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FULL COUNCIL

13 DECEMBER 2023

Present: Councillors O'Callaghan (Chair), Bishop (Vice-Chair), Bacon, Barnett, Batsford, Beaney, Beaver, Cannan, Carr, Collins, Cooke, Edwards, Evans, Fernando, Foster, Haffenden, Hay, Hilton, Jobson, Marlow-Eastwood, Patmore, Roark, Rogers, Sinden, Turner, Webb, Williams and Willis.

In attendance: Jane Hartnell (Chief Executive), Kit Wheeler (Chief Finance Officer), and Mary Kilner (Chief Legal Officer).

35. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies received from Councillors Arthur, Pragnell, Rankin and Roberts.

36. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 22nd November 2023 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record of the proceedings.

37. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

38. BUDGET SAVINGS PROPOSALS

The Mayor proposed that the Council suspends Rule 16.6b of the Constitution for the duration of the item, allowing any proposed amendments to be open for discussion at the same time, seconded by Councillor Beaver.

RESOLVED that Council suspends Rule 16.6b of the Constitution to permit the original motion and any proposed amendments to be on the table and open for discussion at the same time.

The Mayor proposed that the Council proceed as if in committee in to take advice from officers, seconded by Councillor Barnett.

RESOLVED that under Rule 16.14 of the Constitution the Council proceed as if in committee.

Councillor Barnett proposed approval of the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Willis.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7pm and the meeting reconvened at 7.09pm.

The Mayor proposed that the meeting return to Full Council mode, seconded by Councillor Batsford.

RESOLVED that the meeting return to Full Council mode.

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Councillors debated the budget savings proposals as recommended by Cabinet. Councillor Beaver proposed that the question be now put, seconded by Councillor Edwards.

RESOLVED that the question now be put.

The Mayor moved to the vote.

RESOLVED (by 14 votes for, with 14 abstentions):

Full Council approve the draft Budget Savings proposals and those that can be implemented as soon as practicably possible.

Reasons:

1. Current estimates are that £4m savings are required to cover the council's budget deficit in 2024/25. This deficit has been largely created by cuts in local government funding over the past decade and more recently exacerbated by the housing and homelessness crisis in Hastings.
2. Due to the seriousness of the council's budget position, proposals for addressing the funding gap have been brought forward for earlier consideration. This will enable the council to start work on implementing the agreed proposals before the start of the new financial year and will positively impact on our ability to achieve savings in the timescale required.

39. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Minute 23 of Cabinet on 4th December 2023, Fees and Charges, was not called for discussion.

(The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 7.22pm)