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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 6.00 pm

Attendance:

The Mayor (Councillor Hutchison) (in the Chair)

Councillors Ms Ballard, Beavis, Bradley, Burgess, Casey, Chegwyn, Mrs Cully, Earle, Hammond, Herridge, Mrs Huggins, Hutchison, Hylands, Jessop, Johnston, Miss Kelly, Pepper, Philpott, Scard, Westerby, Durrant, Gledhill, Marshall, Maynard, Bradley and Cox

Also in attendance: Honorary Alderman Dickson.

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR MEMBERS FOR THEIR INABILITY TO ATTEND THE MEETING.

Apologies for non attendance were received from Councillors Raffaelli and Morgan and Honorary Alderman Hook.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Westerby declared a pecuniary interest in agenda items 10, 11 and 12 and left the meeting and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

MAYOR'S COMMUNICATION

The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor for attending the New Year's Day dip.

TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2022.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held on the 15 December 2022 be signed as true and correct records.

TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO. 3.4 AND TO ANSWER PUBLIC QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER NO.3.5, SUCH QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED ORALLY DURING A TIME NOT EXCEEDING 15 MINUTES.

There were none.

QUESTIONS (IF ANY) PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER NO. 3.3

There was one public question in the name of Patrick Davies to Councillor Chegwyn.

This Public Question draws on experience of receiving poor or no response when contacting councillors, or being passed to council employees. Will the Council Leader establish a clear policy making councillors accountable for complaints / requests for information received from residents within their area of responsibility, to include the need for a reasonable time frame for such responses and to keep residents informed of any delays and / or reasons for such delays and to remind all councillors that they are servants to, not masters of, Gosport Borough residents.

Answer: I would hope that no Councillors need reminding that they are not masters of Gosport Borough Council residents. I would hope that all Councillors respond in reasonable time and that Council Officers do likewise. I see no need for a new protocol.

There were 8 Members questions.

Cllr John Beavis

Question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Chegwyn

What plans are in place to reinstate the allotments on the Manor Way Field in Lee on the Solent, how many will there be and when will work start.?

Answer: The work on the allotments will start asap, there were a number of things to look at, including the costings.

Supplementary question: Thank you. I note there is no funding in the Capital programme for allotments, how would they be paid for.

Answer: There is the possibility of using CIL funding and there is money allocated under different headings and that the schemes would be realistic and delivered within a timescale unlike before.

Stephen Philpott

Question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Chegwyn

The report to the Policy & Organisation Board on 22nd September 2022 said that, following an advertised tender process (quote), "TJ Waste have been identified as the winning Tenderer". Without necessarily naming the other companies, please could the Leader of the Council say how many others TJ Waste beat in the tender process?

Answer: I cannot answer that as I took no part in the process.

Supplementary Question: I can, there were no other tenderers in the process, just TJ Waste. Why therefore did the report to the Policy and Organisation Board on 22 September state that there was a winning tender which indicated there were others.

Answer: Thank you for answering the question, I understand there was one other bid, but on assessment it was not valid.

Cllr John Gledhill

Question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Chegwyn

What factors are taken into consideration when deciding which events pay for the use of Council land and which events get the use of the land for free? Who decides this and how is the reasoning behind the decision recorded?

Answer: I refer the Councillor to the debate held on fees and charges.

Supplementary question: Why are you limiting community groups by charging them to use the land, penalizing them.

Answer: We are not limiting them

Cllr Zoe Huggins

Question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Chegwyn

As the Leader confirmed on 15 December 2022 that a meeting has taken place with Parkrun, which was intended to engage the group in discussing seafront parking time changes which were implemented in August 2022.

Can the Leader confirm the date of the meeting held with Parkrun, who attended and the outcome of the meeting?

Answer: The meeting took place in the week after the Council meeting with two representatives of parkrun. It was a good meeting and the attendees understood the reasons for the amended policy.

Cllr Hammond

Question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Chegwyn

Can the Leader please update the Council on plans for Gosport Police Station?

Answer: Things are somewhat confusing, County Councillor Lesley Meenaghan said on Facebook that the Police Station had been saved, and that it would be used as accommodation for the Police and that it had been reported elsewhere that no decision had been made. Concern was therefore expressed that Cllr Meenaghan had stated otherwise. It was hoped that Donna Jones, as Police and Crime Commissioner should be able to confirm the plans for the site and there was also concern that it had been suggested that it would cost £10million to improve the site and redevelop a front desk. Members felt that this would be disappointing if there was not suitable Police Staff to man it.

Supplementary: Can the Leader confirm how many additional PCSOs have been recruited to the Borough.

Answer: There are no confirmed new PCSOs and if there were to be any more they would be replacing those previously cut.

As a point of clarification an email was read from the Police and Crime Commissioner advising that she was aware of what had been published and expressed concern. £10m was a significant sum that could fund alternative police stations and she had no idea where this figure had been stated from. Nothing had been determined for the site.

Cllr Stephen Philpott

Question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Chegwyn

The free Community Skip Scheme was cancelled after 3rd December 2022 and the Council's website still says this was due to "unforeseen circumstances". Would the Leader of Council explain what these unforeseen circumstances were?

Answer: The skips scheme is postponed and not cancelled, due icy weather and ensuring the correct insurance is in place.

Supplementary: The website says that the skips are cancelled and due to unforeseen circumstances, does the Leader of the Council know anything about applying to the Environment Agency for a permit to allow the skips scheme to go ahead. If this is the case, did the skip scheme operate without the required licence prior to the 3 December 2022 which is an offence?

Answer: All aspects of the scheme will be legal when it restarts

Cllr Stephen Philpott

Question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Chegwyn

The report to the Policy & Organisation Board on 22nd September 2022 gave a maximum cost of the free community skip trial, based on a maximum of four skips, as £36,400, but this figure was revised at the meeting to £38,440. The report went on to say that the cost could reduce to £28,080 if the scheme finished earlier. Please could the Leader say what amount TJ Waste bid for the contract?

Answer: I had no part in the Tender process.

Cllr Stephen Philpott

Question to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Peter Chegwyn

The contract for the six-month trial ended early and the last six collection events were cancelled. Have TJ Waste billed the Council for these cancelled events and, if so, can the Leader tell me how much it has cost the Council not to provide the community skip collection events?

Answer: Those dates that have been postponed have not cost the Council.

Supplementary: If the contract was cancelled by the by the Council, are the Council required to pay for the non-collections.

Answer: The Council has not paid for collections that haven't taken place.

TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING PART I MINUTES OF THE BOARDS OF THE COUNCIL.

The Council received the Part I minutes of the Housing Board.

In answer to a Member's question, the Board was advised that residents were being supported with cost and that the rent increase averaged out at £3.96 per week. However

71% of residents received support with their rent in the form of housing benefit and the increase was below the rate of inflation.

RESOLVED:

- The revised HRA Business Plan Financial Model extract (Appendix A) and associated 2022/23 Revised Budget and 2023/24 Budget (Appendix B) is agreed.
- That Council Dwelling rents increase by 7% in line with the outcome of the government consultation results published in December.
- Service charges increase on average by 4%. Council provided heating services will increase in line with costs.
- The rent for all garages is increased by 10.1 % (CPI rate) in line with inflation, as agreed in the Garage Renewal strategy.

TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING PART II MINUTES OF THE BOARDS OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED: That the Part II Minutes of the Community and Environment Board on 10 January 2023 be presented and accepted by the Council.

It was noted that a budget updated would be provided to the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Part II Minutes of the Policy and Organisation Board on 18 January be presented and accepted by the Council.

It was noted that there had been a good debate and that there was unanimous support for the motion. The closure would create increased pressure and would leave 5000 patients needing a new surgery.

It was requested that thanks be placed on record to Councillor Raffaelli for his specialist knowledge and involvement.

It was believed that an extension had been agreed to the 1st August to allow options to be explored, it was accepted that this might not find a resolution, but at least there would time for sufficient consideration to be given. It was noted that the consultation had gone out there was no option on it for patients to advise that they wished the service to carry on as it was.

Members recognised the site was ideally located and there could be a detrimental impact on residents in the south of the Borough if the surgery closed.

A date was being confirmed for the Council to hear from the ICB on the wider health issues in Gosport.

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY & BUDGET (REVENUE & CAPITAL) 2023/24

Consideration was given to the report of the Borough Treasurer

An amendment was proposed and seconded as follows

Amendment:

Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget (Revenue & Capital) 2023/24

That the recommendations to Agenda Item 9 - Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget (Revenue & Capital) 2023/24 be amended as follows:-

Recommendation 2.2) be amended to:

A General Fund Budget for 2023/24 of £11,741,800 as set out in Appendix A (Amended) and broken down in Appendix C (Amended) including the changes described below:

i) Reductions to Revenue Estimates

| Savings Proposal | Impact on Level of Service & Service Outcomes | 2023/24 | 2024/25 & Future Years |
|---|---|---------|------------------------|
| | | £ | £ |
| Community & Environment Board | | | |
| Cease the provision of "Clean Up Initiatives" (including Community Skips Scheme) | Locally provided skips for waste disposal will be unavailable to residents | 123,750 | 123,750 |
| Remove provision for Exhibitions and Events at the Criterion | Planned exhibitions and events will not take place | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| Policy & Organisation Board | | | |
| Remove funding for Grants Panel | Funding to be re-directed to Gosport Voluntary Action to distribute | 57,200 | 57,200 |
| Reduction in Members Allowances | Removal of the following allowances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice Chairman P&O • Chairman of Service Boards and Regulatory Board • Chairman of Standards & Audit Sub-Board • Vice-Chairmen of Service Boards and Regulatory Board • Vice-Chairman Standards & Audit Sub-Board | 11,900 | 11,900 |
| Note: Members must have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel's report considered by the Council on 20 July 2022 | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| | | | |
| Total | | 217,850 | 217,850 |

Additions to Revenue Estimates

| Increases to Board Estimates | 2023/24 | 2024/25 & Future Years |
|---|----------------|---|
| | £ | £ |
| Community & Environment Board | | |
| Reduce hours of operation of Beach Road Car Park to 10am to 6pm | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| Enhance weed spraying service to include spray and removal | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| CCTV | 36,850 | 36,850 |
| | | |
| Policy & Organisation Board | | |
| Re-instate contract with the Tourist Information Centre | 59,000 | 59,000 |
| Re-instate funding for Gosport Voluntary Action | 77,000 | 77,000 |
| Total | 217,850 | 217,850 |

Recommendation 2.16 be amended to:-

The Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2025/26 as set out in Appendix D (amended) is approved, including the changes described below:

i) Reductions to the Capital Programme

| Scheme Deletions / Reductions | | Scheme Cost £ |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| Policy & Organisation Board | | |
| Reduce | Criterion Building - Acquisition & Refurbishment | 950,000 |
| | | |
| Total | | 950,000 |

ii) Additions to Capital Programme

| Scheme Additions / Increases | | Scheme Cost £ |
|--|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Community & Environment Board | | |
| Add | Pathway lighting | 172,500 |
| Add | Nobes Avenue Pavilion | 350,000 |
| Add | Manor Way Allotments and Rest Garden | 91,000 |
| Add | Stokes Bay War Memorial | 72,000 |
| Add | Brookers Field Pavilion | 75,000 |
| Add | Seafront Gym Equipment | 29,000 |
| Add | DSO Cemetery Team | 25,000 |
| Add | Grange Farm Dry Barn | 150,000 |
| Add | Heritage Repairs to Foreshore | 10,000 |
| | | |
| Total | | 974,500 |

Recommendation 2.17) be amended to:

That the Prudential Indicators as set out in Appendix E (amended) are approved

Recommendation 2.22

That the Council declare the Criterion Building surplus to requirements and seek to dispose of the asset on the open market; the capital receipt generated to be used as follows:

- i) to fund the shortfall of £24,500 between the cost of the new capital schemes and deletion of capital schemes set out in the amended Recommendation 2.16 (above)
- ii) the remaining sum received from the capital receipt be used to reduce the amount of borrowing being used to finance the Capital Programme in general

For the amendment: Councillors Councillor Beavis, Burgess, Casey, Gledhill, Huggins, Jessop, Philpott, Scard (8)

Against the amendment: Councillor Ballard, M Bradley, K Bradley, Chegwyn, Cox, Cully, Durrant, Earle, Hammond, Herridge, Hylands, Johnston, Kelly, Marshall, Maynard, Pepper, Westerby, The Mayor (18)

RESOLVED: That the motion is not carried.

For the recommendation: Councillor Ballard, M Bradley, K Bradley, Chegwyn, Cox, Cully, Durrant, Earle, Hammond, Herridge, Hylands, Johnston, Kelly, Marshall, Maynard, Pepper, Westerby, The Mayor (18)

Against the recommendation: Councillor Beavis, Burgess, Casey, Gledhill, Huggins, Jessop, Philpott, Scard (8)

RESOLVED: That the Council approve

2.1 A Revised General Fund Budget for 2022/23 of £11,252,830 as set out in Appendix A;

2.2 A General Fund Budget for 2023/24 of £11,741,800 as set out in Appendix A and broken down in Appendix C;

2.3 Any variation arising from the final Local Government Finance Settlement be accommodated by a transfer to / from the Revenue Financing Reserve;

2.4 That the level of Council Tax be increased by 2.99% for 2023/24;

2.5 It be noted that the Borough Treasurer has determined that the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2023/24 will be 27,056.0 [item T in the formula in Section 31 B(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")];

2.6 That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the financial year 2023/24 in accordance with Section 31 and Sections 34 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

| | | |
|-----|-------------|--|
| (a) | £43,817,600 | Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act. |
| (b) | £37,109,060 | Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. |
| (c) | £6,708,540 | Being the amount by which the aggregate at 2.6 (a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2.6(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Act. |
| (d) | £247.95 | Being the amount at 2.6 (c) above (Item R), all divided by Item 2.5 above (Item T), calculated by |

the Council, in
accordance with Section
31B(1) of the Act, as the
basic amount of its
Council Tax for the year.

LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME FOR 2023/24

Councillor Westerby left the room and took no further part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Benefits, Procurement and Insurance updating Members on the revised Local Council Tax Support scheme for working age applicants introduced from 1st April 2022 and of the intention to make no changes to the scheme for the 2023/24 financial year.

A named vote was taken as follows:

For the recommendation: Councillors Ballard, Beavis, M Bradley, K Bradley, Burgess, Casey, Chegwyn, Cox, Cully, Durrant, Earle, Gledhill, Hammond, Herridge, Huggins, Hylands, Jessop, Johnston, Kelly, Marshall, Maynard, Pepper, Philpott, Scard, The Mayor

RESOLVED: That Council approves the Local Council Tax Support scheme for the 2023/24 financial year and notes the continuation of the unchanged statutory scheme for pension age customers.

LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME-EXCEPTIONAL HARDSHIP POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of Benefits, Procurement and Insurance detailing the review and updates made to the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Exceptional Hardship Policy originally introduced in 2017.

A named vote was taken on the recommendation.

For the recommendation: Councillors Ballard, Beavis, M Bradley, K Bradley, Burgess, Casey, Chegwyn, Cox, Cully, Durrant, Earle, Gledhill, Hammond, Herridge, Huggins, Hylands, Jessop, Johnston, Kelly, Marshall, Maynard, Pepper, Philpott, Scard, The Mayor

RESOLVED: That full Council approves the updated LCTS Exceptional Hardship Policy attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FUND POLICY 2023-24

his report sets out the details of the Council's Council Tax Support Fund Policy 2023/24 developed in response to the announcement by Central Government (alongside the 2023-

24 provisional local government finance settlement) for Local Authorities to distribute additional financial support to the most vulnerable households in England in receipt of Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) in the 2023/24 financial year.

The Council recognised the hardwork that had been undertaken by the Head of Benefits, Procurement and Insurance in delivering all three agenda items.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendation.

For the recommendation: Councillors Ballard, Beavis, M Bradley, K Bradley, Burgess, Casey, Chegwyn, Cox, Cully, Durrant, Earle, Gledhill, Hammond, Herridge, Huggins, Hylands, Jessop, Johnston, Kelly, Marshall, Maynard, Pepper, Philpott, Scard, The Mayor

RESOLVED: That Council approves the Council Tax Support Fund Policy 2023/24 attached as Appendix 1 and gives delegated authority to the Head of Benefits, Procurement & Insurance in consultation with the Borough Treasurer to make technical amendments to ensure it meets the criteria set by Central Government and the Council.

APPOINTMENT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

RESOLVED: That Peter Baulf, City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer at Portsmouth City Council, be appointed as Monitoring Officer for Gosport Borough Council.

ELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR ELECT 2023/24

RESOLVED: That Councillor Martin Pepper be elected and Mayor Elect and Councillor Richard Earle be elected as Deputy Mayor Elect.

APPOINTMENT OF THE GRANTS SUB BOARD

RESOLVED: That Councillors Chegwyn, K Bradley, Hutchison, Burgess and Cully be appointed to the Sub-Board.

The Meeting concluded at 8.54 pm

The Mayor.

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