

Northern Rother District Councillors' Report April 2022D.

Revenue Budget and Capital Programme – Q3 2022/23.

Cabinet agreed the continuation of two Service Level Agreements in respect of Rother District Citizen's Advice and Bexhill Museum and an extension of funding of £85,000 for Rother Citizens Advice and £8,500 for Bexhill Museum for a further one year.

The Revenue Budget forecast as of 31 December 2021 indicates a surplus of £128,000 against the approved budget drawdown from Reserves of £2.7m. This is an improvement of £222,000 since the Q2 forecast.

Strategy and Planning shows a deficit £677,000 which has decreased by £60,000 mainly due to a predicted reduction of £54,000 in the cost of support from Capita Business Services to clear the planning applications backlog. There was also a reduction in the costs of judicial reviews forecast (£17,000) and additional income from the administration of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts (£38,000), although this was largely offset by a predicted downturn in Planning fee income of £47,000.

The Council's Capital Programme is forecast to underspend by £47.345m in 2021/22, but this is due to timing differences and the five-year programme is still on target to be delivered.

Financial Stability Programme.

Options being considered include:

a/ Public Conveniences, to either:

Devolve to Town and Parish Councils including further options to refurbish before devolving or

Devolve to Town and Parish Councils providing such Councils with funding to refurbish perhaps through CIL funds or

Retain, refurbish and introduce charges or

If the Parish or Town Council and the community agree that the facility is not required then redevelop or demolish.

b/ Car parks that are a net cost to RDC, to either:

Devolve to Town and Parish Councils or other suitable groups or

Retain and investigate introducing charges in sites that are currently free to use or

Re-purpose if the facility is not needed by the community.

c/ Grounds maintenance, to either:

Agree a programme of devolvement with Bexhill, Battle and Rye Town Councils or

Continue with a service contract managed by RDC, but with a minimum specification at lowest cost.

Arboriculture Services contract.

It is proposed to work with Hastings Borough Council to jointly procure and appoint an arboriculture services contractor with an estimated annual cost to RDC of £46,000 and as a separate contract to Hastings Borough Council for a term of three years with an option to extend for a further two years.