

Council

Venue: Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Doncaster Road, Selby, YO8 9FT

Date: Thursday, 21 February 2019

Time: 6.00 pm

Present: Councillor D Buckle in the Chair

Councillors D White (Vice-Chair), J Chilvers, K Arthur, J Cattanach, I Chilvers, M Crane, J Deans, S Duckett, M Hobson, C Lunn, D Mackay, J Mackman, M McCartney, C Metcalfe, R Musgrave, W Nichols, R Packham, C Pearson, I Reynolds, J Shaw-Wright, J Thurlow and P Welch

Officers Present: Janet Waggott (Chief Executive), Julie Slatter (Director of Corporate Services & Commissioning), Karen Iveson (Chief Finance Officer (s151)) and Palbinder Mann (Democratic Services Manager)

Press: 1

Public: 18

53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Casling, Jordan, Marshall, Peart, Sage and Sweeting.

54 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

55 MINUTES

The Council considered the minutes of the meeting of meeting held on 18 December 2018.

RESOLVED:

To approve the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 December 2018 for signing by the Chairman.

56 COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman announced that during the last week, he had been involved in two small business awards. These had been awarded to the following:

- The Blacksmiths Arms in Biggin which had been rated in the top 10 in the UK for their meals and for using local suppliers in the area within a 10 mile radius of Biggin.
- The Queen of the Old Thatch at South Milford which had received the best Sunday lunch in England and this had been awarded by the Observer newspaper.

The Chairman informed Council that tomorrow, he would be attending the opening of the Rhubarb festival in Wakefield with the Mayor of Wakefield. It was noted that the festival would on for three days with over 200 food stalls, with many from the Selby area.

Additionally, the Chairman informed Council that tomorrow night, he had been invited in his role as Chairman to the Yorkshire Hero Awards at York Racecourse. He noted that many groups and individuals from the Selby area had been nominated for an award and he wished them all the success for their hard work.

57 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Reynolds entered the meeting at this point.

The Leader of the Council informed Council that Network Rail had written to residents regarding crossing work taking place in the town however had stated the incorrect times for the work to take place. He added that he had contacted them and they would be sending an amended letter to all residents with the correct information.

Concern was raised at the number of roadworks taking place in the town and in the surrounding areas and it was felt better communication was needed between different authorities and agencies to ensure work was appropriately scheduled to avoid disruption.

The Chairman announced two events that would be taking place to raise money for his chosen charities as follows:

- There would be a Race Night at Fields Garden Centre on Friday 1 March in Sherburn in Elmet. The Chairman announced that the event had been sold out and thanked everyone who had brought a ticket or sponsored a horse.
- There would be a gala concert at Selby Abbey as part of the 950th

anniversary, this would be made up of 12 acts from the Selby area and would take place on Saturday 16th March with two shows at 2pm and 7pm. The Chairman announced that some tickets were still available if people wanted to attend.

The Chairman announced that the above events would be last main funding raising events during his year in office due to the elections and thanked everyone for their support during his year in office.

58 PETITIONS

There were no petitions received.

59 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions received.

60 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

There were no questions submitted by Councillors.

61 REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

Councillor M Crane, Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council presented his update on the work he had recently undertaken, as outlined in his report.

The Leader of the Council added that with regard to the highway works taking place across the area, there should be better co-ordination between the relevant authorities and agencies and that when work had ceased for the day, roads should be open for traffic until work restarted again the next day.

In relation to the devolution proposals, the Leader of the Council informed Council that he and other local leads would be meeting James Brokenshire about the devolution proposals.

In response to a query concerning the review for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), the Leader of the Council announced that sup group was now up and running however that there was issues in relation to who would be the responsible body for the sub group with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) wanting to take on the role. The Leader of the Council stated that the District Council was not a member of WYCA. With regard to the proposed memberships of LEPs going forward, the Leader of the Council informed Council that he raised concern at the small number spaces that would be allocated to District Councils on LEPs.

A query was raised regarding who would be involved in the work to bid for the Selby High Street Fund. The Leader of the Council stated that this was likely to be local members and the Selby Town Enterprise Partnership (STEP).

Concern was raised at the local of provision for football pitches in Eggborough and Hensall as part of the Local Football Facilities Plan. The Leader of the Council explained that he was aware football provision was needed in a specific area and discussion had taken place with the company who would be looking after Eggborough Power Station about whether the current sports facilities could be maintained.

Councillor J Mackman, Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Lead Member for Place Shaping

Councillor Mackman, Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Executive Member for Place Shaping, provided an update on the work he had recently undertaken, as outlined in his report.

The Lead Executive Member for Place Shaping explained that he had attended a meeting with the people who would be carrying out the demolition through controlled explosion of some of the chimneys at Ferrybridge Station. The Council was informed that the demolition process would take two years and access to the M62 would be controlled throughout the demolition process.

In response to a query concerning the responsibility for the Ferrybridge Station proposal mentioned in the report, the Lead Executive Member for Place Shaping explained that Wakefield was the main authority dealing with the application and Selby would be a statutory consultee. Additionally, it was noted that liaison meetings had been arranged for local people to attend.

Councillor C Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources

Councillor Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources presented his update on the work he had recently undertaken, as outlined in his report.

A query was raised regarding the considerable underspends in the General Fund (GF) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources explained that HRA underspends related to work not being undertaken in completing repairs due to being understaffed in the trades team. With regard to the surplus in the GF, the Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources explained that this was due to in year salary savings and higher investment interest.

Councillor C Metcalfe, Executive Lead Member for Communities and Economic Development

Councillor Metcalfe, Lead Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development provided an update on the work he had recently undertaken, as outlined in his report.

A query was raised around whether local members and parish councils would

be involved in producing the Sherburn Growth and Infrastructure Plan. The Lead Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development explained that the main priority of the plan was to look at the infrastructure deficit in Sherburn and engagement would take place with local members and parish councils.

In response to a query concerning the specific meaning of 'vertical farming', the Lead Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development explained that this was the modern way of agriculture and once the site was up and running, it would be a good idea to have a site visit for members to see for themselves. In response to an additional query concerning how high the 'vertical farming' was, the Lead Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development confirmed he would look into this and respond after the meeting.

A query was raised regarding the meaning of inward investors for Sherburn and details of the strategic sites outlined in the update on Church Fenton. The Lead Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development explained that the aim regarding the strategic sites was to enhance the connectivity in the area. With regard to inward investors, there were a number of businesses who were interested in setting up in the area however at the moment the information was commercially sensitive to release.

Councillor C Pearson, Executive Lead Member for Housing, Health and Culture

Councillor Pearson, Lead Executive Member for Housing, Health and Culture, provide an update on the work he had recently undertaken, as outlined in his report.

The Lead Executive Member for Housing, Health and Culture informed Council that he had attended the handover of 13 homes for local people at Crawford Close in Byram which was named after former District Councillor Jack Crawford. Disappointment was expressed that members of the Labour Group had not been invited to the event as Jack Crawford was a former Labour Councillor.

Council was informed that the ward Councillors for Selby East had received an email regarding a refuse collection vehicle which was smaller than normal collection vehicles had broken down. Concern was raised that this vehicle was used to undertake collections in Volta Street, Dennison Road and Darcy Street and due to it no longer being operative, residents had been asked to bring their refuse bins to the front of the properties. The Members concerned expressed concern that no consultation had taken place with either Councillors or residents and no alternatives had been proposed. It was agreed this would be looked into.

Councillor Musgrave left the meeting at this point and did not return.

While it was acknowledged work had been undertaken to bring a number of

empty properties back into use, concern was raised that there were still a number of properties in the district that had been empty for a considerable time which needed to be brought back into use.

In response to a query concerning the progress of the former Natwest Bank buildings which the District Council had purchased, the Lead Executive Member for Communities and Economic Development explained that the Director of Economic Regeneration and Place was taking this work forward.

In response to a query concerning how many empty properties over two years old were council owned properties, the Director of Corporate Services and Commissioning confirmed no empty properties over two years were council owned.

A query was raised regarding the underspend in relation to Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) and why there was an underspend when there was a waiting list for adaptations. The Director of Corporate Services and Commissioning explained that work for DFGs was no longer implemented by the Improvement Agency and was instead undertaken by the District Council. Further to this, Council was informed that spending on DFGs had more than doubled since the Council had taken over and it was catching up with the backlog. The Director of Corporate Services and Commissioning agreed to provide a report to Councillors updating them on the progress.

RESOLVED:

To receive and note the reports from the Executive.

62 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Councillor W Nichols, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor W Nichols, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee provided an update on the work of the Committee as outlined in her report. There were no questions for Councillor Nichols.

Councillor J Deans, Chairman of the Policy Review Committee

Councillor Deans, Chairman of the Policy Review Committee provided an update on the work of the Committee as outlined in his report. There were no questions for Councillor Deans.

Councillor K Arthur, Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee

Councillor Arthur, Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee provided an update on the work of the Committee as outlined in his report. Members raised concern that the briefing note on Brexit which had been circulated to the Committee had not been circulated to all Members. It was agreed this would be circulated to all Members.

RESOLVED:

To receive and note the reports from Committees.

63 MOTIONS

The following motion had been listed on the agenda for discussion:

This Council calls upon the Government to reconsider transitional arrangements for women born on or after 6th April 1951, so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late to make alternative arrangements.

Councillor Packham proposed the motion and explained the following:

- The matter had been discussed at a Council meeting last February however an amended motion had been passed at that meeting which had been effectively a negative of the proposal therefore it was up for consideration again. It was noted that 156 other Councils including North Yorkshire County Council had approved the motion.
- 592,600 women had been affected by the changes in Yorkshire and of these, 6,700 were from Selby and Ainsty. Some women had been waiting six years, to the age of 66 for a pension they expected to receive for most of their life, at the age of 60.
- Many women in the affected age group had not been individually informed of the changes likely to affect them, or were given only an eighteen month notice of a six year change in their pension age. This was in contrast to when the state pension age for men increased from 65 to 66 and men had been given five years notice which was unfair.
- The changes had led to hardship for those who had been affected with impacts on other allowances such as winter fuel allowance and bus passes.
- Members had received individual letters from women affected explaining the difficult personal circumstances they were facing as a result of the changes.
- A Judicial Review of the changes had been brought on behalf of a group and this would be heard in the High Court in the spring. It was also understood that the local MP, Nigel Adams was sympathetic to the cause.

The Leader of the Council explained that he felt sorry for the people affected and would vote in favour of the motion along with writing a letter of support however outlined that this was not an issue which the District Council had control over.

RESOLVED:

To agree the following motion:

This Council calls upon the Government to reconsider transitional arrangements for women born on or after 6th April 1951, so that women do not live in hardship due to pension changes they were not told about until it was too late to make alternative arrangements.

64 THE BUDGET, RESERVES AND BALANCES 2019/20

Karen Iveson, Chief Finance Officer presented the report which provided the Council with assurance on the proposed budget and the Council's reserves in order to formally set the budget and Council Tax for 2019/20.

The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that she felt that the Council's budget proposals were robust and that the reserves were adequate.

RESOLVED:

To consider the Chief Finance Officer's statements in paragraphs 2.6 and 2.12 of the report when setting the Council Tax.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To provide Council with assurance on the proposed budget and the Council's reserves in order to formally set the budget and Council Tax for 2019/20.

65 REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019/20 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Councillor Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources provided a presentation on Executive's proposed revenue budget, capital programmes and outline Programme for Growth, for 2019/120 to 2021/22.

The key elements of the presentation were:

- In its financial strategy, the Council was taking a long term view of resources and spending and managing down the ongoing revenue budget in line with in year funding through efficiency savings and growing income.
- The budget risks included the reduction and uncertainty of Government funding, rates retention being currently under review, a rent reduction of 1% imposed for 2019/20 and concerns over the impact of Brexit and any other wider economic impacts.
- There were significant revenue and capital investments proposed over the next three years with around £10.1m from the General Fund (GF)

and £14.5m from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

- The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement includes business rates baseline funding being increased to £2.427m to reflect the 75% pilot in 2019/20. Furthermore, an additional £340k will be received for the New Homes Bonus for 2019/20.
- The GF presents a balanced budget which includes increased service commitments for areas such as recycling credits and housing benefit grant. The planned efficiencies and income growth are estimated at £1.1m.
- The HRA was showing a net revenue surplus of £3.2m before the funding for the capital programme for 2019/20. This includes a 1% reduction in housing rents and £214k of planned savings.
- A council tax increase of £3 for a Band D property was being proposed which would result in an approximate increase of 1.71%.

Concern was raised around the vacancy levels and impact this could have on current staff who may have to pick up extra duties. The Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources explained that this was reflecting what was actually happening and no added impact was expected.

Discussion took place on the proposals put forward and it was felt that the proposed £2 saving on council tax for a Band D property would result in minimal savings for residents when taking into account precept increases from other authorities along with the relevant parish. Concern was raised that by not increasing council tax by the maximum £5 for a Band D property would result in reduction in council tax over the year of £62k.

With regard to the proposed council tax increase, the Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources explained that the Council had always aimed to keep the rise below inflation and had kept the same practice when proposing the current rise.

Council attention was drawn to the council tax figures in the amended appendices A to C that had been circulated following the agreement of the precept by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

In line with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the Chairman explained that a recorded vote must be taken on the proposals which had been put forward as outlined in the report.

For the proposal: Fifteen

Councillors K Arthur, D Buckle, J Cattnach, I Chilvers, J Chilvers, M Crane, J Deans, M Hobson, C Lunn, D Mackay, J Mackman, C Metcalfe, C Pearson, I Reynolds, and D White.

Against the proposal: Seven

Councillors S Duckett, M McCartney, W Nichols, B Packham, J Shaw-Wright, J Thurlow and P Welch.

Abstain: None

The motion to approve the recommendations as outlined in the report and the amended appendices was carried.

RESOLVED:

- i) To approve the revenue budgets, savings, capital programme and programme for Growth at Appendices E to K;**
- ii) To increase Council Tax by £3 to £178.22 for a Band D property for 2019/20;**
- iii) To confirm an empty homes premium equivalent to 100% of the Council Tax charge i.e. to charge 200% of the Council Tax liability on a property that has been empty and substantially unfurnished for more than 2 years, with effect from 1 April 2019;**
- iv) To consider and approve the formal Council Tax resolution set out in the amended Appendix B;**
- v) To transfer the Surplus of £3.219m on the HRA to the Major Repairs Reserve to support the capital programme;**

REASON FOR DECISION:

To ensure the Executive's budget proposals are fully funded for 2019/20.

Councillor John Cattnach left the meeting at this point and did not return.

66 TREASURY MANAGEMENT - TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2019/20, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20, ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2019/20 AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2019/20

Councillor Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and Resources presented the report which presented for approval the proposed Treasury Management Strategy together with the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement, Annual Investment Strategy for 2019/20, Capital Strategy 2019/20 and Prudential Indicators 2019/20 as required by the Department of Communities and Local Government and CIPFA (as updated 2017).

There were no comments on the report.

RESOLVED:

- i) **To set the Operational Borrowing Limit for 2018/19 at £79m;**
- ii) **To set the Authorised Borrowing Limit for 2018/19 at £84m;**
- iii) **To delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer to effect movement within the agreed authorised boundary limits for long-term borrowing for 2018/19 onwards;**
- iv) **To delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer to effect movement within the agreed operational boundary limits for long-term borrowing for 2018/19 onwards;**
- v) **To approve the treasury management strategy statement 2018/19;**
- vi) **To approve the minimum revenue provision policy statement for 2018/19;**
- vii) **To approve the treasury management investment strategy for 2018/19;**
- viii) **To approve the prudential indicators for 2018/19 which reflect the capital expenditure plans which are affordable, prudent and sustainable;**
- ix) **To approve the Capital Strategy for 2018/19.**

REASON FOR DECISION:

To ensure the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and associated policies are prudent and affordable.

67 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20

Councillor Crane, Leader of the Council presented the report which sought approval of the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2019/20 in accordance with section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

It was noted this report needed to be produced each year.

RESOLVED:

To approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20.

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REASON FOR DECISION:

To comply with Localism Act 2011 (the Act) to prepare a Pay Policy Statement articulating the Council's policy towards the pay of the workforce.

68 APPOINTMENT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

Councillor Crane, Leader of the Council presented the report which asked the Council to appoint a Monitoring Officer.

A view was expressed that it would have been better to see a permanent post advertised allowing individuals from the district to apply. The Chief Executive explained that the interim appointment would be for a maximum of six months which would sit alongside the Better Together work currently undertaken with North Yorkshire County Council. The Chief Executive further explained that the time would allow the Council to define what they wanted from the permanent role.

RESOLVED:

To appoint Bernice Elgot as the Council's Monitoring Officer.

REASON FOR DECISION:

To ensure that the Council appoints a Monitoring Officer as per section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

69 URGENT ACTION

The Chief Executive informed Council that the following urgent action had been taken by her since the last Council meeting under her delegated authority:

- On 28 January 2019, to appoint Councillor Chris Pearson as a substitute member of the Planning Committee for the municipal year 2018/19 with immediate effect.

The meeting closed at 7.42 pm.