

FULL COUNCIL

21 FEBRUARY 2018

Present: The Right Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Judy Rogers) in the Chair, Councillors Sinden, Batsford, Chowney, Clark, Davies, Forward, Howard, Dowling, Poole, Roberts, Sabetian, Scott, Street, Turner, Webb, Wincott, Beaver, Charman, Lee, Fitzgerald, Beaney, Atkins, Edwards, Clarke, Dowling, Bacon, Patmore and Rankin

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor Cartwright, Cooke and Westley

Apologies for lateness had been received from Councillor Davies.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Councillors declared an interest in the minutes:

Councillor	Committee	Minute	Interest
Rankin	Full Council, 21 February 2018	65, Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19	Personal – he operates a property business as a landlord and agent
Edwards	Full Council, 21 February 2018	65, Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19	Personal – he operates a property business as a landlord
Webb	Full Council, 21 February 2018	63, Draft Corporate Plan 2018/19 – 2020/21	Personal – he is a councillor at East Sussex County Council
Scott	Full Council, 21 February 2018	63, Draft Corporate Plan 2018/19 – 2020/21	Personal – he is a councillor at East Sussex County Council

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31. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN 2018/19 - 2020/21

Councillor Rogers, the Right Worshipful the Mayor, proposed a motion, seconded by Councillor Beaver, and agreed unanimously as follows: -

RESOLVED that in order to facilitate full discussion on cabinet's proposal for the corporate plan and any proposed amendment to cabinet's recommendations, council suspends Rule 16(6)(b) of council procedure rules (only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of) to permit the Deputy Leader's motion and all amendments to be on the table and open for discussion at the same time.

Councillor Forward proposed a motion, seconded by Councillor Roberts, that the recommendations set out in minute number 63, draft corporate plan 2018/19 – 2020/21, of budget cabinet on 12 February 2018 be approved.

RESOLVED (by 22 votes for to 7 against, with 1 abstention) that:

- 1. Full council approves that the content of the content of the draft document presented to budget cabinet form the basis of the council's corporate plan 2018/19 – 2020/21.**
- 2. That delegated authority is given to the Director of Corporate Services and Governance, after consultation with the Leader of the Council to make further revisions as is considered necessary to the attached plan prior to publication to reflect decisions made on the council's budget.**
- 3. That all those who submitted views as part of the consultation process be thanked for their contribution.**

The reason for this decision was:

The council needs to approve the corporate plan as its statement of Hastings Borough Council's strategic direction to 2021.

32. REVENUE BUDGETS 2017/18 (REVISED) AND 2018/19, PLUS CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19 TO 2019/20

Councillor Rogers, the Right Worshipful the Mayor, proposed a motion, seconded by Councillor Beaver, and agreed unanimously as follows: -

RESOLVED that in order to facilitate full discussion on cabinet's proposal for the revenue budget and capital programme and any proposed amendment to cabinet's recommendations, council suspends Rule 16(6)(b) of Council Procedure Rules (only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of) to permit the Deputy Leader's motion and all amendments to be on the table and open for discussion at the same time.

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Councillor Rogers, the Right Worshipful the Mayor, proposed a motion, seconded by Councillor B Dowling, that the council proceed as if in committee at the start of the debate, in order for members to take advice from the Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues.

The Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues presented a report on the revenue budgets 2017/18 (revised) and 2018/19, plus the capital programme for 2018/19 to 2020/21. The report gave an overview of the key factors impacting on the budget and updated members on the council's progress to achieve further efficiencies and generate additional income. Members were also advised of amendments to the report, following receipt of the final council tax figures from the other precepting authorities.

Councillor Chowney proposed a motion, seconded by Councillor Charman, that minute number 64, Revenue Budgets 2017/18 (Revised) and 2018/19, plus Capital Programme 2018/19 to 2019/20, of budget cabinet on 12 February 2018 be approved, subject to the amendments set out by the Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues.

Councillor Lee proposed an amendment to the budget, seconded by Councillor Edwards, as follows: -

1. The Council resolves to make necessary staffing and supplies and services reductions for the 2018/19 year amounting to:

Staffing savings of £673,200 (17.3 FTE's)
Supplies and Services net reductions of £56,200

There are however some areas of increased expenditure proposed, the ongoing costs to be met from some of the savings identified above :

The Council resolves to:

- (i) Reopen and refurbish Harold Place toilets at an estimated cost of £150,000 funded from the Capital Reserve.
The subsequent maintenance and cleaning of the toilets £75,000 per annum
Less the estimated income from installing turnstiles £14,600 per annum
Total net running costs in a full year would be £60,400 per annum
- (ii) Reinstate planning notice letters at a cost of £13,000

The net overall ongoing saving from these measures amounting to £701,300 in 2018/19 and an estimated £656,000 in a full year. The budget deficit being reduced from £1,038,763 to £337,463 in 2018/19 and to £380,000 in 2019/20

The proposed amendment was lost by 7 votes to 22 votes against with 0 abstentions. Councillors Atkins, Beaver, Martin Clarke, Edwards, Lee, Patmore and Rankin voted in favour of the amendment. Councillors Bacon, Batsford, Beaney, Lee Clark, Chowney, Davies, B Dowling, T Dowling, Fitzgerald, Forward, Howard, Poole,

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Roberts, Rogers, Sabetian, Scott, Sinden, Street, Turner, Webb and Wincott voted against the amendment.

The motion proposed by the Leader of the Council was approved by 21 for, to 7 against with 1 abstention. Councillors, Bacon, Batsford, Beaney, Chowney, Davies, Fitzgerald Forward, Howard, Poole, Roberts, Rogers, Sabetian, Scott, Sinden, Street, Turner, Webb and Wincott voted in favour of the motion. Councillors Atkins, Beaver, Martin Clarke, Edwards, Lee, Patmore and Rankin voted against the motion. Councillor Lee Clark abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED (by 21 votes for, to 7 against, with 1 abstention) that: -

1. Approve the revised revenue budget for 2017/18 (Appendix A)
2. Approve the draft 2018/19 revenue budget (Appendix A)
3. Approve a 2.99% increase in the borough council's part of the Council Tax
4. Agree that the absolute minimum level of reserves that shall be retained be £6m (plus General Fund Balance) i.e. an increase of £1m from 2017/18
5. Approve the Capital programme 2017/18 (revised) to 2020/21 (Appendix P)
6. Approve the proposed expenditure from the Renewal and repairs reserve, and Information Technology Reserve (Appendices J and I respectively) and those items from other reserves shown in Appendix H that can proceed without further reference to cabinet or Council
7. Approve that the use of the monies in the budget and Reserves for "Invest to Save" schemes be determined by the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council
8. Approve the revised Land and Property Disposal Programme (Appendix L), and agree that disposals can be brought forward if market conditions make it sensible to do so.
9. Agree that schemes marked with asterisk in the Capital Programme can proceed without further reference to cabinet or Council.
10. Agree that work on Priority Income and Efficiency Reviews (PIER) through the Strategic Budget Group should continue, and where possible identify a sustainable budget for a period in excess of one year. A mid-year review, for members and officers, to be undertaken in light of the continuing severe government grant reductions.
11. Approve the detailed recommendations in Appendix M, which relate to the setting of Council Tax in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992 (updated or full Council)
12. Approve that the budget be amended as necessary to reflect the final grant figures including Disabled Facility Grants.
13. Approve an increase in the Council Tax premium chargeable for long term empty properties to 200% (from 150%), subject to the required legislation being in place along with sufficient time to undertake annual billing

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The reason for this decision was:

1. Major reductions in funding in 2018/19 are set to continue into 2019/20 and beyond and this will impact heavily upon the council's ability to provide services and grants across all areas of existing activity.
2. Since 2010/11 funding has been reduced by more than 65% in cash terms on a like for like basis. To ensure key corporate priorities are achieved it remains imperative that the limited resources available are properly targeted.
3. The council needs to be in a position to match its available resources to its priorities across the medium term and to maintain sufficient reserves and capacity to deal with potentially large and unexpected events in addition to fluctuations in income and expenditure levels
4. The council is exposed to a much greater degree of volatility in the level of funding it receives through Non Domestic Rates. In addition it is also exposed to a much higher degree of volatility in terms of Council Tax Support claims – the council now receiving an upfront sum as part of the annual grant settlement rather than reimbursement of actual costs. The potential downside risks of Brexit and the increased reliance on income streams provide further potential volatility to the council's future funding.

33. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The Mayor having called over the remaining minutes set out in the agenda, the under mentioned minutes were reserved for discussion.

Meeting	Minute	Councillor
Budget cabinet, 12 February 2018	65 (C) – Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19	Lee
Budget cabinet, 12 February 2018	66 (C) - Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy	Lee

Minute number 65 of budget cabinet on 12 February 2018, Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19, was a matter on which the council was required to make a decision. Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the minute, seconded by Councillor Turner, and agreed by 21 votes for, to 7 against, with 1 abstention.

Minute number 66 of budget cabinet on 12 February 2018, Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy, was a matter on which the council was required to make a decision. Councillor Chowney proposed approval of the minute, seconded by Councillor Poole, and agreed unanimously.

(The Mayor declared the meeting closed at. 8.52 pm)