

Committee: Finance Committee	Date: 9 April 2019
Subject: Report of Action Taken - Public Decisions taken under Delegated Authority/Urgency procedures since the last meeting of the Committee	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Information
Report author: John Cater, Town Clerk's Department	

Summary

This report advises Members of urgent and/or delegated action taken by the Town Clerk since the last meeting of the Committee, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, in accordance with Standing Order No. 41(a) and 41(b).

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

Main report

1. Subject: Annual Budget Submission: Amendment to recommendations to incorporate Capital Budgets (Urgency)

Background

At its 19 February 2019 meeting, the Finance Committee considered the annual reports in respect of the City Fund, City Cash and Bridge House Estates budgets and approved them for submission to the Court.

However, whilst the various capital budgets were presented through the budget book, it has become apparent that there was no specific recommendation concerning their approval. The explicit approval of the Committee is necessary in order to facilitate these recommendations being put to the Court and the Capital Budgets approved for the forthcoming year.

The following three paragraphs should have been included at the appropriate points within the two budget reports, along with recommendations for the Capital Budgets to be approved:

CITY FUND CAPITAL & SRP PROJECT BUDGETS

1. The latest City Fund capital and supplementary revenue projects budgets total £109.9m for 2018/19 and £38.7m for 2019/20. The budgets include schemes relating to affordable housing construction, HRA stock improvements, police accommodation, the Museum of London re-location, the Combined Courts project, a property acquisition and highways improvement schemes. These budgets are set out in detail at from page 105 of the summary budget book and Members are asked to approve their submission to the Court.

CITY'S CASH CAPITAL & SRP PROJECT BUDGETS

2. The latest City's Cash capital and supplementary revenue projects budgets total £205.6m for 2018/19 and £35.3m for 2019/20. The budgets include Markets Consolidation Programme costs, purchase of 20/21 Aldermanbury, property investments and works at the

CoL Freeman's School. These budgets are set out in detail at page 166 of the summary budget book and Members are asked to approve their submission to the Court.

BRIDGE HOUSE ESTATES CAPITAL & SRP PROJECT BUDGETS

3. The latest Bridge House Estates capital and supplementary revenue projects budgets total £2.4m for 2018/19 and £0.5m for 2019/20. The budgets relate mainly to property investments. These budgets are set out in detail from page 208 of the summary budget book and Members are asked to approve their submission to the Court.

Whilst tacit approval could be inferred from the Committee's discussion and approval of the overall budget reports, the explicit approval of the Finance Committee was necessary ahead of submission to the Court. The Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman were therefore asked to approve the Capital Budgets and authorise their inclusion in the Court report accordingly.

Reason for Urgency

With the Court meeting on 7 March 2019 and no meeting of the Finance Committee before that date, urgent approval was required to ensure the recommendations were presented to the Court as part of the annual budget submissions.

Action Taken

The Capital Budgets for City Fund, City's Cash and Bridge House Estates was approved as set out in the Summary Budget Book, for onwards submission to the Court. (26th February)

2. Subject: International Disasters Fund - Recommendation from the Central Grants Unit in respect of Cyclone Idai (Delegated Authority)

Background

The City of London holds a contingency fund of £100,000 in its City's Cash budget, allocated to the International Disasters Fund (IDF) administered by the Finance Committee.

A report on use of this fund was presented to Finance Committee on 31 January 2017 where it was noted:

- a) The strong criteria applied by the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) for the selection and monitoring of UK aid charities;
- b) The ability of the Central Grants Unit (CGU) to provide recommendations of appropriate charities to support, including due diligence reviews;
- c) That donations given as restricted to a specific appeal or purpose are required under charity law to be spent directly on that purpose.

When a DEC appeal is not launched, a donation could be made to an individual charity carrying out humanitarian relief in the area. It is acknowledged that the transparent governance controls applied by the DEC means that Finance Committee can be confident in giving direct to the individual charities that are members of the DEC, should they believe this to be the most appropriate use of the Corporations' emergency donations budget. The CGU is in place to provide advice and recommendations on how donations would be best placed in the instance that a DEC appeal is not launched.

Update

Cyclone Idai swept through Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe in March, destroying almost everything in its path, causing devastating floods, killing and injuring thousands of people and ruining crops. More than 2.6 million people could be affected across the three countries, and the port city of Beira, which was hit on 15th March and is home to 500,000 people, is now an “island in the ocean”, almost completely cut off. Thousands of families are in desperate need of food, water, shelter and medical treatment. The DEC launched an appeal to coordinate the humanitarian response to this crisis.

Action Taken

The Finance Committee agreed a donation of £30,000 from the International Disasters Fund be provided to support the Disaster Emergency Committee in providing humanitarian support to communities affected by Cyclone Idai. (20th March)

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