

## Worthing Borough Council

### Record of the Decisions taken by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 4 February 2013

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Present: Councillors Paul Yallop (Chairman); Bryan Turner (Vice-Chairman), Mary Lermite, Clive Roberts, Steven Waight and Tom Wye

*Also present: Councillors Charles James and Vino Vinojan*

*Officers: Chief Executive, Strategic Director (AG), Executive Head of Financial Services, Executive Head of Corporate and Cultural and Democratic Services Manager*

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#### **CAB/001/2012-13 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

#### **CAB/002/2012-13 Public Question time**

Mr Shanks of Oxford Road Worthing asked for an update on the Teville Gate Development; the Cabinet Member for Regeneration explained the position regarding the developer and the 'reserved matters' relating to the outline planning permission. The Cabinet Member explained that he had himself sought an update from officers on the position as at the end of January and an indication from the developer as to when the project would commence, he would be chasing officers for this update as this had not yet been supplied.

The Leader stated that the land was not in the Council's ownership therefore the project had most likely stalled due to the current financial markets however the Council was keen to ensure the area was redeveloped.

#### **CAB/003/12-13 Items Raised under Urgency Provisions**

None

#### **CAB/004/2011-12 Estimates 2013/2014 and Setting the 2013/2014 Council Tax**

The Cabinet had before it a report by the Executive Head of Financial Services, copies of which had been circulated to all members and a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of this record of decision as item 4.

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

- The final revenue estimates for 2013/14;
- An updated outline 5-year forecast; and
- The provisional level of Council Tax for 2013/14, prior to its submission to the Council for approval on the 19 February 2013.

The report was subject to any proposals to change the draft revenue budget following the consideration of the budget proposals by Cabinet. The budgets reflect the decisions taken by Members to date in relation to agreed savings proposals and also updated the impact of the 2013/14 settlement.

The budget was presented and analysed by Cabinet Member portfolio. In addition, the draft estimates for 2013/14 were prepared, as usual, in accordance with the requirements of the Service Reporting Code of Practice for Local Authorities 2013/14 (except in relation to pension costs adjustments that do not impact either on the Budget Requirement or the Council Tax Requirement).

The arrangements for setting the Sussex Police Authority precept have changed this year. The new Police and Crime Commissioner has indicated that the overall increase to the Council Tax will be 0% for 2013/14 and this was approved by the Sussex Police and Crime Panel on 11th January 2013.

The precept for West Sussex County Council has not yet been finalised and will not be confirmed until 15th February 2013. Therefore the formal detailed resolution setting the overall Council Tax for next year will be presented direct to the Council Meeting on 19th February 2013.

Presenting the report at the meeting the Executive Head reminded those present of previous conversations regarding current and projected budget shortfalls and action to address these deficits in the longer term. Highlighting the main changes which were a reduction in local government finance; the business rate retention scheme and the current revenue support grant the proposed budget was before Cabinet to recommend the level of Council tax for 2013/14.

The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee had recommended that the draft budget be adopted, supported a 0% Council tax increase and that the annual Investment Strategy and the Policy for Minimum Revenue provisions be agreed.

Referring to paragraph 6.1 the Cabinet Member for Resources expressed his concern regarding the financial pressures in future years for the Council that would make it increasingly difficult to protect front line services. In supporting the Cabinet recommendation to Council, the Cabinet Member for Resources made it clear that unless the Government properly funded the council in future then it may not be able to accept a council tax freeze for a 4<sup>th</sup> time.

## **Decision**

The Cabinet considered the level of Council Tax supporting a 0% increase and therefore agreed the following:

that Council be **recommended:**

- i. to agree the changes to the prudential indicators as set out in Appendix 4 of the report

- ii. to agree the draft budgets for 2013/14 at Appendix 6 as submitted in Cabinet Member Portfolio order, and the transfer to the Reserves leading to a net budget requirement of £ 14,232,220;
- iii. to agree that the Council Tax for Worthing Council's requirements in 2013/14 be £ 216.00 for a Band D equivalent property
- iv. to agree the Annual Investment Strategy and Policy for Minimum Revenue Provisions contained in Appendix 7 to the report

### **Reason for Decision**

The Council is obliged to set a balanced budget.

The Cabinet was of the opinion that the recommended budget would allow the Council to continue to deliver its services in a manner that was affordable within the resources available to it.

Members considered the level of Council Tax increase that should be levied on the public and decided that in the current financial climate when personal incomes were stretched that it was not appropriate to place an additional financial burden on Council Tax payers.

Statutory Requirement to set Council Tax

### **Alternative Options considered**

The Cabinet considered whether to recommend to Council to freeze the current level of Council Tax or to increase Council Tax by 1.9% .

### **Call-in**

There is no call in deadline for this item as it is a recommendation to Council on 19 February 2013.

The meeting ended at 6.24pm having commenced at 6 pm.

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Leader

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**Democratic Services Section:**

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