

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

3 November 2020

From Ian James

To Councillor Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment

Item 7 – Budget Monitoring

Question 1

Please explain in more detail what is the general reserve fund and how much money is available today (3/11/20) for the Council to draw down on? Does the Council have any other reserves, and if so how much?

Response

Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires a local authority to have due regard to the level of balances and reserves it needs for meeting estimates of future expenditure when calculating the Council's budget. The general fund reserve is a reserve that is set aside to help mitigate the risks within the normal business activity of the council. Its main purpose is as a working balance to help cushion the impact of uncertainties on cash flows and also act as a contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events and emergencies that may arise in any given year. The current balance on this reserve is £15.456m.

The council also holds other usable reserves that are earmarked to meet other known and predictable events and liabilities that are faced in future years. These are listed in detail within the Annual Statement of Accounts and as at the 31 March 2020 and they totalled £27.202m, however this excludes the cumulative deficit of the Dedicated Schools Grant and Schools Balances. Including the Dedicated Schools Grant and Schools Balances the total is £23.916m.

The council also has other reserves that are ring-fenced for capital purposes and are set aside to fund the Capital Programme in both this year and future years. As at 31 March 2020 these totalled £74.626m.

Question 2

At the last meeting you stated that the Future Chippenham Team is now part of the Major Project Team and utilising exiting resources. Are there consultants engaged with this team, and what is their cost to the major projects team?

Response

There are no consultants employed in the Major Projects Team.

The Major Projects team are funded by Revenue and Capital funding allocated for the projects that they work on. Projects may need specialist advice provided by consultants; such costs will be charged to the appropriate capital scheme.

Question 3

The three companies set up by Wiltshire Council under the names Stone Circle. Is Wiltshire Council funding those companies with the £4.2m which was agreed at the 24th March cabinet meeting. If so this money was indicated as capital funding.

This money you stated was capital funding, is it now being used for resource funding to run these three companies?

Response

The £4.220m that was advanced in the 24 March Cabinet report is to be used to progress the programme as outlined in the report. This will be used for preliminary investigations, route option assessment and preliminary design for the road and associated housing sites. None of this funding will be going to Stone Circle.