

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of The Council

Date: Thursday, 24th February, 2022

Place: Council Chamber - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor M Borton (Chair)
Councillors B Beggs, M Berry, H Boyd, K Buck, S Buckley, L Burton, P Collins, J Courtenay, D Cowan, T Cowdrey, T Cox, M Davidson, A Dear, M Dent, F Evans, K Evans, N Folkard, D Garne, D Garston, S George, I Gilbert, S Habermel, T Harp, B Hooper, D Jarvis, A Jones, M Kelly, J Lamb, A Line, D McGlone, K Mitchell, A Moring, C Mulrone, D Nelson, C Nevin, L Salter, I Shead, M Terry, A Thompson, S Wakefield, C Walker, N Ward, J Warren, P Wexham, R Woodley and K Robinson

Start/End Time: 6.30 - 9.34 pm

709 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Moyies and Stafford.

710 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:

- Councillor Cowdrey

People Scrutiny Committee – 8th February 2022

Minute 673 (Draft Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Primary carer for service user and involved in negotiating service complaints and appointed to Foster Care Panel;

Cabinet – 15th February 2022

Minute 705 (Draft Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Primary carer for service user and involved in negotiating service complaints;

- Councillor K Evans

Place Scrutiny Committee – 7th February 2022

Minute 660 (Draft Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Member of Leigh Town Council;

Cabinet – 15th February 2022

Minute 705 (Draft Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Member of Leigh Town Council;

- Councillor Gilbert

Cabinet – 13th January 2022

Minute 604 (Draft HRA and Rent Setting) and Minute 605 (Draft Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Employee of business near the High Street and GMB union member;

Cabinet – 15th February 2022

Minute 704 (HRA and Rent Setting) and Minute 705 (Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: GMB union member;

- Councillor Jones

Cabinet – 13th January 2022

Minute 605 (Draft Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Son works for C2C;

Council – 24 February 2022

Minute 720 (Pay Policy Statement) – Non-pecuniary interest: two children are employed by the Council;

- Councillor Mulronee

Cabinet – 13th January 2022

Minute 605 (Draft Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Member of Leigh Town Council and Council appointee to Southend Tourism Partnership;

Place Scrutiny Committee – 7th February 2022

Minute 660 (Draft Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Member of Leigh Town Council and Council appointee to Southend Tourism Partnership;

Cabinet – 15th February 2022

Minute 705 (Prioritising Resources 2022/23 to 2026/27) - Non-pecuniary interest: Member of Leigh Town Council;

- Councillor Mitchell

Council – 24 February 2022

Minute 714 (Prioritising Resources to Deliver Better Outcomes 2022/23 to 2026/27) – Non-pecuniary interest: Daughter is a resident in supported accommodation and linked to associated adult social care.

711 Communications

Minutes Silence – Mrs Joan Carlile

The Council remained silent for one minute as a mark of respect to Mrs Joan Carlile, former Councillor and Mayor of Southend-on-Sea in 1984-1985, who sadly passed away recently.

712 Questions from Members of the Public

The Leader responded to a written question received from a member of the public.

713 Questions from Members of the Council

There were no questions from Councillors at this meeting.

714 Prioritising Resources to Deliver Better Outcomes 2022/23 to 2026/27

The Council considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) presenting the Cabinet's revenue budget and Council Tax for 2022/23 financial year, together with Minutes 604 and 605 of Cabinet held 13 January 2022 and Minutes 703 to 705 of Cabinet held on 15 February 2022, and Scrutiny Minutes 660, 673, 694 and 695.

The Council suspended the relevant parts of Council Procedure Rule 10 to permit the extended budget speeches of the Leader of the Council and of the Leader of the Opposition Group.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.1(e) Councillor Cox, had submitted two amendments to the Budget.

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

Amendment 1: Pay and Display Tariff Standardisation

For amendment 1:

Cllrs Beggs, Boyd, Buck, Buckley, Courtenay, Cox, Davidson, Dear, F Evans, Folkard, Garne, Garston, Habermel, Jarvis, Lamb, McGlone, Moring, Nelson, Salter, Walker and Warren (21)

Against amendment 1:

Cllrs Berry, Burton, Collins, Cowan, Cowdrey, Dent, K Evans, George, Gilbert, Harp, Hooper, Jones, Kelly, Line, Mitchell, Mulrone, Nevin, Robinson, Shead, Terry, Thompson, Wakefield, Ward, Wexham and Woodley (25)

Abstentions:

Cllr Borton (Mayor) (1)

Absent

Cllrs Moyies and Stafford (2)

Amendment 1 was not carried.

Amendment 2: Seaways

For amendment 2:

Cllrs Beggs, Boyd, Buck, Buckley, Courtenay, Cox, Davidson, Dear, F Evans, K Evans, Folkard, Garne, Garston, Habermel, Jarvis, Lamb, McGlone, Moring, Nelson, Salter, Walker and Warren (22)

Against amendment 2:

Cllrs Berry, Burton, Collins, Cowan, Cowdrey, Dent, George, Gilbert, Harp, Hooper, Jones, Kelly, Line, Mitchell, Mulroney, Nevin, Robinson, Shead, Terry, Thompson, Wakefield, Ward, Wexham and Woodley (24)

Abstentions:

Cllr Borton (Mayor) (1)

Absent

Cllrs Moyies and Stafford (2)

Amendment 2 was not carried.

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

For the budget:

Cllrs Berry, Burton, Collins, Cowan, Cowdrey, Dent, K Evans, George, Gilbert, Harp, Hooper, Jones, Kelly, Line, Mitchell, Mulroney, Nevin, Robinson, Shead, Terry, Thompson, Wakefield, Ward, Wexham and Woodley (25)

Against the budget:

Cllrs Beggs, Boyd, Buckley, Courtenay, Cox, Davidson, Dear, F Evans, Folkard, Garne, Garston, Habermel, Jarvis, Lamb, McGlone, Moring, Nelson, Salter, Walker and Warren (20)

Abstentions:

Cllr Borton (Mayor) and Buck (2)

Absent:

Cllrs Moyies and Stafford (2)

The Council Budget 2022/23 proposals were carried, as set out as follows:

Resolved:

With regard to the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2022/23 and rent setting:

1. That an average rent increase of 4.10% on all tenancies, be approved.
2. That an average rent increase of 4.10% on shared ownership properties, be approved.
3. That an increase of 4.10% for garage rents to £12.70 per week for tenants and £15.24 for non-tenants (being £12.70 plus VAT), a rise consistent with the proposal for the main rent increase (all variants on a standard garage will receive a proportionate increase), be approved.
4. That the South Essex Homes core management fee at £6,648,000 for 2022/23, be approved.
5. That the South Essex Homes proposals for average increases of 10.88% in service charges, be approved.
6. That the South Essex Homes proposals for an average 16.95% reduction in heating charges for sheltered housing tenants and an average 4.42% increase in heating charges for hostel tenants to reflect the actual costs incurred, be approved.
7. That the following appropriations, be approved:
 - £60,000 to the Repairs Contract Pensions Reserve.
 - £2,978,000 to the Capital Investment Reserve.
 - £8,309,000 from the Capital Investment Reserve.
8. That, subject to resolutions 1 through to 7 above, the HRA budget for 2022/23, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report to Cabinet on 15 February 2022, be approved.
9. That the value of the Council's capital allowance for 2022/23 be declared as £76,915,000 as determined in accordance with regulation 16 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations.

With regard to Treasury Management 2022/23:

10. That the Treasury Management Policy Statement 2022/23, set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report to Cabinet on 15 February 2022, be approved.
11. That the Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23, set out at Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.
12. That the Annual Treasury Management Investment Strategy 2022/23, set out at Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.

With regard to the General Fund Revenue Budget 2022/23:

13. That the Financial Sustainability Strategy 2022 – 2032, set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report to Cabinet on 15 February 2022, be approved.

14. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 – 2026/27, set out at Appendix 2 to the report, and the resulting Medium Term Financial Forecast and estimated Earmarked Reserves Balances up to 2026/27 (Annexes 1 and 2 to Appendix 2 to the report), be approved and that any final minor changes/updates of this Strategy as required, be delegated to the Executive Director (Finance & Resources).

15. 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 (Appendix 3 to the report), be noted.

16. That the appropriation of the sums to earmarked reserves totalling £2.675M (Appendix 4 to the report), be approved.

17. That the appropriation of the sums from earmarked reserves totalling £4.988M, which includes £2.500M that was previously approved to support the budget in 2021/22 and is now requested to be used to support the estimated budget gap for 2022/23 instead (Appendix 4 to the report), be approved.

18. That a General Fund Budget Requirement for 2022/23 of £140.288M and Council Tax Requirement of £91.844M (Appendix 5 to the report), be approved.

19. That it be noted that the 2022/23 revenue budget has been prepared based on using £1.500 million from accumulated Collection Fund surpluses for the core budget to allow for a smoothing of the budget gap across the next four financial years.

20. That a Council Tax increase of 3.99% for the Southend-on-Sea element of the Council Tax for 2022/23, being 1.99% for general use and 2.00% for Adult Social Care, be approved.

21. That it be noted that the position of the Council's preceptors has been determined as follows:

- Essex Police – proposed Council Tax increase of 4.79%
- Essex Fire & Rescue Services – proposed Council Tax increase of 1.95%
- Leigh-on-Sea Town Council – proposed Council Tax increase of 0.71%

22. That no Special Expenses be charged other than Leigh-on-Sea Town Council precept for 2022/23.

23. That the proposed General Fund revenue budget investment of £13.422M (Appendix 6 to the report), be approved.

24. That the proposed General Fund revenue budget savings and income generation initiatives for 2022/23 of £4.837M (Appendix 7 to the report), be approved.

25. That the proposed future outline Budget Transformation Programme 2023/24 – 2026/27 (Appendix 8 to the report), be approved.

26. That the proposed range of fees and charges for 2022/23 (Appendix 9 to the report), be approved.

27. That the Dedicated Schools Grant budget and its relevant distribution as recommended by the Education Board (Appendix 10 to the report), be approved.

28. That the Capital Investment Strategy for 2022/23 to 2026/27 (Appendix 11 to the report) and the Capital Investment Policy (Annex 1 to Appendix 11), be approved.

29. That the proposed new schemes and additions to the Capital Investment Programme for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27 totalling £12.6M for the General Fund (Appendix 12 to the report), be approved.

30. That the new schemes subject to viable business cases totalling £33.9M (£15.5M for the General Fund and £18.4M for the Housing Revenue Account) (Appendix 12 to the report), be approved.

31. That the proposed changes to the current Capital Investment Programme (Appendix 13 to the report), be approved.

32. That the proposed Capital Investment Programme for 2022/23 to 2026/27 of £124.4M to be delivered by the Council and £52.4M to be delivered by Subsidiary Companies, Partners and Joint Ventures (Appendix 14 to the report) of which £55.2M is supported by external funding, be approved.

33. That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2022/23 (Appendix 15 to the report) and the prudential indicators (Appendix 16 to the report), be approved.

34. That the operational boundary and authorised limits for borrowing for 2022/23 which are set at £385M and £395M respectively (Appendix 16 to the report), be approved.

With regard to the Council Tax 2022/23:

35. That it be noted that on 13 January 2022 the Cabinet calculated the Council Tax Base 2022/23:

(a) for the whole Council area as 59,086.74

(b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates (Leigh Town Council) as 8,890.46.

36. That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022/23 (excluding town/parish precepts) be determined as £91,843,838.

37. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the Act):

(a) £380,332,680 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) -£288,035,962 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.

(c) £92,296,718 being the amount by which the aggregate of 37(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 37(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) £1,562.05 being the amount at 37(c) above, divided by the Council Tax Base shown at 35(a) above, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including town/parish precepts).

(e) £452,880 being the aggregate amount of all special items (town/parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act set out below:

Band A: 33.96; Band B: 39.62; Band C: 45.28; Band D: 50.94; E: 62.26; Band F: 73.58; Band; G: 84.90; Band H: 101.88

(f) £1,554.39 being the amount at 37(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 37(e) above by the Council Tax Base shown at 35(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.

38. That it be noted that the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner has 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 in the table below:

Essex Police: Band A: 145.68; Band B: 169.96; Band C: 194.24; Band D: 218.52; Band E: 267.08; Band F: 315.64; Band G: 364.20; Band H: 437.04

Essex Fire: Band A: 50.22; Band B: 58.59; Band C: 66.96; Band D: 75.33; Band E: 92.07; Band F: 108.81; Band G: 125.55; Band H: 150.66

39. That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Act, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2022/23 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings:

Band A: 1,232.16; Band B: 1,437.52; Band C: 1,642.88; Band D: 1,848.24; Band E: 2,258.96; Band F: 2,669.68; Band G: 3,080.40; Band H: 3,696.48

40. That the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 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 2022/23: 3-6% (Comprising 1-4% for the Adult Social Care Precept and 2% for other expenditure).

For Southend-on-Sea Borough Council the 2021/22 Council Tax increase included 2% for the Adult Social Care precept and the remaining 1% increase in Adult Social Care precept was deferred to the 2022/23 financial year. Therefore, the percentage increase defined by the Secretary of State as constituting an excessive increase for 2022/23 for this Council is 4%.

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

2021/22 amount £1,494.72

2022/23 amount £1,554.39

Percentage increase: 3.99%

The figure at 40(b) is less than the figure at 40(a) above and therefore the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is **not excessive** and no referendum is required.

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

Unparished area: Band A: 1,232.16; Band B: 1,437.52; Band C: 1,642.88; Band D: 1,848.24; Band E: 2,258.96; Band F: 2,669.68; Band G: 3,080.40; Band H: 3,696.48;

Parished area: Band A: 1,266.12; Band B: 1,477.14; Band C: 1,688.16; Band D: 1,899.18; Band E: 2,321.22; Band F: 2,743.26; Band G: 3,165.30; Band H: 3,798.36.

715 Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held Thursday, 13 January 2022

Resolved:

That minutes 604 and 605, be noted.

716 Minutes of the meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee held Monday, 7 February 2022

Resolved:

That minute 660, be noted.

717 Minutes of the meeting of People Scrutiny Committee held Tuesday, 8 February 2022

Resolved:

That minute 673, be noted.

718 Minutes of the meeting of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held Thursday, 10 February 2022

Resolved:

That minutes 694 and 695, be noted.

719 Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held Tuesday, 15 February 2022

Resolved:

That minutes 703, 704 and 705, be noted.

720 Pay Policy Statement 2022/23

The Council considered a report of the Executive Director (Transformation) presenting the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 in the context of the Council's overall Reward Strategy.

Resolved:

That the Pay Policy Statement as recommended by the Senior Manager Pay Panel, be approved.

Chair: _____