

## Council

A meeting of Council was held on Wednesday, 26th February, 2014.

**Present:** The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Mrs Kathryn Nelson); Cllr Mrs Lynne Apedaile, Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Derrick Brown, Cllr Mark Chatburn, Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Michael Clark, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Gillian Corr, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Phillip Dennis, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Ben Houchen, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Elliot Kennedy, Cllr Jean Kirby, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Miss Tina Large, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Ray McCall, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr David Rose, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Andrew Stephenson, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Tracey Stott, Cllr Steve Walmsley, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr David Wilburn, Cllr Norma Wilburn, Cllr Mrs Mary Womphrey, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Cllr Bill Woodhead and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

**Officers:** N Schneider (CE); J Danks, G Cummings, B Brown (R), J Humphreys (CESC); P Dobson (DNS); P Kelly (DPH); D E Bond, P K Bell (LD).

**Also in attendance:** Members of the public.

**Apologies:** Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr Alan Lewis and Cllr Andrew Sherris.

### **C       Declarations of Interest** **102/13**

Each of the Members present declared, but had a dispensation regarding their disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of agenda item 4 - Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy due to having beneficial interests in properties in the borough / being Council Tax Payers.

Each of the Members present declared a personal interest in respect of agenda item 4 - Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy and specifically a recommendation relating to member allowances, as they were recipients of / entitled to receive such allowances.

### **C       Former Councillor and Honorary Alderman Brian Hodgson** **103/13**

Members stood for a minute's silence as a mark of respect for former Councillor and Honorary Alderman Brian Hodgson.

### **C       Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy** **104/13**

Consideration was given to the final report in setting the Council's 2014/15 budget and Council Tax and outlining the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) position to 2018. There had been a considerable number of changes in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan since the reports to Council in February and June 2013, mainly through changes in Government Funding.

The report had been considered by Cabinet, at its special meeting held on 20th February 2014 and a copy of the Cabinet report and an extract of the relevant Cabinet minute were provided for Members.

Members expressed their thanks to all of the Officers who had been involved in the budget process. Members considered that the budget proposals being put forward were a testament to the excellent management of the Council's financial resources.

The Director of Law and Democracy had informed Members that regulations had been issued by the Government (the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014), which made it mandatory for Councils, as soon as practicable after the regulations came in force, to amend their standing orders to include provisions requiring recorded votes at budget meetings.

The regulations had come into force and as the Council's procedure rules could, in effect, be deemed to include a requirement for recorded votes to be taken in relation to budget decisions, each decision taken at the Council meeting in relation to council tax setting, would therefore be by recorded vote. This would include any amendment motions, as well as the substantive council tax setting motion.

In the usual way, in accordance with the recorded vote procedure in Council Procedure Rules, the vote would take place by roll call of the Members present at the meeting, and recording whether they voted for, or against the motion, or abstained from voting.

Moved by Councillor Cook, seconded by Councillor Beall 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 at 3% of general fund, and
  - c) that the controlled reserves and provisions are adequate for their purpose.

#### General Fund Budget

2. the reduction in Government funding between 2010/11 and 2015/16 of £52m (approximately 43% in cash terms, 56% in real terms) be noted.
3. a 2014/15 Council Tax requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council of £67,595,650 be approved.
4. a 2014/15 Council Tax requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council inclusive of Parish Precepts (£599,828) of £68,195,478 be approved.
5. the 2014/15 budget and indicative 2014/18 MTFP, as outlined above and in paragraphs 5.30 – 5.33 to the report and the use of balances and reserves as outlined above and in paragraph 6.15 and 6.18 to the report, be approved.

#### Business Rate Relief System

6. the proposed amendments to the Council's discretionary business rates discount scheme in line with Government guidance, as described in Section 8 of the report, be approved.
7. the detailed design of the New Build Empty Property Relief and Retail Relief schemes, and their accompanying administrative processes, be delegated to the Corporate Director of Resources in consultation with the

## Cabinet Member for Corporate Management & Finance.

8. where future changes were required to the Council's discretionary rate relief scheme, to bring it in line with new Government guidance, these amendments to the scheme be delegated to the Corporate Director of Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Management & Finance

### Taxation

#### SBC

9. the Council Tax for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, prior to Parish, Fire and Police Precepts be increased by 1.9%, i.e. to £1,312.66 at Band D (£875.11 at Band A).

#### Fire, Police & Parish

10. the Police precept of £10,414,383 which equates to a Council Tax of £202.24 at Band D (£134.83 at Band A) be noted.

11. the Fire precept of £3,555,741 which equates to a Council Tax of £69.05 at Band D (£46.03 at Band A) be noted.

12. the Parish precepts, as set out in paragraph 10.4, of the budget report be noted.

#### Capital

13. the Capital Programme attached at Appendix B be approved.

#### Organisational and HR

14. the Pay Policy Statement attached at Appendix C to the report be approved.

15. the new fixed term contract for the Chief Executive, as outlined in paragraph 9.4 of the report be approved.

#### Members Allowances

16. the Members allowances be frozen for 2014/15.

#### Council Tax - Statutory Requirements

17. the statutory requirements for Council Tax as shown in Appendix D be approved.

#### Treasury Management / Prudential Code

18. the Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators for 2014/15 – 2016/17, as set out in Appendix E, to the report be approved.

Moved by Councillor Lupton, seconded by Councillor Laing that the motion be amended as follows:-

3. Approve a 2014/15 Council Tax requirement for Stockton on Tees Borough Council of £66,335,048

4. Approve a 2014/15 Council Tax requirement for Stockton on Tees Borough Council inclusive of Parish Precepts (£599,828) of £66,934,876

5. Approve the 2014/15 budget and indicative 2014/18 MTFP as outlined in the amended paragraphs 5.30 – 5.33 and the use of balances and reserves as outlined in paragraph 6.15 and 6.18.

9. Approve the Council Tax for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council prior to Parish, Fire and Police Precepts be frozen at £1288.18 at Band D (£858.79 at Band A).

Details of the changes to the body of the report and the impact of the alternative recommendations were provided for Members consideration.

All other recommendations remained the same as the substantive motion.

For the amendment:-

Councillors Chatburn, Cherrett, Dennis, Houchen, Kennedy, Laing, Lupton, Perry, Mrs Rigg, Andrew Stephenson, Mrs Womphrey, Womphrey and Woodhead.

Against the amendment:-

Councillors Apedaile, Baker, Beall, Brown, Mrs Clark, Clark, Cook, Cooke, Corr, Cunningham, Dixon, Faulks, Gibson, Harrington, Javed, Johnson, Kirby, Kirton, Large, McCall, Mrs McCoy, Moore, Mrs Nelson, Nelson, Mrs O'Donnell, Patterson, Rose, Smith, Norma Stephenson, Stoker, Stott, Walmsley, Mrs Walmsley, Wilburn, Mrs Wilburn and Woodhouse.

The amendment was not carried.

Councillor Chatburn informed Members that he had withdrawn his proposed amendment.

A recorded vote then took place on the substantive motion.

For the substantive motion:-

Councillors Apedaile, Baker, Beall, Brown, Mrs Clark, Clark, Cook, Cooke, Corr, Cunningham, Dixon, Faulks, Gibson, Harrington, Javed, Johnson, Kirby, Kirton, Large, McCall, Mrs McCoy, Moore, Mrs Nelson, Nelson, Mrs O'Donnell, Patterson, Rose, Smith, Norma Stephenson, Stoker, Stott, Walmsley, Mrs Walmsley, Wilburn, Mrs Wilburn and Woodhouse.

Against the substantive motion:-

Councillors Chatburn, Cherrett, Dennis, Houchen, Kennedy, Laing, Lupton, Perry, Mrs Rigg, Andrew Stephenson, Mrs Womphrey, Womphrey and Woodhead.

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED that:-

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