

## **Adur District Council**

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

**7 February 2017**

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

Councillor Carson Albury  
Councillor Brian Boggis

Councillor Emma Evans  
Councillor David Simmons

\*= absent

Councillor Graysmark was also in attendance.

Also in attendance: Dave Donaldson for the ACF.

#### **A EX/001/16-17 Declarations of Interest**

None were declared.

#### **A EX/002/16-17 Questions by the Public**

No questions were asked by the member of the public.

#### **A EX/003/16-17 Items Raised under Urgency Provisions**

There were no items raised under urgency provisions.

#### **A EX/004/16-17 Housing Revenue Account – Budget 2017/18**

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 arrangement for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and asked Members to set the rent levels and service charges for 2017/18. The report also considered some of the strategic challenges facing the HRA over the next few years.

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report highlighting that rent setting was mostly academic since the Government had decided by Statutory Regulation that there would be a 1% rent reduction year on year for 3 years. Over these 3 years the total HRA rental reduction to the Council was likely to be in the region of £1.9 M; there was no indication yet as to the situation at the end of the 3 years.

The Executive Member for Customer Services informed the Executive that the condition survey on the inside of the HRA properties was expected in the next few weeks which was likely to produce a 4 year programme of maintenance and high level of investment. There was a growing capital investment programme particularly proposals at Albion Street

Southwick and Cecil Norris House in Shoreham. He highlighted the the excellent work undertaken by the officers he worked with on this area of his portfolio.

Mr Donaldson of the ACF indicated the Group's concern but noted the investment in the housing stock which was welcomed by residents.

The Executive Member for Resources pointed out parts of the report that showed the Council's commitment to redevelopments and providing social housing.

### **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 2017/18 as follows:-

- (a) **Rents of Council Dwellings (including supported housing)** – agreed a decrease of 1.0% reducing the average council dwelling rent by £0.92 to £91.07 per week (average rent currently £91.99 per week) – (Para.5.5 of the report)
- (b) **Rents of Council garages** – agreed an increase of 2.0% to £9.67. (currently £9.48 per week), plus VAT for non-Council tenants) (Para.5.19 of the report)
- (c) **Service Charges** - delegated to the Head of Housing and Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Executive Member for Customer Services, the setting of the service charges (Para. 8.2 of the report)

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

### **Reason for Decision**

To set the rent level for 2017/18

### **Alternative options considered**

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**Call In** : The call in deadline for this decision is Friday 17 February at 5pm.

### **A EX/005/16-17 Adur District Council overall Budget Estimates 2017/18 and Setting of 2017/18 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 2017/18 including any adjustments arising from settlement;
- An updated outline 5-year forecast;
- The provisional level of Council Tax for 2017/18, prior to its submission to the Council for approval on the 23rd February 2017.

The budgets reflect the decisions taken by Members to date in relation to agreed savings proposals and any committed growth. The report also updates members about the impact of the draft 2017/18 settlement.

The major points raised within the report included:

- A full update on the impact of settlement. The Council should prepare itself for a continuation of the reduction in Government resources for another 2-5 years (Section 3.2 of the report) ;
- Identified that the Executive will need to consider whether to increase Council Tax by maximum level possible of 2% or by a lower amount (paragraph 5.10).

The budget was presented by Executive Member portfolio. The draft estimates for 2017/18 had been prepared, in accordance with the requirements of the Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities (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 2017/18 of £5.00 or 3.36%. The proposed 2017/18 budget was considered by the Sussex Police and Crime Panel (PCP) on 20th January 2017 and an increase of £5.00 was approved.

The Director presented the report drawing attention to the budget position and the impact the reducing grant would have over the next few years, highlighted in paragraph 3.4. For the forthcoming year, the Director identified at paragraph 5.10 options available to the Executive suggesting that a 1.98% increase, amounting to 10p per week, would ensure that the Council had a balanced budget and fund some new initiatives.

The Executive Member for Resources informed the Executive that with the disappearance of the RSG the Council had had to replan and reorganise to take advantage of limited resources. The various Strategic Boards had been created to specifically drive forward services to the residents of the district. The Council had not put up council tax over the last few years, mostly freezing the level of tax - with a reduction on one occasion. This was the first occasion an increase had been proposed which amounted to 10p per week for a Band D property, of which there were few properties within the District; for a Band A property the increase would be 6p. Furthermore the Council was retaining weekly bin collections which he felt residents valued. The Council Tax benefit scheme to help the less well off was also continuing. There were a number of forthcoming high profile projects, one of which - Gigabit coastal project would support investment in the area.

Other members of the Executive spoke on the proposals before it. The Leader thanked officers and members for their work in producing a balanced budget - and retaining weekly bin collections.

### **Decision** the Executive

(i) Agree to **recommend** to Council the draft budgets for 2017/18 at Appendix 5 as submitted in Executive Member Portfolio order, and the transfer to Reserves leading to a net budget requirement of £9,165,860;

(ii) Agreed to **recommend** to Council an increase of 1.98% making Band D for Adur District Council's requirements in 2017/18 as set out in paragraph 12.3. of £269.55 per annum

(iii) Agree to **recommend** to Council the special expenses of £18.18 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.

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

The meeting ended at 7.16 pm having commenced at 7pm.

Leader