

Adur District Council

Record of Decisions made at a Meeting of the Executive held at the Shoreham Centre, Pond Road, Shoreham-by-Sea

8 February 2016

Councillor Neil Parkin (Leader)
Councillor Angus Dunn (Deputy Leader)

*Councillor Pat Beresford
*Councillor Keith Dollemore

Councillor Jim Funnell
Councillor David Simmons

*= absent

Also in attendance: Mr F Bathurst for the ACF.

A EX /001/15-16 Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

A EX/002/15-16 Questions by the Public

Mr Featherstone had submitted the following question which he read out to the meeting:

The Adur Ferry Bridge has now been completed for over 2 years and there has not been works started to the above .

My self and some other residents went to an Adur CLC meeting in March last year and presented a petition about the delays. We were assured at that meeting that there were some delays due to consultations but that the works would now start in October 2015 and thus avoid the summer holiday period.

However when October 2015 came nothing happened and so I went to another CLC meeting on 26th November 2015 and asked why the scheme had not been started (see minutes of this meeting, I was the Shoreham resident!) and that there was a problem with the proposed access to the pub (it seems that the wrong person had originally been approached about this)

I have since been in e-mail correspondence with Mick Clark , the County Councillor, who considers that the delays were due to the incompetence of Adur DC.

I certainly do not want to get involved in any “blame ping pong” but I want to know why these delays happened and will these works ever be started.

I walk over the new bridge nearly every day and it is a wonderful bridge but you arrive at the south end it is like a tip. At night the lighting is non –existent and it is a safety hazard. Who is responsible?

The Leader responded to Mr Featherstone as follows

With so many land owners to consider the situation has been complex and whilst the delays are frustrating they are not down to the District Council. As you know the delays previously were due to objections regarding the loss of parking in front of the shops and access to the public hard.

I have just had a legal update which confirms the current position is as follows:

The original Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) has not been finally signed off by WSCC as Greene King (Waterside Pub) belatedly raised concerns about the loss of one of its vehicular accesses to the Pub and this has delayed implementation of the project. To avoid any risk the District Council has negotiated with Greene King to provide an alternative layby in front of its premises.

The revised lay-by design required an external audit which was completed in late October 2015, the District Council provided responses to the issues raised from external audit to WSCC in early November 2015 and have been awaiting final response from WSCC. The County Council were chased on a couple of occasions with the District Council finally copied into the decision late January 2016, only to find out it was signed off on the 12th December 2015. A loss of a month.....

It is hoped that the layby can be added to the existing TRO without requiring further public consultation but this decision is for WSCC to resolve. As soon as the TRO has been finally approved the District Council will instruct the Contractors to start on site.

A EX/003/15-16 Items Raised under Urgency Provisions

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

A EX/004/15-16 Housing Revenue Account – Budget 2016/17

The Executive had before it a joint report from the Director for Digital and Resources and the Director for Communities, attached to these minutes as item 4.

The report set out financial arrangements for the Housing Revenue Account and requested members to set the rent levels and service charges for 2016/17. The report also considered some of the issues emerging from 2017/18 onwards.

The Executive Member for Customer Services expressed his disappointment at the news contained in the report on the required reduction in rent levels for general needs housing particularly regarding the impact in future years, pointing to paragraph 14.4. the council was actively investing in new housing stock which was key to reducing the Housing Register. He was pleased to see further investment with new staff being appointed to the service as outlined in paragraph 10.0.

Decision the Executive

- (i) considered and approved the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates,
- (ii) determined the level of associated rents and charges with effect from week one of 2016/17 as follows:-

- (a) **Rents of Council Dwellings (except supported housing)** – agreed a decrease of 1.0% reducing the average council dwelling rent by £0.92 to £91.08 per week (average rent currently £92.00 per week) – (Para.5.7 of the report)
- (b) **Rents of Council Dwellings (supported housing)** - delegated to the Head of Housing in consultation with the Executive Member for Customer Services, the setting of the rent charge for supported housing subject to a maximum increase of 0.9% (CPI +1%)
- (c) **Rents of Council garages** – agreed an increase of 5.0% to £9.48. (currently £9.03 per week), plus VAT for non-Council tenants) (Para.5.14 of the report)
- (d) **Service Charges** - delegated to the Head of Housing and Head of Finance in consultation with the Executive Member for Customer Services, the setting of the service charges (Para. 11.2 of the report)

(iii) Approved a continued contribution of £311,000 to the earmarked reserve specifically for new development and refurbishment of council housing (para. 13.5 of the report)

(iv) Approved the HRA Treasury Management Strategy contained in Appendix 3 to the report.

Reason for Decision

To set the rent level for 2016/17

Alternative options considered

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Call In

The call in deadline for this decision is Thursday 18th February at 5pm.

A EX/005/15-16 Adur District council overall Budget Estimates 2016/17 and Setting of 2016/17 Council Tax

The Executive had before it a report from the Director for Digital and Resources, attached to these minutes as item 5.

The report represented the culmination of the annual budget exercise and asked the Executive to consider the following:

- The final revenue estimates for 2016/17;
- An updated outline 5-year forecast; and
- The provisional level of Council Tax for 2016/17, prior to its submission to the Council for approval on the 23 February 2016.
(This will be subject to any proposals to change the draft revenue budget following the consideration of the budget proposals by Executive).

The budgets as presented reflected the decisions taken by Members to date in relation to agreed savings proposals. The report also updated the Executive about the impact of the draft 2016/17 settlement.

The major points raised within the report included:

- A full update on the impact of settlement. The Council was advised to prepare itself for a difficult few years following the accelerated removal of revenue support grant (paragraph 3.6 of the report) ;
- The Executive will need to consider whether to increase Council Tax by the maximum level possible below 2% (1.99%) or by a lower amount (paragraph 5.10); and, finally
- The Executive needed to consider the new growth items in Appendix 2

The budget was presented in Executive Member portfolio, prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Service Reporting code of Practice for Local Authorities 2016/17 (except in relation to pension costs adjustments that do not impact either on the Budget Requirement or the Council Tax Requirement).

The Police and Crime commissioner had consulted on an increase to the council Tax for 2016/17 of 3.44% (as one of the lowest precepts in the country they are permitted to increase by £5) and the proposed 2016/17 budget was due to be considered by the Sussex Police and Crime Panel on 22 January. The Panel had approved the increase.

The Head of Finance informed the meeting that the Secretary of State had announced the final settlement earlier in the day although the full details for Adur had not been received, the Officer was confident that the Council would not be worse off than previously expected. There were a number of changes around the Business Rates with details silent from 2019/20 onwards; this she suspected related to the ongoing (and lack of current detail) in the review of Business Rates.

The Executive Member for Resources requested an explanation of the Business Rate retention scheme to which the Head of Finance referred to page 37 paragraph 3.7.

The Executive noted in paragraph 8.1(ii) (Significant Risks) possible withdraw of funding by partners indicating that the Council would not be funding gaps where finance had been withdrawn by partners for partnership schemes. Officers were commended for finding a further £1M saving in current year but retaining the weekly bin collections.

The Leader proposed a 1.99% increase in the council tax as outlined in the report, it was agreed by the Executive to make this recommendation to Council.

Decision the Executive

- i. Considered and agreed to include the growth items detailed at Appendix 2 within the revenue budget in 2016/17;
- ii. Agreed to recommend to Council the draft budgets for 2016/17 at Appendix 7 as submitted in Executive Member Portfolio order, and the transfer to Reserves leading to a net budget requirement of £9,739,740,

- iii. Considered which band D Council Tax to recommend to Council for Adur District Council's requirements in 2016/17 as set out in paragraph 12.3 determining a 1.99% increase

Recommended to Council that

- a. the Council Tax Band D for Shoreham, Southwick, Sompting and Coombes for 2016/17 be £282.15 ;
- b. the special expenses of £17.82 per Band D equivalent charged in all areas of the District except Lancing

Reason for Decision

Statutory requirement to set a budget

Alternative options considered

As detailed in the report, growth bids were considered.

Call In

There is no call-in for this decision as it is a recommendation to Council

The meeting ended at 7.28 pm having commenced at 7pm.

Leader