

Public Document Pack

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Legal & Democratic Services

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02 March 2020

THE COUNCIL - THURSDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 2020 SUPPLEMENTARY PACK: AGENDA ITEMS 4 AND 5: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AGENDA ITEM 8: PROPOSED BUDGET AMENDMENTS 2020/21

Please find enclosed, for consideration at the next meeting of the The Council taking place on Thursday, 20th February, 2020, the following papers that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

Agenda No Item

4 Questions from Members of the Public (Pages 1 - 2)

Questions and answers attached

5 Questions from Members of the Council (Pages 3 - 4)

Questions and answers attached

**8 Prioritising Resources to Deliver Better Outcomes - 2020/21 to 2024/25
(Pages 5 - 8)**

Proposed budget amendments attached

Robert Harris
Principal Democratic Services Officer

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

4

Council Meeting – 20th February 2020

Question 1 from Mrs Judith McMahon to the Leader of the Council

Question

In the Administration's un-amended budget proposals, where is the new money for remediation measures for Kursaal residents whose health, wellbeing and safety will be primarily impacted by the avalanche of traffic they will suffer from the Queensway underpass closure?

Answer

The Queensway scheme is still being developed with further public consultation that started yesterday. The proposals will be subject to a planning application and the planning process but no adverse impact is expected in regards to the health, wellbeing and safety of Kursaal residents.

In fact it is hoped that the plans to regenerate the estate will improve connections to the town centre and significantly improve pedestrian safety for example.

Question 2 from Mrs Judith McMahon to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning

Question

How much money and how many signs has the Administration set aside for new signage specifically designed to inform about protection of wildlife, especially Swans and Anatidae in our Southend waters given the information I have brought to the Administration's attention over the past Civic year?

Answer

We do have wildlife signage in our parks including signage educating people on the correct feed for swans and other water fowl and since April 2018, we have spent over £6,000 on park signage.

We will continue to provide information where appropriate and will be rolling out a programme of signage to promote bio diversity pollinator friendly projects in the coming year. We will ensure that all signage fits in with the parks and is environmentally friendly.

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS
Council Meeting – 20th February 2020

Question 1 from Councillor Ayles to the Cabinet Member for Business, Culture and Tourism

Question

At the last meeting of the Council (17th December 2019) the Cabinet member for business and tourism rejected any involvement with the 400 year Mayflower celebrations, even to the point of recommending Southenders go to Harwich.

The loss of revenue to Southend by this action will affect the budget in many ways.

Could the Cabinet member explain how this loss will be made up?

Answer

There was no financial forecast for the Mayflower celebrations in the budget. There are therefore, no losses to make up.

Question 2 from Councillor Ayles to the Cabinet Member for Business, Culture and Tourism

Question

The Cabinet Member for business and tourism has reinstated on Southend Pier a second station that was deleted due to cost.

This has reduced the budget available for the pier train replacement and what I believe urgent track updating.

Has the Cabinet Member put into the budget an extra allowance to especially cover track updating and ensure passenger safety?

Answer

The second station was not deleted due to cost, the works were paused whilst the Administration and I considered the overall pier options. We continue to invest in the Pier and this budget demonstrates our commitment which includes ongoing maintenance as required to operate safely.

Council Budget – 2020/21 to 2024/25

8

Budget amendment to the proposed 2020/21 General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget

Proposed by Councillor Cox and Seconded by Councillor Davidson

£'s

Revenue Budget Amendment

1. Crime & Disorder

Special Police Constables **0**

To agree in principle to amend the Council Tax Base for 2021/22 to allow for the introduction of a discount on the Council Tax paid by Special Police Constables residing in the Borough. The relevant criteria of the scheme, discount to be applied and the cost impact on Council Tax income to be assessed as part of the setting of the 2021/22 Council Tax base and revenue budget.

Police Officers **115,000**

That the Council work and negotiate with Essex Police with a funding contribution to enable the recruitment of an additional 4 officers to allow the new officers to work in the Southend-on-Sea area.

Community Safety team **5,000**

That the current team is expanded by volunteers and that a minor sum is set aside to provide for the relevant running costs such as training, equipment, etc.

2. Traffic & Parking

Town Centre On-Street Parking **0**

In all roads off the High Street between Royal Terrace and Queens's Road to remove all relevant yellow lines and replace with additional parking bays to also include the provision of disabled parking bays. This would be with 2 hours free parking and no return within 4 hours. The minor cost of the line marking to be prioritised within the existing Highways budget.

Town Centre Car Parks **18,000**

To provide free car parking every day from 1st November to the end of February in Short Street car park, Pitman's Close car park and London Road North car park, as a pilot scheme for 2020/21 and then to include this proposal as part of the budget for 2021/22.

Mayors Vehicle 0

To change the Mayors vehicle to an electric vehicle in two years' time and to either buy or lease the vehicle depending upon the most advantageous financial position at that time. Any capital investment to be financed by borrowing and any potential external funding with the associated financing and running costs. The scheme is to be subject to a viable business case and is to be added into the Capital Investment Programme under the heading of schemes subject to a viable business case. If a lease option then the relevant revenue sums to be considered as part the relevant budget setting process.

Total of revenue budget amendment 138,000

Capital Budget Amendment

3. High Street Regeneration

1. Amphitheatre and viewing screen 0

To consider the development of an amphitheatre at the top of the High Street to host large scale events such as open air theatre, celebrations, festivals. The development is also to include a large TV screen to enable the screening of sporting world cups, royal events, etc. The overall capital investment to be financed by borrowing and any potential external funding with the associated financing and running costs. The scheme is to be subject to a viable business case and is to be added into the Capital Investment Programme under the heading of schemes subject to a viable business case.

2. Repaving of the High Street 0

A rolling highways programme to repave the whole of the High Street financed by borrowing or any other applicable external funding with the associated financing and running costs. The scheme is to be subject to a viable business case and is to be added into the Capital Investment Programme under the heading of schemes subject to a viable business case.

3. Empty Properties on the High Street 0

To purchase empty properties on the High Street by using Compulsory Purchase Orders to enable those properties to be used for a start-up business scheme. The overall capital investment to be financed by borrowing and any potential external funding with the associated financing and running costs. The scheme is to be subject to a viable business case and is to be added into the Capital Investment Programme under the heading of schemes subject to a viable business case.

Total of capital budget amendment 0

Funding Proposal

That the additional increase in revenue expenditure of £138,000 be offset as follows;

1. The use of £120,000 from the Business Transformation Reserve to support the proposed pilot scheme of police officers and community safety team on page 1 and that the proposal is built into the budget for 2021/21.
2. The use of £18,000 from the Business Transformation Reserve to support the proposed pilot scheme in the Town Centre car parks.

Total of funding proposal **(138,000)**

Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) statement pursuant to Standing Order 10.1(e)

I can confirm that as the Council's S151 Officer, that the proposal would not produce an unbalanced or unsound budget and that I am still able to state that the overall budget proposed is still sufficiently robust but challenging for approval by the Council.

Joe Chesterton

Executive Director - Finance & Resources (S151 Officer)

19th February 2020

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