

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting18th February 2021

1. Title of Item/Report

Medium Term Financial Plan and Strategy

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet's views were sought on the final report in setting the Council's 2021/22 Budget and Council Tax, along with an outline of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) position to 2025.

The report also included an update on the financial performance for 2020/21.

The 2020/21 financial position had been significantly affected by the Covid Pandemic and the report highlighted significant financial pressures which had been funded by Government.

It was noted that there were a range of pressures on the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2021 onwards which were not necessarily related to the pandemic and these had been reflected in the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan. The financial position over the medium term was extremely uncertain, and as previously outlined to Members, would be affected by a further Government Spending Review, a potential Fair Funding Review and future proposals around Business Rates Retention.

The proposals in the report presented before Cabinet would mean that the Council would have a balanced budget in 2021/22 and place the Council in a good financial position heading into a period of financial uncertainty.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, Members note that the Section 151 Officer confirms that the following recommendations:

- a) represent a robust budget which has been prepared in line with best practice;
- b) provide adequate working balances;
- c) that the controlled reserves and provisions are adequate for their

purpose.

General Fund Budget

2. Approve a 2021/22 Council Tax requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council of £98,166,656.
3. Approve a 2021/22 Council Tax requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council inclusive of Parish Precepts (£872,636) of £99,039,292.
4. Approve the 2021/22 budget and indicative 2021/25 MTFP as outlined in paragraphs 51 – 52, the level of General Fund Balances set out in paragraphs 31 – 32 and the one-off pressures set out in paragraphs 54 – 58 of the report.
5. Approve prudential borrowing of £10m to fund the additional town centres investments in Stockton and Thornaby (£5m in each) as set out in the Report to Cabinet on 18 February 2021.
6. Approve prudential borrowing of up to £10m allow the Council to negotiate the acquisition of Billingham Town Centre and undertake any immediate repairs and remediation work as set out in the Report to Cabinet on 18 February 2021

Business Rate Relief System

7. Note that the Chancellor is expected to make announcements regarding business rates and reliefs in his March Budget.

Taxation

SBC

8. Approve the Council Tax for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council prior to Parish, Fire and Police Precepts be increased by 3.9%, which includes the Government Levy of 2% in respect of Social Care i.e. to £1,714.98 at Band D (£1,143.32 at Band A).

Fire, Police & Parish

9. The Council note the Police precept of £15,210,571 which equates to a Council Tax of £265.73 at Band D (£177.15 at Band A).
10. The Council note the proposed Fire precept of £4,598,145 which equates to a Council Tax of £80.33 at Band D (£53.55 at Band A).

11. The Council note the Parish precepts as set out in paragraph 78 of the budget report.

Capital

12. Approve the Capital Programme attached at Appendix A & B of the report.

Organisational and HR

13. Council approve the Pay Policy Statement including the new pay and grading structure at Appendix C and C(1) of the report.

Members Allowances

14. Approve that Members allowances are frozen for 2021/22. This will mean that these allowances have been frozen since 2013/14.

Council Tax - Statutory Requirements

15. Members approve the statutory requirements for Council Tax as shown in Appendix D of the report.

16. Cabinet recommend to Council that the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme is retained for the financial year 2021/22 (see paragraphs 81 - 83) and that the Director of Finance, Development and Business Services be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader, to make further adjustments should the Government issue revised publications with regards to these matters after 24 February to ensure that the intended alignment is maintained.

Capital Strategy

17. Approve the Capital Strategy as set out at Appendix E to the report, including the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Policy and the MRP Strategy.

Treasury Management/Prudential Code

18. Approve the Treasury Management Strategy as set out in Appendix F to the report.

Investment Strategy

19. Approve the Investment Strategy as set out at Appendix G to the report.

RESOLVED that:-

20. Cabinet approve and note the Officer Appointments to outside bodies and governing bodies at Appendix C(1).

3. Reasons for the Decision

To consider recommendations to be submitted to Special Council that seek to:

- Approve the 2021/22 budget, MTFP and Capital Programme;
- Approve Council Tax;
- Agree the Pay Policy Statement, Capital Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy;
- Approve borrowing to support investment in Town Centres.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Nigel Cooke declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in respect of this item as a result of being a Board member of Tees Music Alliance.

6. Details of any Dispensations

All Members have been granted a dispensation regarding any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in relation to the consideration and setting of the budget/Council Tax.

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

In respect of Recommendation 20 only - Midnight Friday 26th February 2021.

Proper Officer
22 February 2021