

Worthing Borough Council

Record of the Decisions taken by the Executive at its meeting held at the Town Hall, Chapel Road Worthing

9 February 2016

Councillor Daniel Humphreys (Leader)
Councillor Bryan Turner (Deputy Leader)

Councillor Heather Mercer
Councillor Clive Roberts

Councillor Mark Nolan
Councillor Val Turner

*= absent

W EX/001/15-16 Declarations of interest

Councillor Bryan Turner declared his interest as a member of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Val Turner declared her interest as a member of the Police and Crime Panel.

W EX/002/15-16 Questions by the public

There were no questions by the public.

W EX/003/15-16 Items raised under Urgency Provisions

None.

W EX/004/15-16 Worthing Overall Budget Estimates 2016/17 and Setting of 2016/17 Council Tax

The Executive had before it a report by the Director for Digital and Resources, attached to the signed record of these decisions as item 4.

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 23 February 2016. Details in the report were subject to any proposals to change the draft revenue budget following the consideration at the meeting.

The budgets in the report 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 should prepare itself for a continuation of the austerity measures for another 2-5 years (paragraph 3.5 in the report);
- The Executive was advised to consider whether to increase Council Tax by the maximum level possible below 2% (1.96%) or by a lower amount (paragraph 5.10 in the report); 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.

At the meeting the Head of Finance was able to give an update on the final settlement as recently announced by the Secretary of State. The key features were that no Authority would be worse off, there was increased resources for rural service delivery and a transition grant; Worthing's share of this grant was £99K.

With this information the Head of Finance highlighted paragraph 5.12; there was no requirement to use reserves to balance the budget and with the money in hand (£27K) she suggested that the Executive consider placing this in a separate budget for one off projects.

The Executive Member for Resources thanked the Head of Finance and her team for the work they had undertaken to produce the information for the setting of the budget. In proposing the increase of 1.96% the Member explained this rise required to balance the budget was modest at £3.36 per year, around 8p per week which represented value for money. The proposed increase was part of a range of measures by the Council which included seeking income streams.

Clarification was sought regarding the closure of the Brooklands Golf Course in the Revenue Budget summary on page 33, the Head of Finance responded to the questions raised. The Director for Communities highlighted the commercial potential of the pavilion on the site indicating some opportunities that were being investigating.

Decision the Executive

- Considered and agreed to include the growth items detailed at Appendix 2 within the revenue budget in 2016/17,
- 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 £13,940,320;
- Considered which band D Council Tax to recommend to Council for Worthing Borough Council's requirements in 2016/17 as set out in paragraph 12.3; determining a

1.96% increase therefore the band D as recommended for 2016/17 was £220.23

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 6.45pm having commenced at 6.30pm.

Leader