

Council

A meeting of Council was held on Thursday, 8th March, 2018.

Present: The Worshipful the Mayor (Cllr Maurice Perry); Cllr Helen Atkinson, Cllr Sonia Bailey, Cllr Paul Baker, Cllr Louise Baldock, Cllr Chris Barlow, Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Derrick Brown, Cllr Carol Clark, Cllr Chris Clough, Cllr Robert Cook, Cllr Nigel Cooke, Cllr Gillian Corr, Cllr Evaline Cunningham, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Philip Dennis, Cllr Ken Dixon, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr John Gardner, Cllr Lisa Grainge, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Tony Hampton, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Eileen Johnson, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy, Cllr Mick Moore, Cllr Mrs Kathryn Nelson, Cllr Steve Nelson, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Paul Rowling, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Andrew Stephenson, Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Marilyn Surtees, Cllr Laura Tunney, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Paul Weston, Cllr Julia Whitehill, Cllr David Wilburn, Cllr Norma Wilburn, Cllr Bill Woodhead MBE and Cllr Barry Woodhouse.

Officers: Neil Schneider (CE), Julie Danks, Peter Bell, Nigel Hart (DCE), Beccy Brown, Julie Butcher (HR, L&C), Garry Cummings, Tony Montague (F&BS), Richard McGuckin (E,G&D), Jamie McCann (CS), Ann Workman (AH); Reuben Kench (CL&E).

Also in attendance: Members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr Julia Cherrett, Cllr Stefan Houghton, Cllr Lauriane Povey, Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tracey Stott and Cllr Matthew Vickers.

1 Declarations of Interest

Each of the Members present had a non-prejudicial interest in relation to setting the Council Tax and Members Allowances and a dispensation regarding any 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.

2 Medium Term Financial Plan Update & Strategy

Consideration was given to a report on the Medium Term Financial Plan Update and Strategy.

This was the final report in setting the Council's 2018/19 Budget and Council Tax. The report also outlined the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) position to 2022.

The MTFP report for 2018/19 to 2021/22 was attached and contained the following detail:

- Background and Context
- National Changes
- Financial Position at 31 December 2017
- 2018/19 Council Tax levels including Adult Social Care Levy
- Medium Term Financial Plan 2018-22
- One off Pressures & Final MTFP
- Capital Programme
- Business Rate Relief Scheme
- Pay Policy and Members Allowances
- Members Allowances
- Precept Levels
- Treasury Management Strategy

Attached to the report as appendices were the following:

- Capital Programme December 2017
- Capital Programme 2012-2020
- Pay Policy Statement
- Council Tax Statutory Requirements
- Treasury Management Strategy

The report outlined the Council Tax proposals and budget for 2018/19 and the indicative MTFP for the next three years.

The report updated the position from that reported to Cabinet and Council in February 2017 and in particular reflected the implications arising from the Spring and Autumn Budgets and the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2018/19.

The Provisional and Final Financial Settlements had provided indicative funding allocations for the next two years, as the final two years of the four year settlement agreed with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). They confirmed further funding reductions which would make the difficult financial position faced by the Council even more challenging. The report also outlined future changes to Local Government Finance, most noticeably the proposals to move to retention of a greater proportion of business rates by Local Authorities and to introduce changes to the funding formulae. These were potentially major changes which were likely to have an impact on council funding. This meant that the position for 2020/21 onwards, outlined in the report, needed to be treated with some caution.

The Council had a strong track record of prudent financial management and delivering savings early. This had enabled the use of reserves to support a planned and managed approach to addressing the financial challenges and this would continue.

Cabinet had considered this matter at its meeting held on 22 February 2018 and a copy of the relevant minute extract had been circulated to Members.

Moved by Councillor Bob Cook, seconded by Councillor Jim Beall:-

1. That 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. A 2018/19 Council Tax requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council of £85,292,114 be approved.
3. A 2018/19 Council Tax requirement for Stockton-on-Tees Borough

Council inclusive of Parish Precepts (£831,506) of £86,123,620 be approved.

4. The 2018/19 budget and indicative 2018/22 MTFP as outlined in paragraphs 77-80 and the use of borrowing to fund the one-off pressures set out in paragraph 76 be approved.

Business Rate Relief System

5. The changes introduced in the 2017 Spring and Autumn budgets be noted.

Taxation

SBC

6. The Council Tax for Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council prior to Parish, Fire and Police Precepts be increased by 5.9%, which includes the Government Levy of 3% in respect of Social Care, i.e. to £1,543.88 at Band D (£1,029.26 at Band A) be approved.

Fire, Police & Parish

7. The Police precept of £12,515,270 which equates to a Council Tax of £226.54 at Band D (£151.03 at Band A) be noted.

8. The Fire precept of £4,153,341 which equates to a Council Tax of £75.18 at Band D (£50.12 at Band A) be noted.

9. The Parish precepts as set out in paragraph 100 of the budget report be noted.

Capital

10. The Capital Programme attached at Appendix A & B be approved.

Organisational and HR

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

Members Allowances

12. Members allowances be frozen for 2018/19.

Council Tax - Statutory Requirements

13. The statutory requirements for Council Tax as shown in Appendix D be approved.

Treasury Management/Prudential Code

14. The Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision

Statement, Investment Strategy, Treasury Management Practices and Prudential Indicators for 2018/19 – 2019/20 as set out in Appendix E to the report be approved.

Cabinet at its meeting held on 22 February had RESOLVED that:-

15. The Officer Appointments to Outside bodies and governing bodies at Appendix C(1) be noted and approved.

Moved by Councillor Elsi Hampton, seconded by Councillor Sally Ann Watson that the substantive motion be amended as follows:-

Additional Recommendations

1. Generate annual revenue savings of £420,000 in 2018/19 rising to £715,000 from 2019/20 through implementing the reductions outlined below.
2. Allocate £1m for further investment in Ingleby Barwick Leisure Centre.
3. Revise the MTFP as outlined in paragraph 77 of the report to reflect the changes as presented in paragraph 10 below.

Detail

4. The costs of communication and media support be reduced by £100,000 from £193,000 per year. Full year effect from 2019/20, 8 months saving from 2018/19.
5. The level of promotional printing be reduced by £180,000 from £240,000 per year from 2018/19.
6. Reduce the level of committee paper printing by £40,000 from £60,000 per year from 2018/19.
7. Reduce the spend on SIRF by £195,000 to £300,000, from 2019/20, reflecting that commitments are already in place for 2018/19.
8. The Medium Term Financial Plan currently includes a saving of £225,000 to be delivered by 2020/21 for Senior Management. It is proposed that an additional reduction of £200,000 per year to be made to management costs as soon as possible. For 2018/19, given the time required to implement this change, 8 months saving is included.
9. It is proposed to utilise the annual savings generated above to make further investment in Ingleby Barwick Leisure Centre of £1m.

10. The Medium Term Financial Plan outlined in paragraph 77 of the report would be revised as follows:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	£	£	£	£
Budget Gap per report	0	1,476	4,757	3,078
Savings				
Comms Team	(67)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Promotional Printing	(180)	(180)	(180)	(180)
Committee Printing	(40)	(40)	(40)	(40)
SIRF	0	(195)	(195)	(195)
Senior Managers	(133)	(200)	(200)	(200)
Total Savings	(420)	(715)	(715)	(715)
Additional Investment – Leisure Centre	420	580		
Updated Budget Gap	0	1,341	4,042	2,363

The above changes would mean a balanced budget in 2018/19, and a reduced gap from 2019/20 onwards.

All other recommendations remained the same as the substantive motion.

A recorded vote then took place on the amendment to the substantive motion.

For the amendment:-

Councillors John Gardner, Lynn Hall, Elsie Hampton, Tony Hampton, Maurice Perry, Laura Tunney, Sally Ann Watson, Julia Whitehill and Bill Woodhead.

Against the amendment:-

Councillors Helen Atkinson, Sonia Bailey, Paul Baker, Louise Baldock, Chris Barlow, Jim Beall, Derek Brown, Carol Clark, Chris Clough, Bob Cook, Nigel Cooke, Gillian Corr, Evaline Cunningham, Ian Dalgarno, Phil Dennis, Ken Dixon, Kevin Faulks, Lisa Grainge, David Harrington, Dianne Hewitt, Barbara Inman, Mohammed Javed, Eileen Johnson, Paul Kirton, Ann McCoy, Mick Moore, Kathryn Nelson, Steve Nelson, Jean O'Donnell, Ross Patterson, Paul Rowling, Mike Smith, Andrew Stephenson, Norma Stephenson, Mick Stoker, Marilyn Surtees, Sylvia Walmsley, Paul Weston, David Wilburn, Norma Wilburn and Barry Woodhouse.

The amendment was not carried.

Moved by Councillor Lynn Hall, seconded by Councillor Bill Woodhead that the substantive motion be amended as follows:-

Additional Recommendations

1. Generate annual revenue savings of £98,000 from reductions in members allowances outlined below.

2. Utilise the saving generated to fund an additional 3 enforcement officers at a cost of £90,000 and retain the remaining £8,000 to support community safety equipment.

Detail

3. Remove Vice Chairs Special Responsibility Allowance and this would generate savings of £28,000.

4. Apply a 10% reduction to all other Member allowances which would generate a saving of £70,000.

5. Use of savings above to fund the appointment of an additional 3 enforcement officers at a cost of £30,000 each which totals £90,000 and the remaining £8,000 allocated to support community safety equipment such as CCTV.

All other recommendations remained the same as the substantive motion.

A recorded vote then took place on the amendment to the substantive motion.

For the amendment:-

Councillors Phil Dennis, John Gardner, Lynn Hall, Elsie Hampton, Tony Hampton, Maurice Perry, Andrew Stephenson, Laura Tunney, Sally Ann Watson, Julia Whitehill and Bill Woodhead.

Against the amendment:-

Councillors Helen Atkinson, Sonia Bailey, Paul Baker, Louise Baldock, Chris Barlow, Jim Beall, Derek Brown, Carol Clark, Chris Clough, Bob Cook, Nigel Cooke, Gillian Corr, Evaline Cunningham, Ian Dalgarno, Ken Dixon, Kevin Faulks, Lisa Grainge, David Harrington, Dianne Hewitt, Barbara Inman, Mohammed Javed, Eileen Johnson, Paul Kirton, Ann McCoy, Mick Moore, Kathryn Nelson, Steve Nelson, Jean O'Donnell, Ross Patterson, Paul Rowling, Mike Smith, Norma Stephenson, Mick Stoker, Marilyn Surtees, Sylvia Walmsley, Paul Weston, David Wilburn, Norma Wilburn and Barry Woodhouse.

The amendment was not carried.

A recorded vote then took place on the substantive motion.

For the substantive motion:-

Councillors Helen Atkinson, Sonia Bailey, Paul Baker, Louise Baldock, Chris Barlow, Jim Beall, Derek Brown, Carol Clark, Chris Clough, Bob Cook, Nigel Cooke, Gillian Corr, Evaline Cunningham, Ian Dalgarno, Ken Dixon, Kevin Faulks, Lisa Grainge, David Harrington, Dianne Hewitt, Barbara Inman, Mohammed Javed, Eileen Johnson, Paul Kirton, Ann McCoy, Mick Moore, Kathryn Nelson, Steve Nelson, Jean O'Donnell, Ross Patterson, Paul Rowling, Mike Smith, Norma Stephenson, Mick Stoker, Marilyn Surtees, Sylvia Walmsley, Paul Weston, David Wilburn, Norma Wilburn and Barry Woodhouse.

Against the substantive motion:-

Councillors Phil Dennis, John Gardner, Lynn Hall, Elsie Hampton, Tony Hampton, Andrew Stephenson, Laura Tunney, Sally Ann Watson, Julia Whitehill and Bill Woodhead.

Abstention:-

Councillor Maurice Perry

The motion was carried.

RESOLVED:-

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