

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE DECISION MAKING

RECORD OF THE DECISION MAKING HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2025

Present:

|                       |   |   |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Councillor Fielker    | - | Leader of the Council   |
| Councillor Letts      | - | Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services |
| Councillor Bogle      | - | Cabinet Member for Economic Development                             |
| Councillor Finn       | - | Cabinet Member for Adults and Health                                |
| Councillor A Frampton | - | Cabinet Member for Housing Operations                               |
| Councillor C Lambert  | - | Cabinet Member for Communities and Safer City                       |
| Councillor Kataria    | - | Cabinet Member for Compliance and Leisure                           |
| Councillor Keogh      | - | Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport                        |
| Councillor Savage     | - | Cabinet Member for Green City and Net Zero                          |
| Councillor Winning    | - | Cabinet Member for Children and Learning                            |

60. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORTING Q3

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47994)

On consideration of the report of the Leader of the Council, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) To note the Quarter 3 performance report.
- (ii) To note performance issues raised, actions being taken and consider any areas for focus or further investigation.

61. THE 2025/26 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47847)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, Cabinet approved the following:

**GENERAL FUND REVENUE**

To recommend to Council:

- i) Have regard to the Statement of the S151 Officer as set out in paragraphs 94 to 106 on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of the council's reserves, when approving the following recommendations.
- ii) The 5 year Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2028/29 as set out in table 1 and appendix 1.

- iii) The Revenue Budget for 2025/26 as set out in tables 3 and 4 and Appendices 1 and 2.
- iv) The inclusion in the budget General Fund pressures totalling £12.72M in 2025/26, increasing to £23.34M in 2028/29, as detailed in paragraph 36.
- v) The inclusion of commitments totalling £1.98M in 2025/26, increasing to £10.40M in 2028/29, as detailed in paragraph 38.
- vi) The inclusion of savings proposals (including increases to ring-fenced grants) totalling £49.60M in the 2025/26 General Fund Revenue Budget, of which £34.56M relate to the Transformation Programme, increasing to £66.16M in 2028/29, of which £50.82M relate to the Transformation Programme, as detailed in paragraphs 40 to 43.
- vii) An increase in the 'core' council tax of 2.99% and an increase in the Adult Social Care precept of 2.00%, allowable under general powers to increase council tax without a referendum.
- viii) A Band D Council Tax for Southampton City Council of £1,903.14 for 2025/26, a Net Budget Requirement of £230.78M and the Council Tax Requirement for 2025/26 at £128.17M as per Appendix 6. The Council Tax increase comprises a core increase of 2.99% and 2.00% specifically for Adult Social Care.
- ix) A change to fees and charges policy and note the new charges as set out in paragraph 64 to 67 and Appendix 9.

#### Other Recommendations

- x) Approve the Procurement Forward Plan for 2025/26 contained at Appendix 10.
- xi) Delegate authority to the relevant Executive Director, after consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member(s), to take all actions necessary to enter into all contracts contained in the Procurement Forward Plan for 2025/26 at Appendix 10 for the contract duration stated including any contractually permitted extension options. Providing that this is within the budget envelope available for the contract for the projects contained in the Procurement Forward Plan 2025/26 at Appendix 10.
- xii) Note the indicative Procurement Pipeline for the years 2026/27 and 2027/28 contained at Appendix 11.

## 62. THE GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2029/30

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47849)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, Cabinet approved the following:

To recommended to Council:

- i) The Capital Strategy, as detailed in Appendix 1.
- ii) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Strategy as detailed in Appendix 2.
- iii) The Non-Treasury Investment Strategy as detailed in Appendix 3.
- iv) The Treasury Management Strategy as detailed in Appendix 4. The revised fully funded General Fund Capital Programme, that totals £312.92M (as detailed in paragraphs 15 and 16) and the associated use of

resources. The Housing Revenue Account capital programme is set out elsewhere on the agenda.

- v) The addition and spend of £105.75M to the General Fund programme. These additions are detailed in paragraphs 25 to 53 and Appendix 5.
- vi) The removal of schemes from the capital programme totalling £0.06M, set out in paragraph 39 and detailed in Appendix 5.
- vii) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy as detailed in Appendix 7.

63. THE HRA BUDGET 2025/26 AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2029/30

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47851)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, Cabinet approved the following:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Recommend to Council that from 1 April 2025, an average rent increase will be applied to dwelling rents of 2.7% in line with the rent increase guidance set by Government, as detailed in paragraph 16, equivalent to an average increase of £2.70 per week in the current average weekly dwelling rent figure of £99.90 for Social rent, and £4.40 per week in the current average weekly rent for affordable rent of £162.80. Rents for Shared Ownership rents will also increase by 2.7%.
- (ii) Recommend to Council that weekly service charges will increase 2.7% from 1 April 2025, as detailed in paragraph 22, pending further work on service charges in 2025/26.
- (iii) Recommend to Council the Housing Revenue Account revenue estimates as set out in Appendix 4.
- (iv) Recommend to Council the 40 year Business Plan for revenue and capital expenditure set out in Appendix 1, Appendix 5 confidential Appendix 6 respectively, that based on current assumptions are sustainable, maintaining a minimum HRA balance increasing from £2.59M brought forward into 2024/25 to £7.00M by 2027/28, following a review of policy undertaken in 2023/24 for future budgets to provide a sufficient and necessary buffer against financial risks.
- (v) Recommend to Council a decrease in landlord-controlled heating charges of 10% as set out in paragraph 26.
- (vi) Recommend to Council the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme, which totals £312.92M (as detailed in paragraph 55 & 56 and the associated use of resources.
- (vii) Recommend to Council the continuation of the current policy to increase the HRA working balance from the forecast £3.09M as at the end of 2024/25 to £7M by 2027/28.

64. FINANCIAL POSITION UPDATE - FEBRUARY

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47843)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, Cabinet agreed to the £0.28M adjustments to be made to directorate budgets to reflect sustained favourable variances reported at month 10 of 2024/25 due to transformation measures, to be transferred to centrally held contingency to reduce the reliance on Exceptional Financial Support (EFS), as set out in paragraph 6.

65. CAPITAL FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD TO THE END OF DECEMBER 2024

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47845)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, Cabinet approved the following:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i) Note the revised General Fund Capital Programme, which totals £207.01M as detailed in paragraph 3.
- ii) Note the HRA Capital Programme is £245.53M as detailed in paragraph 3.
- iii) Approve slippage of £21.97M, £19.75M within the General Fund programme and £2.21M within the HRA programme, as detailed in paragraphs 7 to 9 and Appendix 3.
- iv) Note that the overall forecast position for 2024/25 at quarter 3 is £137.73M, resulting in a potential underspend of £1.28M, as detailed in paragraphs 10 to 12 and Appendix 2.
- v) Note that the capital programme remains fully funded up to 2028/29 based on the latest forecast of available resources although the forecast can be subject to change; most notably regarding the value and timing of anticipated capital receipts and the use of prudent assumptions of future government grants to be received.

66. TRANSFORMATION UPDATE

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 48101)

On consideration of the report of the Leader of the Council, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) That Cabinet agrees the updates to the expected outcomes of the Portfolios of activities within the adapt | grow | thrive Transformation Programme as set out in the 'Current Portfolio Status' section, including the 'Key delivery progress' for each Portfolio, within the main appendix – "Transformation Update- February 2025".
- (ii) That Cabinet agrees the £34.5m of expected savings from the delivery of transformation activities for 2025/26, supported by updated business cases, set out within the main appendix – "Transformation Update- February 2025".

67. RESOURCED PROVISION AT CANTELL SCHOOL

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 46193)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, Cabinet approved the opening of a resourced provision at Cantell School for 10 pupils with moderate learning difficulties with associated speech, language and communication needs and/or Autism from April 2025 as set out in the statutory notice, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

68. ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS 2026-27

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47832)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) To approve the Admissions Policies, the Published Admission Numbers (PANs) and the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools and the schemes for coordinating Infant-Primary, Junior and Secondary admissions for the school year 2026-27 as set out in appendices 1 to 6.
- (ii) To authorise the Executive Director for Children and Learning to take any action necessary to give effect to the admissions policies and to make any changes necessary to the admissions policies where required to give effect to any Acts, Regulations or revised Schools Admissions or School Admissions Appeals Codes or binding Schools Adjudicator, Court or Ombudsman decisions whenever they arise.

69. UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SOUTHAMPTON HEALTH & CARE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47795)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, Cabinet approved the new Terms of Reference for the Health Care Partnership Board as shown in Appendix 1 of this report.

70. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS) UPDATE

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47868)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Cabinet approved the following:

- (i) To resolve that the updated Local Development Scheme (Appendix 1) is to have effect on 3rd March 2025.
- (ii) In the event provisions from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act come into force, to grant delegated powers to the Director of Transport and Planning to produce the local plan timetable in substantially the same terms as the updated LDS and to maintain and make future updates (to reflect progress on the Local Plan) in consultation with the cabinet lead.

71. SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL HOUSING LANDLORD SERVICES - IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47962)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Housing Operations, Cabinet approved the following:

Having complied with paragraph 15 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules.

- (i) That the findings of the Social Housing Regulator and the C3 grading are accepted in full.
- (ii) That the commitment to improving the performance of the Housing Landlord function is agreed as priority for the Council.
- (iii) That the Improvement Plan is agreed as the mechanism to drive performance improvement and support the improvement requirements of the Social Housing Regulator.
- (iv) That the Housing Advisory Board is established to oversee the Improvement Plan and ensure regular performance reports to Cabinet.
- (v) That the concerns and comments of Scrutiny are accepted and there are regular performance reports.

72. SOUTHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT SITE

Decision made: (CAB 24/25 47866)

On consideration of the report of the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the confidential report.