

Scrutiny Panel 1st February 2021 Item 5 – Quarterly Finance Update	Item No 5
--	-------------------------

Outline

The finance update and reports attached will cover:

1. Presentation about the Council Budget for 2021/2022
2. Council's Monthly Overall Financial Position (OFP) Report - This report provides information about the Council's latest budgetary position in 2020/21. **Report to Follow**
3. Capital Programme report - This report provides information about the Council's Capital Programme.
4. Housing Revenue Account budget 2021/22 including tenants rents and service charges.

In addition to the main reports the Group Director Finance and Corporate Resources will give a presentation on the Council Budget.

The reports in the agenda provide the following information:

1. The Overall Financial Position (OFP) **report is to follow.**
2. The Capital programme report updates Members on the current position of the Capital Programme with the delivery of those schemes as set out in section 9 of this report. Key recommendations for capital investment are detailed below.
 - a. This report recommends investment into more Hackney based SEND provision and in Hackney schools generally.
 - b. This report recommends improving the public realm in particular through tree planting and green screen programmes – '21st Century Street' programme launched in response to growing demands in Dalston to address the air quality and road safety impact of motor vehicles, improve the look and feel of streets, and increase the amount of green space and tree canopy cover.
 - c. This report recommends continued investment in parks - £1m in park depots which are vital in ensuring that Parks Operational staff have a secure and safe environment in which to carry out their work. There are plans to integrate these staff with grounds maintenance staff from Hackney Housing and improve both how the sites are laid out and the facilities on site to accommodate the increase in staff numbers.

- d. This report recommends work continues on the road safety programme with investment to reduce traffic on residential streets, creating low-traffic neighbourhoods so more people can walk and cycle as part of their daily routine. Ensuring the highways are well and sustainably lit will reduce the Council's energy consumption through street lighting and reducing the Council's carbon footprint and generating savings.
 - e. This report recommends continued investment in highways maintenance in upgrading drainage to improve safety and mitigate flooding risk and continue our bridge maintenance programme
3. The report recommends a budget for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2021/22 and rents for our Council homes. This report sets out the proposed budget and rent levels for the forthcoming financial year. The rent increase is proposed at CPI + 1% which is in line with Government policy.

The HRA Business Plan, approved by Cabinet in March 2019 as part of the Asset Management Strategy sets out the savings requirements to ensure that the investment in the existing housing stock can be maintained to ensure the housing stock is sustainable in the long term. The necessary savings identified for 2021/22 are included in this proposed budget.

This year, the pandemic has had a huge impact on the budget for managing and maintaining Council homes, with more tenants put into financial difficulty and struggling to pay their rent, higher costs from providing additional support to those residents most in need, and less extra income from other sources such as hiring out community halls.

Attending for this item will be:

- **Ian Williams**, Group Director Finance and Corporate Resources

Action

The Commission is requested to give consideration to the reports and presentation and ask questions.