

# **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

## **CABINET**

These minutes are draft until confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting.

Thursday, 13th February, 2020

### **Present:**

Councillor Dine Romero	Council Leader and Liberal Democrat Group Leader
Councillor Rob Appleyard	Cabinet Member for Adult Services
Councillor Tim Ball	Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning, and Economic Development
Councillor Neil Butters	Cabinet Member for Transport Services
Councillor Paul Crossley	Cabinet Member for Community Services
Councillor Richard Samuel	Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Sarah Warren	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services
Councillor David Wood	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services
Councillor Joanna Wright	Cabinet Member for Transport Services

### **64 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **65 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Democratic Services Manager drew attention to the evacuation procedure as set out in the Agenda.

### **66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Kevin Guy.

### **67 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Monitoring Officer issued a general dispensation for all Councillors with regard to their payment of Council Tax. She also issued a further dispensation with regard to any Councillors in receipt of specific services and invited them to make any such declarations.

Councillor Tim Ball declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to the social care budget item, being in receipt of a related service.

Councillor Sarah Warren declared an interest in relation to the schools and the music service budget.

Councillor Richard Samuel declared an interest in relation to the budget, being the holder of a bus pass.

Councillor Liz Hardman, in attendance at the meeting, declared an interest in her capacity as a Governor at Aspire Academy.

**68 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

There was none.

**69 QUESTIONS FROM PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS**

There were 9 questions from Councillors and 1 question from a member of the public.

*[Copies of the questions and responses, including supplementary questions and responses if any, have been placed on the Minute book as Appendix 1 and are available on the Council's website.]*

**70 STATEMENTS, DEPUTATIONS OR PETITIONS FROM PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS**

Councillors Karen Walker and Sarah Bevan made a joint statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes and on the Council's website*] setting out their wish list for projects in Peasedown St John to be included within the forthcoming Council budget. They raised various queries about specific projects. In response to these issues, Councillor Jo Wright invited Councillors Karen Walker and Sarah Bevan to meet her and Councillor Neil Butters to review their issues. Councillor Richard Samuel noted the comments and queries from the Councillors. He explained that the budgets were built at portfolio level and subject to prioritisation. He responded that he would look into their queries and get back to them.

Ian Barrett, Chief Executive of Avon Wildlife Trust, made a statement [*a copy of which is attached to the Minutes and on the Council's website*] This statement was made at the Corporate Strategy item later in the meeting.

**71 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING**

On a motion from Councillor Rob Appleyard, seconded by Councillor Tim Ball, it was

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**72 CONSIDERATION OF SINGLE MEMBER ITEMS REQUISITIONED TO CABINET**

There were none.

### **73 MATTERS REFERRED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY BODIES**

Councillor Paul Myers, as Chair of the Corporate Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel, addressed the Cabinet about the Budget session that had taken place at the Panel on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020. He reported that it was a good meeting. The Panel had suggested that, in future, some comparative figures be provided to enable them to more easily spot trends and set the figures in context. They were concerned about the £20k music service saving and how this would impact on families. He also raised points about localised flooding and road damage, the empty homes review and electric car charging points. He thanked officers for their input.

### **74 SINGLE MEMBER CABINET DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE PREVIOUS CABINET MEETING**

The Cabinet agreed to note the report.

### **75 BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX 2020/21 AND FINANCIAL OUTLOOK**

Councillor Paul Myers speaking as a resident of B&NES said that he felt let down by the lack of ambition in this budget. He understood the pressure the Council was facing but had expected this budget to take further the manifesto commitments. He commented that the Council Tax rise will hit the most vulnerable.

Councillor Vic Pritchard raised a query about why the Cabinet were not seeking a higher increase to the social care element of the budget which would then leave residual funding for public health.

In response to Councillor Pritchard's query, Councillor Richard Samuel responded that practice in the past had been to pass forward the public health grant directly to public health, but the announcement expected from Government on 24th February would inform whether this would take place. He did not expect a reduction but needed to have the details first.

Councillor Liz Hardman welcomed some positive aspects of the budget but expressed concern about the efficiency savings in Adult services and wondered if they were achievable.

Councillor Richard Samuel, in presenting this budget to Council, thanked officers, Scrutiny Panel members and the public for their contributions, in spite of the general election meaning that it had not been possible to do the usual range of engagement events. He described a change in direction and new investment areas in climate emergency, transport and housing. He outlined some of the highlights of the budget and explained a move away from cuts to staff and services partly from a Council tax rise, still resulting in the third lowest Council tax in the South West region. He acknowledged the current funding gap for 2021/22 and hoped to be able to close that gap by the Autumn.

Councillor Tim Ball commented that they had not inherited a good legacy with the Park & Ride issue and expressed surprise about the lack of ambition comments. He

commended this forward-looking budget, fully delivering on housing and development over the 4-year term, and one which would benefit all residents.

Councillor Joanna Wright welcomed the real changes in combatting rat running and congestion and was delighted in the focus on walking, cycling and low traffic neighbourhoods. She described the budget as one which was good for health, social justice and the environment.

Councillor Neil Butters supported this budget and thanked Councillor Samuel and Finance officers in bringing this budget forward. Councillor Butters described a steady state being maintained through Highways resurfacing schemes and state of the art gritters.

Councillor David Wood welcomed the extra investment this brought in for the residents of North East Somerset which went towards addressing the imbalance some North East Somerset residents felt.

Councillor Sarah Warren expressed her delight at the funding for climate emergency measures and improved capacity for citizen engagement. She hoped for positive news from Government the following week regarding Bath's Clean Air Zone.

Councillor Rob Appleyard highlighted the focus on prevention within the budget and the Adult Social Care Charging framework which would simplify processes at a very difficult time for people. He thanked key officers who had contributed to bringing this piece of work forward.

Councillor Paul Crossley highlighted the positive news about libraries. He commended the budget for identifying problems and building in early solutions such as the new staff member to address the Ash dieback problem, which would affect 95% of Ash tree cover in the area, offset in part by the replanting scheme. He also commended the Archway project which was coming on stream in this budget year.

Councillor Richard Samuel responded to various points made during debate and called upon his Cabinet colleagues to drive delivery forward.

On a motion from Councillor Richard Samuel, seconded by Councillor Dine Romero, it was

**RESOLVED** (unanimously) that:

1. The Cabinet recommends Council approves –
  - a) The General Fund net revenue budget for 2020/21 of £118.25m and the individual service cash limits for 2020/21 as outlined in Annex 1 of the report;
  - b) The savings and income generation plans outlined in Annex 2(i), priorities 2(ii), one-off allocations 2(iii), pressures 2(iv) in conjunction with the Equalities Impact Assessment Report in Annex 3 of the report;
  - c) An increase in Council Tax of 1.99% in 2020/21 (an increase of £27.88 per Band D property);
  - d) An increase of 1.99% to Council Tax for the Adult Social Care Precept is approved in recognition of the current demands and financial pressures on

this service. This is equivalent to an increase of £27.88 on a Band D property;

- e) The movement in reserves outlined in paragraph 5.5 and the adequacy of Un-earmarked Reserves at £13.5m within a risk assessed range requirement of £12.3m - £13.5m;
  - f) The Efficiency Strategy attached at Annex 4 to the report;
  - g) The Capital Programme for 2020/21 of £109.507m including new and emerging capital bids outlined in Annex 5(i), planned sources of funding in 5.7.2, and notes the programme for 2021/22 to 2024/25 and that any wholly funded projects coming forward during the year will be added to the Capital Programme in line with the Budget Management Scheme;
  - h) The delegation of implementation, subject to consultation where appropriate, of the capital programmes set out in Annex 5(ii) to Annex 5(iv) to the relevant Director in Consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder;
  - i) The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations and amendments outlined in Annex 5(v) of the report;
  - j) The Capital & Investment Strategy attached at Annex 6 of the report;
  - k) The MRP Policy attached at Annex 7 of the report;
  - l) The Capital Prudential Indicators outlined in 5.7.8
  - m) The Annual Pay Policy Statement at Annex 9 of the report;
  - n) The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2020/21 shown in the following link: <http://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-01/Bath%20%26%20NE%20Someset%20S13A%20202021%20v3.pdf> and referred to in 5.3.4;
  - o) The Adult Social Care Charging and Financial Assessment Framework at Annex 10 of the report;
  - p) The Direct Payment Policy at Annex 11 of the report;
2. That the Council include in its Council Tax setting, the precepts set and approved by other bodies including the local precepts of Town Councils, Parish Councils, and Charter Trustees of the City of Bath, and those of the Fire and Police Authorities.
  3. That Cabinet note the S151 Officer's report on the robustness of the proposed budget and the adequacy of the Council's reserves outlined in section 5.6 of the report
  4. Authorise the Council's S151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency, to make any necessary changes to the draft budget proposal for submission to Council.

## **76 B&NES CORPORATE STRATEGY 2020-2024**

Ian Barrett, Chief Executive of Avon Wildlife Trust, was invited to make his statement at this point. (A full copy is available to view online and attached to the minutes). He welcomed the inclusion of the nature emergency in core policies. He described the loss of wildlife populations and ecosystems and called on the Council to declare an ecological emergency. Councillor Sarah Warren explained that the Cabinet were working hard to improve habitats and address ecological issues and enquired if Avon Wildlife Trust would work with them on this. Ian responded that the strength of the Bristol City Council approach was the partnership with other organisation such as key businesses and charities and welcomed this type of approach.

Councillor Dine Romero explained that they had taken their manifesto commitments and translated them into this strategy which she was pleased to present. They would continue to engage communities in taking this forward.

Councillor Richard Samuel explained how this strategy provided the context for the budget, which translated aspirations into reality. It is intentionally high level.

Councillor David Wood thanked Councillor Romero and officers for delivering this strategy which was clearly based on the foundation of the Liberal Democrat manifesto.

On a motion from Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Richard Samuel, it was

**RESOLVED** (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

1. Thank those who provided feedback on the draft Corporate Strategy and agree to continue to work with local communities to ensure their involvement during the strategy's implementation and review;
2. Note the responses and agree the recommendations and next steps following the feedback on the draft strategy, as set out in the Corporate Strategy Engagement Report in Appendix Two;
3. Note and consider the responses from the Policy Development and Scrutiny Panels also set out in the Corporate Strategy Engagement Report in Appendix Two;
4. Recommend that Council adopt the new Corporate Strategy 2020-2024
5. Recommend that Council adopt the new Corporate Delivery Programme 2020-2021.

## **77 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING, CASH LIMITS AND VIREMENTS - APRIL 2019 TO DECEMBER 2019**

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced this item and explained that a good start had been made on his objective to have a closer fit between capital planning and expenditure so that budgets will balance at year end and there will be no need for draw down.

On a motion from Councillor Richard Samuel, seconded by Councillor

**RESOLVED** (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed:

1. To note the 2019/20 on budget position (as at the end of December 2019).
2. To approve the revenue virements listed for approval in Appendix 3(i) and to note those virements listed for information only.
3. To note the capital year-end forecast detailed in paragraph 3.14 of this report;

4. To note the changes in the capital programme including capital schemes that have been agreed for full approval under delegation listed in Appendix 4(i);
5. To remove from the Provisional Capital Programme schemes of £6.663m, detailed in Appendix 4(iii), to align to current delivery expectation.

**78 TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2019-20 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT (MID YEAR UPDATE)**

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced this regular performance report. He explained that a very good presentation had recently taken place to members of the Corporate Audit Committee.

On a motion from Councillor Richard Samuel, seconded by Councillor Dine Romero, it was

**RESOLVED** (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the Treasury Management Report to 31st December 2019, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice.
2. Note the Treasury Management Indicators to 31st December 2019.

**79 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND TREASURY INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2020/21**

Councillor Richard Samuel introduced the Strategy statement which will be recommended to Council. He drew Members' attention to the Municipal Bonds agency which might make borrowing more complicated but may be a potential investment source in the future.

On a motion from Councillor Richard Samuel, seconded by Councillor Dine Romero, it was

**RESOLVED** (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

1. Recommend the actions proposed within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (Appendix 1) to February Council;
2. Note the Treasury Management Indicators detailed in Appendix 1 and delegate authority for updating the indicators prior to approval at Full Council on 25th February 2020 to the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet Member for Resources, in light of any changes to the recommended budget as set out in the Budget Report elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting; and
3. Note that any comments made by the Corporate Audit Committee at their meeting on the 6th February 2020 will be reported to Full Council on the 25th February 2020.

**80 HERITAGE SERVICES REVISED BUSINESS PLAN 2020-2025**

Councillor Paul Crossley introduced this report by celebrating the Council's success in the recent South West Awards with 4 nominations resulting in 4 gold wins. He

commended the excellent leadership and staff and praised the principles and aspiration of the service. He drew particular attention to the Inclusivity award.

On a motion from Councillor Paul Crossley, seconded by Councillor Tim Ball, it was

**RESOLVED** (unanimously) that the Cabinet agreed to:

1. Approve the Heritage Services Business Plan 2020-2025;
2. Confirm that it wishes Heritage Services to continue to work to the business principles agreed by the Council Executive in 2004, as amended;
3. Confirm that it wishes to relocate the Fashion Museum with a supporting Collections Centre subject to a satisfactory business case being prepared.

The meeting ended at 7.55 pm

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date Confirmed and Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Prepared by Democratic Services**