

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **COUNCIL** held in the Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Thursday, 21 February 2019.

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs C F Chapman MBE (Chairman)

Cllr B Saunders (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs	R D Berry	Cllrs	Ms A M W Graham	Cllrs	I Shingler
	M C Blair		Ms C Hegley		P Smith
	D Bowater		J G Jamieson		B J Spurr
	A D Brown		J Kane		R C Stay
	J Chatterley		D J Lawrence		Mrs T Stock
	K M Collins		Mrs J G Lawrence		T Swain
	I Dalgarno		Cllr M Liddiard		G Tubb
	S Dixon		K C Matthews		A M Turner
	Mrs A L Dodwell		Ms C Maudlin		M A G Versallion
	P Downing		D McVicar		N Warren
	P A Duckett		R Morris		S Watkins
	K Ferguson		T Nicols		B Wells
	F Firth		G Perham		R D Wenham
	E Ghent		A Ryan		J N Young
	C C Gomm		J A G Saunders		A Zerny
	Mrs S A Goodchild		D Shelvey		

Apologies for Absence

Cllrs	Mrs A Barker	Cllrs	P Hollick	Cllrs	R W Johnstone
	Mrs S Clark		K Janes		T Woodward

Absent

Cllrs	Costin	Cllrs	Gurney	Gurney
	Freeman		Walker	

Officers:	Mr R Carr	–	Chief Executive
	Mr M Coiffait	–	Director of Community Services
	Mr A Davie	–	Assistant Director Development and Infrastructure
	Mrs P Everitt	–	Scrutiny Policy Adviser
	Mrs S Hobbs	–	Senior Committee Services Officer
	Mr P Keates	–	Head of Development and Regulation
	Mrs J Ogley	–	Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
	Mr S Rix	–	Interim Monitoring Officer
	Mrs M Scott	–	Director of Public Health
	Mrs S Tyler	–	Assistant Director Business and Supporting Services
	Mr C Warboys	–	Director of Resources

PRAYERS

Prayers were taken by Councillor Blair.

C/18/71 Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 January 2019 be approved as a correct record.

C/18/72 Members' Interests

No declarations of interest were received.

C/18/73 Questions, Statements and Deputations

No members of the public had registered to speak.

C/18/74 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

Sandy Town Council and Harlington Parish Council had been mentioned in the National Association of Local Council's publication, Points of Light, that set out a collection of case studies highlighting the work that town and parish councils were undertaking to support their communities.

C/18/75 Leader of the Council's Announcements and Communications

The Leader highlighted the importance of setting the Council's budget and reflected on the services that the Council delivers. Community Safety was an issue that concerned residents and the proposed budget included additional funding for this area. He also highlighted schemes that were planned as part of the budget proposal:

- M1/A6 Link Road
- dualling of the A421
- additional footpaths and cycle routes
- new school places
- improving older peoples accommodation in Ampthill, Houghton Regis, Flitwick and Biggleswade
- Health Hubs in Dunstable and Biggleswade
- new leisure facilities
- providing employment opportunities; and
- improved waste collection services.

The proposed Council Tax was for a 1% increase for 2019/20.

The Executive Member for Community Services provided an update on the motion that was passed at Council on 15 November 2018 regarding Level Crossing at Tempsford. The Chief Executive, Network Rail acknowledged that there was an issue in the Tempsford area and an additional £40,000 had been allocated for policing and patrolling areas where there was a high risk of people committing suicide. Network rail worked closely with the Samaritans and would meet with the Council to discuss improving the area.

C/18/76

Recommendations from the Executive

(a) Budget 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Plan

The Council considered recommendations from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2019, seeking approval of the proposed Revenue budget for 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

In his introduction, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources commented on the range of external factors which had influenced the proposed budget. In particular the loss of the Revenue Support Grant, 2% pay award, increase in the Living Wage, the Homelessness Act and people living longer. The Financial Settlement provided a one year grant of £1.5m to be ring-fenced for social care and £1m extra New Homes Bonus.

£14.8m of efficiencies had been identified for 2019/20 and £40m efficiencies over the MTFP period.

The Executive Member commented on the outcome of the public consultation and that the draft budget had been scrutinised by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He highlighted the statutory requirements relating to specific budget proposals, as set out in Appendix F to the Executive report.

In response to the results from the public consultation it was proposed to allocate additional funding towards:

- Community Safety
- Sustainable Transport
- Town Centre Ranger
- Community Councillor Fund
- Parking
- Countryside Access
- Culture.

The Executive were recommending a Council Tax rise of 1%.

The Leader of the Independent Group enquired how much of the budget had been allocated towards paying pensions and hoped that the efficiencies could be achieved.

The Leader of the Labour Group commented on the demand for services and the financial pressures on families in Central Bedfordshire. She was concerned that the proposed efficiencies would impact residents, especially on children with mental health problems and learning disabilities. She felt that the Council should ensure that the budget was spent in the community. She proposed that the recommendations from the Executive be voted upon separately.

The Liberal Democrat representative recognised the work of Officers and highlighted the pressures on Councils, with the increase in homelessness, social care and the much needed increase in the Living Wage. Many residents faced loneliness and there was a need to build integrated and resilient communities. The Health and Wellbeing Board were looking to improve health and wellbeing across Central Bedfordshire, in particular mental health and reducing obesity which was higher in the areas of greatest need. She sought assurance that this would continue to be a high priority for the Council.

Other Members of the Council were invited to comment on the proposed budget.

In response to questions, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources confirmed that the percentage contributed towards pensions in 2019/20 was the same as 2018/19. It was anticipated that the budget would be underspent at the end of the financial year. Unemployment in Central Bedfordshire was low. Resources were being focused on communities in areas where there was the greatest need. The Community Councillor Fund would allow for Members to bid for funding to help with small projects within their communities.

£1m was being invested in community safety for such issues as increased uniformed presence in the community, CCTV, prevention of anti-social behaviour and fly tipping. The Town Ranger scheme had been successful in Dunstable and would be rolled out across the area. Sustainable transport was very important and additional funds would be put towards improving walkways and cycle routes.

The proposal to allow Council to vote on the recommendations from the Executive separately was voted upon with 4 voting in favour and 45 voting against the proposal. This proposal was lost.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken.

The recommendations from the Executive upon being put to the vote, those in favour:

Councillors Berry, Blair, Bowater, Brown, Chapman, Chatterley, Collins, Dalgarno, Dixon, Dodwell, Downing, Duckett, Ferguson, Firth, Ghent, Gomm, Goodchild, Graham, Hegley, Jamieson, Kane, D Lawrence, J Lawrence, Liddiard, Matthews, Maudlin, McVicar, Morris, Nicols, Perham, B Saunders, J Saunders, Shelvey, Smith, Spurr, Stay, Stock, Tubb, Turner, Versallion, Warren, Watkins, Wells, Wenham and Young.

Councillors Ryan, Swain and Zerny voted against the resolution.

Councillor Shingler abstained from voting.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the Revenue Budget for 2019/20 and the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2019/20 to 2022/23 be approved;**
- 2. that in line with Government guidance, the following increases in Council tax (CBC element) for residents of Central Bedfordshire be approved:**
 - (a) a Band D increase of £14.86, representing a 1% increase on the charge for 2018/19; and**
 - (b) the CBC Band D Council Tax for 2019/20 will therefore be £1,500.64**
- 3. that the items set out in Appendix L to the Executive report be added to the Council's Budget for 2019/20 and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2019/20 to 2022/23, noting that the use of previously identified funding streams does not necessitate any change to recommendation 2 above.**

(b) Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2022/23

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2019, seeking approval of the proposed Capital Programme for 2019/20 to 2022/23.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources drew attention to some of the major investments planned, including:

- New School Places
- M1/A6 Link Road
- Highways Structural Maintenance
- Integrated Health and Care Hubs in Dunstable and Biggleswade.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken.

Upon being put to the vote, those in favour:

Councillors Berry, Blair, Bowater, Brown, Chapman, Chatterley, Collins, Dalgarno, Dixon, Dodwell, Downing, Duckett, Ferguson, Firth, Ghent, Gomm, Goodchild, Graham, Hegley, Jamieson, Kane, D Lawrence, J Lawrence, Liddiard, Matthews, Maudlin, McVicar, Morris, Nicols, Perham, B Saunders, J Saunders, Shelvey, Shingler, Smith, Spurr, Stay, Stock, Tubb, Turner, Versallion, Warren, Watkins, Wells, Wenham, Young and Zerny.

No Members voted against the resolution.

Councillor Ryan and Swain abstained from voting.

RESOLVED

that the Capital Programme for 2019/20 to 2022/23 be approved.

(c) Budget for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Business Plan)

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2019, seeking approval of the proposed budget for the Housing Revenue Account (Landlord Business Plan).

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources and the Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations set out the proposals covering the Housing Revenue Account.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken.

Upon being put to the vote, those in favour:

Councillors Berry, Blair, Bowater, Brown, Chapman, Chatterley, Collins, Dalgarno, Dixon, Dodwell, Downing, Duckett, Ferguson, Firth, Ghent, Gomm, Goodchild, Graham, Hegley, Jamieson, Kane, D Lawrence, J Lawrence, Liddiard, Matthews, Maudlin, McVicar, Morris, Nicols, Perham, Ryan, B Saunders, J Saunders, Shelvey, Shingler, Smith, Spurr, Stay, Stock, Swain, Tubb, Turner, Versallion, Warren, Watkins, Wells, Wenham, Young and Zerny.

No Members voted against the resolution.

No Members abstained from voting.

RESOLVED

1. that the plans for additional borrowing of £35M over the MTFP period, to be used for building new affordable housing, be approved;
2. that the recent legislative changes relating to Housing Finance and their impact on the Landlord Business Plan, be noted;
3. that the Landlord Business Investment Plan, which proposes HRA investment throughout the Council area, be approved;
4. that the HRA Revenue Budget for 2019/20 and the Landlord Business Plan Summary at Appendices A and B to the Executive report, be approved;
5. that the 2019/20 to 2022/23 HRA Capital Programme at Appendix C to the Executive report, be approved; and
6. that the average rent decrease of 1% for Council tenancies for 2019/20 in line with the national rental decrease as per Government legislation, be approved.

(d) Treasury Management Strategy and Treasury Policy 2019-20

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2019, seeking approval of the Treasury Management Policy, Treasury Management Strategy Statement Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2019/20.

RESOLVED

that the Treasury Management Policy, Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2019/20, be approved.

The decision was unanimous.

(e) Capital Strategy 2019/20

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2019, seeking approval of the Capital Strategy for 2019/20.

RESOLVED

that the Capital Strategy for 2019/20 be approved.

Upon being put to the vote 47 Members voted in favour, no Members voted against and 2 Members abstained from voting.

(f) Investment Strategy 2019/20

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2019, seeking approval of the Investment Strategy for 2019/20.

In response to a question, the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Corporate Resources confirmed that the Capital and Investment Strategies had been scrutinised by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, but the Chairman of the Audit Committee could request for them to be considered by the Audit Committee.

RESOLVED

that the Investment Strategy for 2019/20 be approved.

The decision was unanimous.

(g) Proposed Charges for Traded Services to Schools and Academies 2019/20

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2019, seeking approval of the revised charges for Traded Services to Schools and Academies for 2019/20.

RESOLVED

- 1. that the charges for traded services to Schools and Academies 2019/20, as set out in Appendix A to the Executive report, be approved;**
- 2. that the charges for the new services to be introduced for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix B to the Executive report, be approved; and**
- 3. that the year on year price changes, as set out in Appendix C, and the volumetrics analysis for 2017/18 and 2018/19, set out in Appendix D to the Executive report, be noted.**

The decision was unanimous.

(h) Social Care, Health and Housing Fees & Charges 2019/20

The Council considered a recommendation from the meeting of the Executive held on 5 February 2019, seeking approval of the revised Social Care, Health and Housing fees and charges for 2019/20.

RESOLVED

1. **that the fees and charges prices for 2019/20, as set out in Appendices A and B to the Executive report, be approved; and**
2. **that the new fees and charges for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix C to the Executive report, be approved.**

The decision was unanimous.

(i) Council Tax Resolution

The Council considered a recommendation in respect of the Council Tax Resolution arising from the budget proposals approved above.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken.

Upon being put to the vote, those in favour:

Councillors Berry, Blair, Bowater, Brown, Chapman, Chatterley, Collins, Dalgarno, Dixon, Dodwell, Downing, Duckett, Ferguson, Firth, Ghent, Gomm, Goodchild, Graham, Hegley, Jamieson, Kane, D Lawrence, J Lawrence, Liddiard, Matthews, Maudlin, McVicar, Morris, Nicols, Perham, Ryan, B Saunders, J Saunders, Shelvey, Shingler, Smith, Spurr, Stay, Stock, Swain, Tubb, Turner, Versallion, Warren, Watkins, Wells, Wenham and Young.

Councillor Zerny voted against the resolution.

No Members abstained from voting.

RESOLVED

that the Council Tax Resolution, set out in Appendix A, be approved.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 7.51 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated