

**Minutes of a meeting of Council
held on Wednesday, 27th February, 2019
from 7.00 pm - 7.49 pm**

Present: B Forbes (Chairman)
C Trumble (Vice-Chair)

J Ash-Edwards	M Hersey	P Moore
M Belsey	A Jones	H Mundin
L Bennett	J Knight	K Page
M Binks	J Landriani	P Reed
P Bradbury	Andrew Lea	L Stockwell
C Catharine	Anthea Lea	M Thomas-Atkin
P Coote	J Llewellyn-Burke	N Walker
R de Mierre	A MacNaughton	G Wall
S Ellis	G Marples	N Webster
S Hatton	G Marsh	R Whittaker
G Heard	E Matthews	J Wilkinson
C Hersey	N Mockford	P Wyan

Absent: Councillors A Barrett-Miles, E Belsey, J Belsey, A Boutrup, H Brunsdon, R Cherry, R Clarke, T Dorey, D Dorking, C Fussell, S Hansford, C Holden, G Rawlinson, R Salisbury, D Sweatman and A Watts Williams

1. OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was read by the Vice-Chairman.

2. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9.

None.

3. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2019.

The minutes of the meeting of Council held on 30 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA

In relation to item 8, Councillor Andrew Lea, Councillor Bradbury, Councillor Bennett and Councillor Jones declared a personal interest as West Sussex County Councillors.

5. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.

None.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman noted that the next Council meeting will be the last one of this Administration and urged all Members to attend.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET - 11 FEBRUARY 2019.

The Chairman introduced the report. In response to a question on the Budget Management 2018/19 Progress Report, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance confirmed that staff vacancy savings were due to positions not filled, and she agreed to provide a written answer in relation to the proposed use of the underspend.

The Chairman took Members to the recommendations contained in the report, which were agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED

With regards to the Draft Corporate Plan and Budget 2019/20, Council approved:

- (i) The overall direction and service levels promoted within the draft Corporate Plan;
- (ii) The financial outlook facing the Council;
- (iii) The proposed increase in Council Tax;
- (iv) The proposed placements in the Specific Reserves;
- (v) The proposed Capital Programme; and
- (vi) The service commentaries and supporting summary budget tables for business unit.

With regards to the budget management 2018/19 progress report, Council approved:

- (i) that £16,684 be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 21 of the Cabinet report;
- (ii) that £2,786 be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 22 of the Cabinet report;
- (iii) that £90,000 be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph of the Cabinet report;
- (iv) that £18,873 be transferred to Housing Needs Survey specific reserve as detailed in paragraph 24 of the Cabinet report;

- (v) that £15,830 be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 25 of the Cabinet report;
- (vi) that £340,000 of the revenue underspend be transferred to Specific Reserves as detailed in paragraph 26 of the Cabinet report;
- (vii) the variations to the Capital Programme contained in paragraph 46 of the Cabinet report in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure rule B4.

With regards to the Property Investment Opportunity, Council approved that the purchase be funded from the general reserve.

8. CORPORATE PLAN AND BUDGET 2019/20 - ENCLOSED

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance introduced the report, thanking the Scrutiny Committee, Members and Officers for their efforts in producing a strong Budget and Corporate Plan which will enable the Council to achieve its goals.

She highlighted that the central government grant to the Council has been reduced from £6.5m in 2010 to zero in 2018/19 and that the Secretary of State has reviewed the negative RSG, and confirmed it is no longer to be expected. Instead, the Government is seeking to provide incentives to Councils that are performing well by encouraging participation in schemes such as the Business Rates Pilot.

She acknowledged that whilst uncertainties exist in reference to the fair funding review, and budget reductions planned by West Sussex County Council, this Council has been proactive in many areas. A successful bid for participation in the business rates pilot has enabled £19m to be invested in a full fibre network throughout the District, and prudent property investment was providing income.

She also drew Members attention to some further key areas contained within the plan:

- 1) A £3.1% increase in Council Tax increasing the tax at Band D by £4.95 per year.
- 2) The work undertaken to facilitate planned and coordinated sustainable economic growth including the Burgess Hill Growth Programme, a masterplan for Haywards Heath, a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for East Grinstead and the completion of the Shop Front Improvement project.
- 3) Progress made in relation to Flagship Activities.
- 4) Significant support to community groups through Cabinet Grants.
- 5) A Capital Programme including a significant amount for play spaces.
- 6) Resources provided to fund temporary accommodation, and further ways in which the Council is influencing housing more broadly across the District.

A Member asked about the proposed full fibre network. The Cabinet Member for Economic Growth confirmed that the Council is looking at all options to ensure

connectivity can benefit smaller market towns and rural areas.

Members noted that extensive work had gone into producing a budget well integrated into the Corporate Plan with clear capital budgets and justification for the key projects. It was noted that strategic partnerships are vital to the Council's success in achieving its ambitions.

A Member commented that the proposed increase in Council Tax should be seen in context of the recent freeze in Council Tax, which resulted in benefits to local residents. He urged the Cabinet Member to give consideration to whether an increase in future years is necessary.

In response to a Member's question, the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery confirmed that charges for playing pitches had gone up in line with inflation and there is a budget to litter pick the A23.

The Leader seconded the proposals in the report and thanked Members and Officers for their work to produce a Corporate Plan and Budget which sets a firm financial foundation for the year ahead and the next administration. He reiterated the importance of strategic relationships as millions of pounds of investment for the District are coming through from these partnerships. He also noted that the Burgess Hill Growth Programme will benefit both the town, and the rest of the District as it has spurred on neighbouring towns to pursue ambitious projects of their own.

With regards to the Council Tax increase he acknowledged that the Council wishes to be a low-tax authority but also wants to deliver services that residents deserve and expect so it is important to set a rational budget which can be delivered on. In terms of the cumulative shortfall over 4 years, the Council needs to understand the requirements in the Council Tax regime and fair funding review, and he noted that the Council is already working to mitigate the financial and social costs resulting from West Sussex County Council's challenging budget requirements.

The Leader noted the high performance of the Planning department following significant investment to attract high performing people to the teams. There has also been significant investment in the Revenues and Benefits team following the disbanding of the CenSus partnership which has resulted in the team performing at its highest level. Work has also been invested in streamlining Member Services particularly relating to sustainability and the ambition to move to a paperless system.

He concluded that as the last budget of the administration, it clearly fits the objectives set by the Council and going forward it focusses on growth, infrastructure and economic strategies to benefit residents and businesses within the District.

The Chairman took Members to a recorded vote in accordance with the budget regulations:

	For	Against	Abstained
Councillor Ash-Edwards	✓		
Councillor Margaret Belsey	✓		
Councillor Liz Bennett	✓		
Councillor Michelle Binks	✓		
Councillor Pete Bradbury	✓		
Councillor Cherry Catharine	✓		
Councillor Phillip Coote	✓		

Councillor Ruth De Mierre	✓		
Councillor Sandy Ellis	✓		
Councillor Bruce Forbes	✓		
Councillor Sue Hatton	✓		
Councillor Ginny Heard	✓		
Councillor Chris Hersey	✓		
Councillor Margaret Hersey	✓		
Councillor Anne Jones	✓		
Councillor Jim Knight	✓		
Councillor Jacqui Landriani	✓		
Councillor Andrew Lea	✓		
Councillor Anthea Lea	✓		
Councillor Judy Llewellyn-Burke	✓		
Councillor Andrew MacNaughton	✓		
Councillor Gordon Marples	✓		
Councillor Gary Marsh	✓		
Councillor Edward Matthews	✓		
Councillor Norman Mockford	✓		
Councillor Pru Moore	✓		
Councillor Howard Muddin	✓		
Councillor Kirsty Page	✓		
Councillor Peter Reed	✓		
Councillor Linda Stockwell	✓		
Councillor Mandy Thomas-Atkin	✓		
Councillor Colin Trumble	✓		
Councillor Neville Walker	✓		
Councillor Garry Wall	✓		
Councillor Norman Webster	✓		
Councillor Rex Whittaker	✓		
Councillor John Wilkinson	✓		
Councillor Peter Wyan	✓		

The 38 Members present voted in support.

RESOLVED

Council resolved to approve the Corporate Plan and Budget for 2018/19 as set out in the report.

The meeting finished at 7.49 pm

Chairman