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## SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

### Meeting of The Council

**Date: Thursday, 20th February, 2025**

**Place: Council Chamber - Civic Suite**

**Present:** Councillor R Woodley (Chair)  
Councillors Sam Allen, S W Allen, S Ayles, S Badger, M Borton, L Burton, C Campbell, O Cartey, P Collins, J Courtenay, D Cowan, T Cox, M Davidson, A Dear, M Dent, F Evans, M Faulkner-Hatt, N Folkard, I Ferguson, D Garston, I Gilbert, S Habermel, L Hyde, A Jones, D Jones, P Kinsella, R Longstaff, J McMahan, R McMullan, J Moyies, C Mulroney, K Murphy, S Nadeem, D Nelson, C Nevin, J Norman, M O'Connor, D Poulton, D Richardson, K Robinson, M Sadza, L Salter, M Terry, S Wakefield, N Ward, J Warren and C Webster

**Start/End Time:** 7.00pm - 11.40pm

#### **117 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Berry, Buck and Harland.

#### **118 Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were made:

- (a) Cllr Borton – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26-2029/30) – South Essex Homes Board Member.
- (b) Cllr Garston – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26-2029/30) – son is a Member of Leigh Town Council.
- (c) Cllr Gilbert – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26 – 2029/30) – works for Member of Parliament.
- (d) Cllr A Jones – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26 – 2029/30) – South Essex Homes Board Member.
- (e) Cllr Kinsella – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26 – 2029/30) – relative employed by the Council.
- (f) Cllr Norman – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26-2029/30) – South Essex Homes Board Member.
- (g) Cllr Mulroney – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26-2029/30) – Member of Leigh Town Council.
- (h) Cllr Wakefield – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26-2029/30) – sub-contractor for South Essex Homes.

(i) Cllr Faulkner-Hatt – Minute 122 (Budget Proposals 2025/26-2029/30) – Relative employed by the Council and works for a charity supporting children and families with additional needs.

(j) All officers present – Minute 123 (Pay Policy Statement 2025/26)

## **119 Communications**

### Departure of Colin Gamble – Head of Democratic Services

The Mayor informed Councillors that Colin Gamble, Head of Democratic Services would be leaving the Council shortly and this was his last Full Council meeting.

On behalf of the Council, The Mayor expressed his appreciation and thanks to Mr Gamble for his sterling work and excellent service and wished him all the very best for the future.

## **120 Questions from Members of the Public**

The relevant Cabinet Members responded to written questions received from the public.

## **121 Questions from Members of the Council**

The relevant Cabinet Member responded to a written and supplementary question received from Councillor Longstaff.

## **122 Budget Proposals - 2025/26 to 2029/30**

The Council considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) presenting the Cabinet's revenue budget and Council Tax level for 2025/26 financial year and a Capital Investment Programme for 2025/26 to 2029/30, including the associated Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management arrangements, together with Minutes 90 to 92 of Cabinet held 11 February 2025.

In accordance with Standing Order 3.21 four amendments had been submitted to the Budget, which were circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting and table this evening (the amendments were also added as a supplementary document on the Council's website).

The amendments were voted on by way of a named vote as required by law. The voting was as follows:

### **Budget Amendment 1**

For amendment 1:

Cllrs Stuart Allen, Campbell, Cartey, Courtenay, Cox, Davidson, Dear, Evans, Folkard, Garston, Habermel, D Jones, Longstaff, McMahon, Moyies, Murphy, Nelson, Salter and Warren (19).

Against amendment 1:

Cllrs Sam Allen, Aylen, Badger, Borton, Burton, Collins, Cowan, Dent, Faulkner-Hatt, Ferguson, Gilbert, Hyde, A Jones, Kinsella, Webster, McMullan, Mulroney, Nadeem, Nevin, Norman, O'Connor, Poulton, Richardson, Robinson, Sadza, Terry, Wakefield and Ward (28)

Abstentions

Cllr Woodley (1)

Budget amendment 1 was not carried.

**Budget Amendment 2**

For amendment 2:

Cllrs Aylen, Campbell, Cartey, Courtenay, Cox, Davidson, Dear, Evans, Folkard, Habermel, D Jones, McMahon, Moyies, Murphy, Nelson, Salter, Warren (17)

Against Amendment 2:

Cllr Sam Allen, Stuart Allen, Badger, Borton, Burton, Collins, Cowan, Dent, Faulkner-Hatt, Ferguson, Garston, Gilbert, Hyde, A Jones, Kinsella, Webster, McMullan, Mulroney, Nadeem, Nevin, Norman, O'Connor, Poulton, Richardson, Robinson, Sadza, Terry, Wakefield, Ward (29).

Abstentions:

Cllr Longstaff and Cllr Woodley (2).

Budget amendment 2 was not carried.

**Budget Amendment 3:**

For amendment 3:

Cllrs Aylen, Campbell, Cartey, Cox, Evans, Garston, D Jones, McMahon, Moyies, Nelson, Warren (11).

Against amendment 3:

Cllrs Sam Allen, Stuart Allen, Badger, Borton, Burton, Collins, Courtenay, Cowan, Davidson, Dear, Dent, Faulkner-Hatt, Ferguson, Folkard, Gilbert, Habermel, Hyde, A Jones, Kinsella, Webster, Longstaff, McMullan, Mulroney, Murphy, Nadeem, Nevin, Norman, O'Connor, Poulton, Richardson, Robinson, Sadza, Salter, Terry, Wakefield, Ward (36).

Abstentions:

Cllr Woodley (1).

Budget amendment 3 was not carried.

## **Budget Amendment 4:**

### For amendment 4:

Cllrs Ayles, Cartey, Courtenay, Cox, Davidson, Dear, Evans, Folkard, Garston, Habermel, D Jones, McMahon, Moyies, Nelson, Salter, Warren (16).

### Against amendment 4:

Cllrs Sam Allen, Stuart Allen, Badger, Borton, Burton, Campbell, Collins, Cowan, Dent, Faulkner-Hatt, Ferguson, Gilbert, Hyde, A Jones, Kinsella, Webster, Longstaff, McMullan, Mulroney, Nadeem, Nevin, Norman, O'Connor, Poulton, Richardson, Robinson, Sadza, Terry, Wakefield, Ward (30).

### Abstentions:

Cllrs Murphy and Woodley (2).

Budget amendment 4 was not carried.

The budget proposals were then voted on by way of a named vote as required by law. The voting was as follows:

### For the Budget Proposals:

Cllrs Sam Allen, Ayles, Badger, Borton, Burton, Cowan, Dent, Evans, Faulkner-Hatt, Ferguson, Gilbert, Hyde, A Jones, Kinsella, Webster, McMullan, Mulroney, Nadeem, Nevin, Norman, O'Connor, Poulton, Richardson, Robinson, Sadza, Terry, Wakefield, Ward (29).

### Against the budget proposals:

Cllrs Campbell, Cartey, Courtenay, Cox, Davidson, Dear, Folkard, Garston, Habermel, D Jones, McMahon, Moyies, Murphy, Nelson, Salter, Warren (16).

### Abstentions:

Cllrs Stuart Allen, Longstaff and Woodley (3).

The Council Budget 2025/26 proposals were carried, as set out as follows:

Resolved:

1. That the Section 151 Officer's statement on the robustness of the proposed budget, the adequacy of the Council's reserves and the Council's Reserves Strategy, as set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved.

2. That a 2025/26 revenue budget (Appendices 2 and 3(i) to (iii)), be approved:

- A Council Tax increase of 4.99% for the Southend-on-Sea element of the Council Tax for 2025/26, being 2.99% for general use and 2.0% for Adult Social Care.
- The use of £1.4 million of the collection fund surplus for the 2025/26 budget.
- Note the increase in the Council Tax level of 5.99% for the precepting authority the Essex Fire & Rescue Services.
- Note the increase in the Council Tax level of 5.66% for the precepting authority the Essex Police.

- Note the increase in the Council Tax level of 2.90% for Leigh-on-Sea Town Council.

3. That the final levy position for 2025/26, be approved.
4. That a Capital Investment Programme for 2025/26 to 2029/30, as set out in Appendix 4(i) and (ii) to the report, be approved.
5. That the recommendations of Cabinet held 11 February 2025 for the HRA and associated rent levels, service charges and heating charges, Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators, be approved.
6. That the Statutory Budget Determinations and amount of Council Tax for Southend-on-Sea City Council (set out below), be approved.
7. That the Council's five-year financial forecast, as set out in Appendix 6 to the report, and associated Medium Term Financial Strategy, be approved.
8. That the direction of travel for 2026/27 and beyond and the approach to the ongoing implementation of the Council's transformation programme based on a range of core guiding principles and including proactive management of demand for social care services, be approved.

#### Council Tax Resolutions:

1. That it be noted that on 13 January 2025 the Cabinet calculated the Council Tax Base for 2025/26 as:
  - (a) For the whole Council area as 60,860.63.
  - (b) For dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates (Leigh Town Council) as 9,104.04.
2. That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2025/26 (excluding town/parish precepts) be determined as £109,472,450.
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2025/26 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the Act):
  - (a) £467,099,790 - Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by town/parish councils.
  - (b) -£357,142,550 - Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
  - (c) £109,957,240 - Being the amount by which the aggregate of 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year (including town/parish precepts).

(d) £1,806.71 - Being the amount at 3(c) above, divided by the Council Tax Base shown at 1(a) above, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including town/parish precepts)

(e) £484,790 - Being the aggregate amount of all special items (town/parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Annex 1)

(f) £1,798.74- Being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the Council Tax Base shown at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Town/Parish precept relates.

4. That it be noted that the Essex Police and Crime Commissioner and the Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Act for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below.

Essex Police Authority

Band A: 173.58; Band B: 202.51; Band C: 231.44; Band D: 260.37; Band E: 318.23; Band F: 376.09; Band G: 433.85; Band H: 520.74.

Essex Fire Authority

Band A: 58.38; Band B: 68.11; Band C: 77.84; Band D: 87.57; Band E: 107.03; Band F: 126.49; Band G: 145.95; Band H: 175.14.

5. That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Act, sets the aggregate amounts shown below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2025/26 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings:

Band A: 1,431.12; Band B: 1,669.64; Band C: 1,908.16; Band D: 2,146.68; Band E: 2,623.72; Band F: 3,100.76; Band G: 3,577.80; Band H: 4,293.36.

6. That the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2025/26 be determined as not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Act, and as shown in the calculation below:

(a) Percentage increase defined by the Secretary of State as constituting an excessive increase for 2025/26: 5% (comprising 2% for the Adult Social Care Precept and 3% for other expenditure).

(b) Percentage increase in the Council's basic amount of Council Tax:

2024/25 amount £1,713.24

2025/26 amount £1,798.74

Percentage increase: 4.99%

The figure at 6(b) is less than the figure at 6(a) above and therefore the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2025/26 is not excessive and no referendum is required.

7. That the amounts payable in each town/parish at each band, comprising aggregate sums derived from all precepts, be determined as set out below:

Unparished area:

Band A: 1,431.12; Band B: 1,669.64; Band C: 1,908.16; Band D: 2,146.68; Band E: 2,623.72; Band F: 3,100.76; Band G: 3,577.80; Band H: 4,293.36.

Parished area:

Band A: 1,466.62; Band B: 1,711.06; Band C: 1,955.49; Band D: 2,199.93; Band E: 2,688.80; Band F: 3,177.68; Band G: 3,666.55; Band H: 4,399.86.

**123 Pay Policy Statement 2025/26**

The Council considered a report of the Executive Director (Strategy and Change) presenting the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26 in the context of the Council's overall Reward Strategy.

Resolved:

That the Pay Policy Statement for 2025/26, be approved.

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

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