Minutes

Name of meeting	**FULL COUNCIL**
Date and Time	**WEDNESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2022 COMMENCING AT 5.00 PM**
Venue	**COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT**
Present	Cllrs G Brodie (Chairman), C Critchison (Vice-Chairman), D Adams, D Andre, J Bacon, M Beston, P Brading, V Churchman, I Dore, R Downer, W Drew, S Ellis, P Fuller, A Garratt, S Hastings, S Hendry, C Jarman, J Jones-Evans, P Jordan, J Lever, M Lilley, K Love, K Lucioni, J Medland, C Mosdell, J Nicholson, M Oliver, T Outlaw, G Peace, L Peacey-Wilcox, D Pitcher, M Price, R Quigley, C Quirk, R Redrup, J Robertson, P Spink, I Stephens and I Ward

54. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2022 be approved.

55. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations made at this stage.

It was noted that the Monitoring Officer had on 21 January 2022 granted all councillors a four-year dispensation under section 33 (2) of the Localism Act 2011 to remain in the meeting room and to speak and vote on the budget including setting the council tax or a precept under Local Government and Finance Act 1992 (or any subsequent legislation), notwithstanding the existence of any disclosable pecuniary interest(s).

56. **Public Question Time - Maximum 15 Minutes for Written Questions and 15 Minutes for Oral Questions**

Cllr Cameron Palin from East Cowes asked a question regarding the use of glyophosates weed killer on the Island, a petition had been signed by over 3,200 people. The Cabinet Member advised that the use of weed killer was within the contract and waivers or deed of variation would need to be sought to change the contract, currently there had been no agreed way forward outside contractual obligations.

Cllr Palin asked a supplementary question that other authorities had found alternative ways to deal with weeds and asked that an alternative way be looked into. The Cabinet Member for Highways PFI and Transport infrastructure advised that they were in discussions to find a sustainable solution, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Heritage and Waste Management advised he shared the views made by the public questioner however he understood the contractual reasons, he supported looking at better ways to do this, better alternatives needed to be found.

57. **Chairman's Official Announcements**

The Chairman advised his report had been circulated prior to the meeting and he had nothing further to add.

58. **Leaders Update Report (20 minutes)**

The Leader advised that funding by the community safety from the Police Crime Commissioner for specific projects for the protection of Women had been agreed.

She acknowledged this would be the last meeting of the Council's Chief Executive.

Questions were raised regarding the Kickstart programme and apprenticeships within the Council, the Leader provided figures of apprenticeships within the council and schools, especially 45 on the Kick Start programme.

Councillor Pitcher asked a question regarding the governments levelling up white paper and the option through the Islands forum, the Leader thanked Councillor Pitcher for not just asking the question, but in also providing a solution, she explained that he would be leading on this.

The Leader was asked to share her experiences with mental and physical violence, she explained that she had not experienced physical violence, however while in business women would speak with her regarding situations at home.

Councillor Jordan asked the Leader to explain the personal alarm she now carried, she advised the Chamber that she had contacted the police regarding an issue which had made her feel unsafe and due to concerns for her wellbeing, the alarm was for reassurance.

59. **Budget and Council Tax Setting 2022-2023 and Future Years Forecasts**

A 2022/23 Budget and Council Tax Setting report had been received from the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council. Amendments had been submitted by Councillor Dore, Conservative group and Councillor Garratt, the amendments had been accepted by the Section 151 Officer as being legal and presented a balanced budget.

The Leader advised that both Councillor Dore and Councillor Garratt had withdrawn their alternative budget proposals. She also advised that £170,000 from the capital budget would be allocated to flooding in Binstead, it being confirmed by the Director of Finance this was achievable.

The Leader spoke on the budget proposals recommended by the Cabinet.

The proposer of the amendment spoke on their budget proposal.

The ungrouped councillors were invited to make comment on the budget proposals,

Other members of the council also made comment on the budget proposals.

The Leader, the proposer of the amendment and the other group leaders then summed up.

The Leader moved the recommendation by Cabinet which was duly seconded.

An amendment to the proposal attached as Amendment 2 (and forming part of these minutes) was moved by Councillor Robertson and duly seconded.

A named vote was taken the results were as follows:

For (19)
Cllrs Michael Beston, Paul Brading, Geoff Brodie, Vanessa Churchman, Warren Drew, Suzie Ellis, Steve Hastings, Stephen Hendry, Clare Mosdell, John Nicholson, Martin Oliver, Tig Outlaw, Gary Peace, Matthew Price, Chris Quirk, Ray Redrup, Joe Robertson, Peter Spink, Ian Ward

Against (19)
Cllrs David Adams, Debbie Andre, Jonathan Bacon, Claire Critchison, Ian Dore, Rodney Downer, Paul Fuller, Andrew Garratt, Chris Jarman, Julie Jones-Evans, Phil Jordan, Joe Lever, Michael Lilley, Karl Love, Karen Lucioni, John Medland, Lora Peacey-Wilcox, Richard Quigley, Ian Stephens

Abstain (1)
Cllr Daryll Pitcher

The vote was tied, in accordance with the Council's Constitution the Chairman used his casting vote and voted for the amendment.

The Conservative amendment then became the substantive motion.

A named vote was taken the result of which was as follows:

For (34)
Cllrs Jonathan Bacon, Michael Beston, Paul Brading, Geoff Brodie, Vanessa Churchman, Claire Critchison, Warren Drew, Ian Dore, Rodney Downer, Suzie Ellis, Steve Hastings, Stephen Hendry, Chris Jarman, Julie Jones-Evans, Phil Jordan, Joe Lever, Michael Lilley, Karl Love, Karen Lucioni, John Medland, Clare Mosdell, John Nicholson, Martin Oliver, Tig Outlaw, Lora Peacey-Wilcox, Gary Peace, Matthew Price, Richard Quigley, Chris Quirk, Ray Redrup, Joe Robertson, Peter Spink, Ian Stephens, Ian Ward.

Against (5)
Cllrs David Adams, Debbie Andre, Paul Fuller, Andrew Garratt, Daryll Pitcher

RESOLVED:

1. THAT the Council approve the following:

(a) The revised Revenue Budget for the financial year 2021/22 and the Revenue Budget for the financial year 2022/23 as set out in the General Fund Summary (Appendix 1 amended) which included:

(i) A Revenue Contribution to Capital of £2.0m, to support the provision of housing affordable to Island residents

(ii) The COVID Contingency estimated at £9.1m, to guard against continuing and legacy risks

Appendix 1 (Amended) included the following changes listed in the tables below:

i) *Additional Savings - Reductions to Budget Estimates*

Indicative Portfolio Savings Proposal	Impact on Level of Service & Service Outcomes	2022/23	2023/24 & Future Years
		£	£
Strategic Finance, Corporate Resources & Transformational Change			
New	Reduced Revenue Contribution to Capital	(185,000)	
	Total	**(185,000)**	**0**

ii) Additional Costs - Additions to Budget Estimates

Saving No.	Increases to Portfolio Budgets	2022/23 £	2023/24 & Future Years £
Strategic Finance, Corporate Resources & Transformational Change			
48	Re-instate proposed staffing reductions - Contact Centre	25,000	
Planning & Community Engagement			
New	Increase additional Planning staff (beyond the £100,000investment already provided for)	100,000	
New	Independent review of Brownfield Sites to deliver significant numbers of homes for Islanders at affordableprices	60,000	

Total	**185,000**	**0**

(b) Any variation arising from the Local Government Finance Settlement 2022/23 or any further savings made in 2021/22 arising at the year-end (after allowing for specific carry forward requests) be transferred to the Revenue Reserve for Capital, COVID Contingency, Transformation Reserve, and General Reserves with the level of each transfer to be determined by the S.151 Officer.

(c) That the level of Council Tax be increased by 1.99% for general purposes in accordance with the referendum threshold[1] for 2022/23 announced by Government (as calculated in Appendix 2)

(d) That the level of Council Tax be increased by a further 1.0% beyond the referendum threshold (as calculated in Appendix 2) to take advantage of the flexibility offered by Government to implement a "Social Care Precept"; and that in accordance with the conditions of that flexibility, the full amount of the associated sum generated of £905,600 is passported direct to Adult Social Care

(e) That the amounts set out in Appendix 2 be now calculated by the Council for the financial year 2022/23 in accordance with Section 31 and Sections 34 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992

(f) The S.151 Officer be given delegated authority to implement any variation to the overall level of Council Tax arising from the final notification of the Hampshire Police & Crime Commissioner, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority and Parish and Town Council precepts, and amend the calculations set out in Appendix 2 accordingly

(g) The savings proposals for each Portfolio amounting, in total, to £2,975,000 for 2022/23 and continuing into future years as set out on the next page:

Portfolio	**Controllable Budget**	**Savings Proposal**	
	£	**£**	**%**
Adult Social Care & Public Health*	52,585,029	1,730,900	3.3%
Children's Services, Education & Lifelong Skills*	26,518,026	375,900	1.4%
Community Protection, Digital Transformation, Housing Provision & Housing Needs	13,007,237	182,000	1.4%
Environment, Heritage & Waste Management	8,087,817	304,500	3.8%
Highways PFI, Transport & Infrastructure**	12,255,527	50,900	0.4%
Leader & Strategic Partnerships	806,763	0	0.0%

[1] **Council Tax increases beyond the referendum threshold can only be implemented following a "Yes" vote in a local referendum**

Planning & Community Engagement	2,061,733	11,000	0.5%
Regeneration, Business Development & Tourism	4,787,226	234,300	4.9%
Strategic Finance, Corporate Resources & Transformational Change	12,726,167	85,500	0.7%
Grand Total	**132,835,525**	**2,975,000**	2.2%

*Excludes the additional funding passported through to Adult Social Care of £3.7m (which if included would result in an overall increase of 3.7%) and the additional funding for Children's Services, Education & Skills of £2.3m (which if included would result in an overall increase of 7.3%)

** Excludes £19.4m of PFI grant funding, on a Gross expenditure basis the savings amounts to 0.2%

(h) Directors be instructed to start planning how the Council will achieve the savings requirements of £6.0m for the 3 year period 2023/24 to 2025/26 and that this be incorporated into Service Business Plans

(i) The minimum level of Revenue Balances as at 31 March 2023, predicated on the approval of £3.0m savings in 2022/23 and the retention of the COVID Contingency of £9.1m, be set at £7.0m to reflect the known and expected budget and financial risks to the Council

(j) Members have regard for the "Statement of the Section 151 Officer in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003"

(k) The Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2026/27 set out in Appendix 5 (amended) which includes all additions, deletions and amendments for slippage and re-phasing

(l) The new Capital Investment Proposals ("New Starts") - 2022/23 set out in Appendix 4 be reflected within the recommended Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2026/27 and be funded from the available Capital Resources, be amended to reflect the following changes:

Scheme Description - Reductions & Additions		**Increase / (Decrease) in Corporate Resources**	**Total Corporate Resources Allocated**
		£	**£**
Reductions / Deletions to Proposed CapitalSchemes:			
28	Reduce Equity Capital for new HousingCompany	(1,185,000)	1,315,000
Additional Capital Scheme Proposals (New):			

29	Housing - Increase the borrowing facility for theprovision of affordable homes subject to individual programme and project business cases	15,000,000	40,000,000
38	Rights of Way - Increase provision to restore and improve access paths to Island beaches, torestore and improve footpaths, bridleways and rights of way	500,000	575,000
New	Provision for planting trees and restoring hedgerows on Council-owned land that is notsuitable for housing	500,000	500,000
Total Overall Change		**14,815,000**	

(m)The allocation of Disabled Facilities Grants be made to the Better Care Fund, and reflected within the recommended Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2026/27

(n) The S.151 Officer be given delegated authority to determine how each source of finance is used to fund the overall Capital Programme and to alter the overall mix of financing, as necessary, to maximise the flexibility of capital resources used and minimise the ongoing costs of borrowing to the Council

(o) That the S.151 Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council be given delegated authority to release capital resources held back for any contingent items that might arise, and also for any match funding requirements that may be required of the Council in order to secure additional external capital funding (e.g. bids for funding from Government or the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership).

(p) The Capital Strategy 2022/23, including the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement contained therein (Appendix 6)

(q) The Investment Strategy 2022/23 (Appendix 7)

(r) That delegated authority be given to the S. 151 Officer to make any necessary changes to either the Investment Strategy or the Capital Strategy in accordance with the proposed changes to the capital programme set out in the amendment.

2. It is recommended that the Council note the following in respect of the Council's Budget:

(a) The Revenue Budget 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 has been prepared on the basis of a 2.99% increase in Council Tax, any reduction from the overall 2.99% Council Tax increase proposed will require additional savings of £905,600 for each 1% reduction in order for the Budget 2022/23 to be approved

(b) The Revenue Forecasts for 2023/24 onwards as set out in the section entitled "Revenue Forecasts 2023/24 to 2025/26" and Appendix 1

(c) The estimated Savings Requirement of £6.0m for the three year period 2023/24 to 2025/26, for financial and service planning purposes, be phased as follows:

Financial Year	**In Year Savings Requirement £m**	**Cumulative Saving £m**
2023/24	2.0	2.0
2024/25	2.0	4.0
2025/26	2.0	6.0

(d) The Transformation Reserve held to fund the upfront costs associated with Spend to Save Schemes and Invest to Save Schemes holds a very modest uncommitted balance of £4.4m and will only be replenished from contributions from the Revenue Budget and an approval to the transfer of any further savings at year end

(e) Should the Council elect to reduce the level of savings below £2.0m in 2023/24 (and £2.0m p.a. thereafter), the Council's financial risk will increase and therefore the minimum level of General Reserves held will also need to increase in order to maintain the Council's financial resilience

(f) The Council Tax base for the financial year 2022/23 will be 53,879.9 [item T in the formula in Section 31 B(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")].

(g) The Council Tax element of the Collection Fund for 2021/22 is estimated to be in surplus by £582,900 which is shared between the Isle of Wight Council (85.7%) and the Police & Crime Commissioner (10.9%) and the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority (3.4%)

(h) The Business Rate element of the Collection Fund for 2021/22 is estimated to be in deficit by £6,842,482

(i) The Retained Business Rate income[2] for 2022/23 based on the estimated Business Rate element of the Collection Fund deficit as at March 2022, the Non Domestic Rates poundage for 2022/23 and estimated rateable values for 2022/23 has been set at £31,140,075.

(j) The Equality Impact Assessment (attached at Appendix 8).

Adjournment

The Chairman called for an adjournment

60. **Report of the Chairman of Audit Committee**

[2] Includes Retained Business Rates of £16,196,499, "Top Up" of £11,695,357, S.31 Grants of £10,090,701 a Collection Fund deficit of £6,842,482

60a **Future External Audit Arrangements from 2023/24**

The Audit Committee Chairman introduced the report and proposed the recommendation which was duly seconded, a vote was taken the result of which was:

RESOLVED:

THAT the Council accepted Public Sector Audit Appointments' (PSAA) invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 1 April 2023.

61. **Interim arrangements following the impending departure of the Chief Executive**

The Leader moved the paper and proposed the recommendation which was duly seconded.

Councillors thanked the Chief Executive (John Metcalfe) for all the work he had done during his time with the Isle of Wight Council.

A vote was taken and the result of which was as follows:

RESOLVED:

(i) THAT Wendy Perera, Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Strategy be designated and appointed to undertake the statutory role of Head of Paid Service on a temporary basis, such appointment taking effect immediately upon the Chief Executive's departure.

(ii) THAT Wendy Perera, Assistant Chief Executive and Director of Strategy be appointed to act as the interim Chief Executive with all roles and powers of the post of Chief Executive, such appointment taking effect immediately upon the Chief Executive's departure.

(iii) THAT these interim arrangements be reviewed no more than 12 months following their commencement.

62. **Report of the Monitoring Officer**

62a **Nominations and Appointments to Committee and Other Bodies**

RESOLVED:

THAT those named in Appendix 1 be appointed to those Committees.

63. **Member Question Time (30 minutes)**

Councillors Robertson, Ellis and Drew asked the Leader questions relating to a recent media story regarding an image shared on her personal social media account, the Leader stated the question had not been submitted in advance of the

meeting and was not in relation to budget or policy and would therefore not answer the question.

The Chairman expressed his concern that the questions were not being answered as he considered the equality and diversity impact to the council to be important, he asked that the questioners put their questions in writing for a written response, which the Leader agreed she would undertake.

Councillor Jones-Evans asked about the plans regarding the lack of housing on the Island, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Protection, Digital Transformation, Housing Provision and Housing Needs advised that empty properties were being looked at and brought back into use, Camphill site was currently unavailable and as stated in the approved budget, money would be spent on looking into brown field sites across the Island.

Councillor Garratt understood the situation regarding the Camphill site, however he requested that green field areas needed to be protected.

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Protection, Digital Transformation, Housing Provision and Housing Needs advised that he believed an independent consultant would review brown field sites on the Island.

Councillor Mosdell asked if the Leader and Cabinet member for Highways PFI, Transport and Infrastructure would attend a meeting with Newchurch Parish Council before any decision was made regarding weight restrictions through the village, the Leader advised they would be happy to attend a meeting.

Councillor Peacey-Wilcox asked Councillor Nicholson as Chairman of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Health and Social Care for an update on dentistry. He advised that there had been a lack of meaningful response from commissioners on the Island. He had concerns regarding the primary care model, he highlighted that many GP surgeries were private practices commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Councillor Fuller advised that a Councillors Planning Strategy briefing was being arranged in March, the Leader advised that she was aware and supportive.

Councillor Jordan asked Councillor Nicholson if he would assist with patient travel to the mainland for treatment? He was advised that it had been raised as a concern at the Policy and Scrutiny Committee and was on the Committee’s workplan.

Councillor Spink asked a question regarding the Planning Strategy briefing and requested sight of the draft plan and formal response from the task and finish group prior to the briefing. The Cabinet Member for Planning and Community Engagement advised that the intention was to supply the draft plan as early as possible.

Councillor Pitcher asked that a solution be found with the residents of New Road, who were impacted on the work that had now been postponed until 2023, the Cabinet Member for Highways PFI, Transport and Infrastructure advised that they would seek to find the best solution

The Chairman asked that Councillor Andre as a member of the Health and Wellbeing Board accept his thanks to the way she has addressed adult learning and child poverty within his ward, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Lifelong skills advised that she would accept his thanks and thanked officers for a pilot project that had been set up.

CHAIRMAN