

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Council

**Date:** Friday, 25 February 2022

**Venue:** Council Chamber - Civic Offices

**PRESENT:**

Mrs P M Bryant  
(Mayor)

M J Ford, JP  
(Deputy Mayor)

**Councillors:** I Bastable, Mrs S M Bayford, Mrs S M Walker, Miss J Bull, T M Cartwright, MBE, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, P J Davies, T Davies, S Dugan, Mrs T L Ellis, J M Englefield, J S Forrest, N R Gregory, Miss T G Harper, Mrs C L A Hockley, Mrs J Kelly, G Kelly, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Ms S Pankhurst, R H Price, JP, Mrs K K Trott, N J Walker and S D T Woodward



AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING, A MINUTES SILENCE WAS HELD FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF FORMER COUNCILLOR ERIC DUNN, FOLLOWING WHICH COUNCILLORS P DAVIES, J M ENGLEFIELD, MRS C L A HOCKLEY AND R H PRICE,JP SHARED THEIR MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS OF FORMER COUNCILLOR DUNN.

**1. PRAYERS**

The meeting commenced with a short service of prayers led by the Deputy Mayor.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors F W Birkett, G Fazackarley, L Keeble and Mrs P K Hayre.

**3. MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the Mayor be authorised to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2021.

**4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor announced that after the usual quiet start to the year, she and the Mayoress have attended some interesting events as more engagements come into the diary. They were delighted to attend the annual Holocaust Service at Havant where they were joined by the Mayor of Havant and other dignities.

It was also a great pleasure to host once again the Rotary Youth Speaks competition in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices after a lapse of 2 years. Whilst numbers attending were restricted, it gave the pupils a chance to gain confidence and experience in public speaking. Crofton school gave a fantastic presentation and will be going through to the next round at Portsmouth High School.

The Mayor announced that she was most grateful to the Rev. Ian Meredith for the kind invitation to attend a special civic service at St Mary's Church in Portchester that he had organized for the 6<sup>th</sup> February to start the Queen's Platinum Jubilee year celebrations on the day she ascended to the throne 70 years ago. It was a most enjoyable and well thought out service which included the Queen's favourite hymns.

On 12<sup>th</sup> February the Mayor and Mayoress visited Melvin Jones House in Stubbington to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It was a pleasure to join the residents in their celebrations, and also to be joined by members of Crofton Lions Club including their President, Councillor Pal Hayre. Fareham Lions

were involved with naming the sheltered accommodation 50 years ago, after their own founder Melvin Jones.

At the start of the annual Fairtrade fortnight, last Saturday the Mayor and Mayoress were joined in the shopping centre by the Executive Leader of the Council to give their continued support to this organisation as the Council has done since 2007. The Mayor also visited Capella Close in Hill Head to visit the much needed 11 new homes.

The Mayor announced her gratitude to those who have applied to attend the Mayor's ball at HMS Collingwood on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> March. For those who haven't yet replied, there tickets are still available.

The Mayor announced that Antonio has also offered another charity evening at his restaurant and anyone interested in attending was encouraged to email for further details.

## **5. EXECUTIVE LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Executive Leader's announcements made at this meeting.

## **6. EXECUTIVE MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Health & Public Protection**

#### **Air Quality**

The Executive Member for Health & Public Protection announced that the Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) has recently informed the Council that it has concluded that Fareham is no longer required to provide additional data as part of the Local Authority Data Request from JAQU. This is because the annual mean last year was 40.23 ug/m<sup>3</sup>, which is very close to compliance (which is 40) and in the context of the Stubbington bypass opening soon, the Unit is happy with the progress made to date and also will not be requiring any further ANPR vehicle survey work to be done. Further guidance is expected from them in the spring, and it is hoped at some point Fareham will be formally compliant with the earlier Ministerial Direction Notice.

### **Streetscene**

#### **Herbicide treatment across the Borough**

The Executive Member for Streetscene announced that the Council will commence its annual herbicide treatment across the Borough from the 01 March 2022. The spraying team will be wearing high visibility waistcoats indicating 'Herbicide Spraying' whilst the work is in progress. The Council has used Nomix Dual for many years to reduce unwanted vegetation, specifically in locations where there are obstacles to using traditional machinery and these sites are sprayed once a year in dry weather conditions to ensure maximum effectiveness. The Council works through the year to make the Borough look its best and ensure that areas do not become overrun with unwanted

vegetation. This is necessary work to allow residents to continue to use these areas unhindered.

The Executive Member for Streetscene stated that residents are reassured that the Chemical Regulation Division (CRD) who is responsible for all pesticide products in the UK, has analysed all available information and deemed the product safe to use and with little risk to the environment or animals.

## **Planning and Development**

### **Romsey Avenue Portchester**

The Executive Member for Planning and Development announced that Members will be aware that Fareham is an internationally important overwintering location for protected Brent Geese and Wading Bird species. The Fareham coast is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) as a result. Brent Geese and Waders are also dependent on a network of habitats, known as supporting sites, which provide feeding and roosting opportunities outside of the SPA boundaries. These supporting sites are ranked as Core, Primary, Secondary or Low Use depending on their significance.

The Executive Member for Planning and Development stated that in September 2020, this Council's Planning Committee considered a planning application for 225 dwellings on land south of Romsey Avenue at Portchester. This development was upon part of a Primary Support Site. Natural England raised objections to the proposals based on the partial loss of the Primary Support site and concerns over the replacement mitigation land being provided. The planning application was refused by this Council, with the principal objection being the partial loss of a Primary Support site. A planning appeal was lodged by the promoter of the development and a Public Local Inquiry was held in August 2021. Both this Council and Natural England maintained their objections to the scheme based on the partial loss of a Primary Support site. By a decision letter dated the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022, the Planning Inspector allowed the appeal and granted planning permission for 225 dwellings at the site. Whilst the Planning Inspector sets out their reasoning for allowing the appeal, the Inspector acknowledged that their decision to grant planning permission was contrary to the advice of Natural England.

The Executive Member for Planning and Development stated that in recent times, Natural England has required this Council to address multiple potential impacts on the natural environment before planning permission can be granted. This has included mitigating against the potential impacts of nitrates upon The Solent environment, and mitigating the potential recreational disturbance caused by the residents of this Borough visiting the New Forest. The Executive Member for Planning and Development indicated his concern that whilst this Council has made every effort to mitigate potential impacts identified by Natural England, the Planning Inspector, in this particular case, has simply dismissed the objections raised by Natural England. Officers are presently seeking legal advice on whether the Planning Inspector's decision is legally sound and if there are any grounds for it to be challenged by way of a judicial review.

### **Council statement on the New Forest survey**

The Executive Member for Planning and Development stated that at December's Executive meeting, the Executive approved the Interim New Forest Mitigation Scheme, in response to Natural England's advice that residential development in Fareham should provide mitigation to the protected sites in the New Forest. 117 residents in the Borough were interviewed about the frequency and duration of their visits to the New Forest, and on the back of those interviews, the conclusion was drawn that, on average, Fareham residents visit the New Forest 15.3 times a year. The Executive Member for Planning and Development stated that the Council will be commissioning a repeat of the telephone surveys that led to the Natural England advice. The surveys will be conducted using the same methodology as before but will interview a greater number of people to improve the robustness of the data. The Council is in dialogue with Natural England on this new survey and is also seeking legal advice before the survey is commissioned on how the Council's position could alter in light of the new data. The outcome of the survey will be known in the coming months and a further update will be provided to Members.

### **Leisure and Community**

#### **Platinum Jubilee tree sponsoring project**

The Executive Member for Leisure and Community announced the great success to date of the project for sponsoring a tree for HM Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee. To date, 89 of the 100 available trees have been sponsored. 39 of these are in memory of someone; 35 are personal; and there are a number which have been sponsored by community groups and businesses. The Executive Member for Leisure and Community indicated that there will be more available in the future and Officers are currently looking at another site in Abbey Meadows where more trees could be accommodated.

## **7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor R H Price, JP declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of item 15(2) as he leases an allotment in Portchester. Councillor Price confirmed that, should the need arise, he would not take part in any debate regarding allotments.

Councillor J M Englefield declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of item 15(2) as he leases an allotment in Titchfield Common. Councillor Englefield confirmed that, should the need arise, he would not take part in any debate regarding allotments.

## **8. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS**

There were no petitions presented at this meeting.

## **9. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations given at this meeting.

## **10. REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

- (1) Minutes of meeting Monday, 10 January 2022 of Executive

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 10 January 2022 be received; and
- (b) the recommendations contained in minute 11(1) be considered at item 19 of the agenda.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Monday, 7 February 2022 of Executive

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 07 February 2022 be received;
- (b) the recommendations contained in minute 11(1) be considered at item 15(2) on the agenda;
- (c) the recommendations contained in minute 11(2) be considered at item 16 of the agenda;
- (d) the recommendation contained in minute 11(3) be considered at item 20 of the agenda;
- (e) the recommendations contained in minute 11(4) be considered at item 17 of the agenda; and
- (f) the recommendation contained in minute 11(5) be considered at item 18 of the agenda.

- (3) Schedule of Individual Executive Member and Officer Delegated Decisions

RESOLVED that the Schedule of Individual Executive Member and Officer Delegated Decisions be received.

## **11. REPORTS OF OTHER COMMITTEES**

- (1) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 15 December 2021 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 15 December 2021 be received; and
- (b) the recommendations contained at minute 7 be accepted and accordingly that the Council agrees:

- (i) the revised budget for 2021/22;
  - (ii) the base budget for 2022/23; and
  - (iii) the revised discretionary planning charges for 2022/23.
- (2) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 19 January 2022 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 19 January 2022 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 25 January 2022 of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Committee held on Tuesday 25 January 2022 be received;
- (b) the recommendations contained in minute 7 – Spending Plans 2022/23 be accepted and accordingly that the Council agrees:
  - (i) the revised budget for 2021/22;
  - (ii) the base budgets for 2022/23.
- (c) the recommendations contained in minute 8 – Fees and Charges 2022/23 be accepted and accordingly that the Council agrees the Fees and Charges for 2022/23.

## **12. REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY PANELS**

- (1) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 11 January 2022 of Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Leisure and Community Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 11 January 2022 be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 18 January 2022 of Health and Public Protection Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Health and Public Protection Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 18 January 2022 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 20 January 2022 of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 20 January 2022 be received.

- (4) Minutes of meeting Monday, 24 January 2022 of Climate Change Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel held on Monday 24 January 2022 be received.

- (5) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 27 January 2022 of Streetscene Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Streetscene Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 27 January 2022 be received.

- (6) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 1 February 2022 of Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday 01 February 2022 be received.

- (7) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 3 February 2022 of Housing Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 03 February 2022 be received.

**13. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 2.12**

There were no questions submitted for this meeting.

**14. MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 2.6**

There were no motions submitted for this meeting.

**15. FINANCE STRATEGY, CAPITAL PROGRAMME, REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2022/23**

- (1) Suspension of Standing Order 2.15 and 2.16

Having been duly proposed by Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE and seconded by Councillor Mrs S Walker, it was RESOLVED that:

- (a) the provisions of Standing Order 2.15 be suspended to allow the Executive Leader of the Council to speak for longer than five minutes on items 15(2) and 15(3); and also to allow the Opposition Spokesmen to speak for not more than ten minutes; and

- (b) the provisions of Standing Order 2.16 be suspended to allow the Executive Leader of the Council to speak on matters referred to in items 15(2) and 15(3) more than once to respond to points raised in debate.

- (2) Report to the Executive - 07 February 2022



Councillor R H Price, JP declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of this item as he leases an allotment in Portchester. Councillor Price confirmed that, should the need arise, he would not take part in any debate regarding allotments.

Councillor J M Englefield declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in respect of this item as he leases an allotment in Titchfield Common. Councillor Englefield confirmed that, should the need arise, he would not take part in any debate regarding allotments.

A revised page 100 of the agenda pack was tabled at the meeting to clarify at paragraph 33 of the report that 'Working-age caseload claimants' are in receipt of an out-of-work benefit such as Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support or Universal Credit.

It was proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor T M Cartwright, MBE that the Council accept the recommendations of the Executive and approves:

- (a) the capital programme and financing of £44,990,900;
- (b) an overall revised revenue budget for 2021/22 of £10,494,800;
- (c) a revenue budget for 2022/23 of £10,788,000;
- (d) a council tax for Fareham Borough Council for 2022/23 of £175.22 per band D property, which represents a £5.00 per year increase when compared to the current year and is within referendum limits; and
- (e) an unchanged Council Tax Support Scheme for 2022/23.

In presenting the budget proposals, the Executive Leader gave a review of the Council's performance, success stories and notable achievements from the year and outlined the agreed priorities.

The Executive Leader was pleased to present the administration's twenty-third annual budget and, as is tradition, reminded Members of the achievements of the year and the challenges that have been overcome.

The Executive Leader stated that he was sure Members would agree that the Council has played a significant role during the last two pandemic-dominated years and continues to respond to the needs of residents and businesses in a time of high demand and urgency.

The Executive Leader began his presentation with a wholehearted thank you to all the Council staff and to his fellow Councillors for their continued hard work and professionalism through challenging times. The Executive Leader added particular thanks in relation to the budget he was presenting today to Andy Wannell and all of his finance staff without whom, in financial terms, the Council would not be the envy of many of Fareham's neighbours for prudent budgeting and control.

The Executive Leader stated that, despite the challenges faced, the Council has not stood still and that members would see throughout the presentation examples of prudent but ambitious capital investments in projects across the Borough. The Council continues to plan ahead carefully to meet the current and future needs of residents, but it must be acknowledged that we also face continued financial challenges, further impacted by COVID-19. The Executive Leader would therefore be recommending a very small one penny per day council tax increase for 2022/2023 for the average home.

The Executive Leader stated that we are privileged to live in a Borough with many areas of high quality parks and green space. He was pleased to say that both Holly Hill Woodland Park and The Sensory Garden in the town centre were again awarded Green Flags designating them as some of the best parks in the country. The beautiful Abbey Meadows site was officially opened to the public in the summer and contains a range of footpaths and wildlife habitats to enjoy as well as the Titchfield Abbey themed play area. Future plans are in place to create a community orchard alongside the planting of native trees to support the environment.

The Executive Leader advised the meeting that to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's 70 years of service, the Council will also be creating a secluded and protected wildlife habitat on the northern part of the site. This will be called, the Queen's Copse and residents and organisations are being given the opportunity to sponsor trees to be planted there in honour of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

The Executive Leader stated that members may have driven past the impressive Gate Guardian sculpture that was installed at Daedalus Common in August. The striking winning design was funded by the National Grid and chosen by Fareham residents. The sculpture will be able to be viewed close up when the green space is opened to visitors and given its official name of Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Park later this year.

The innovative virtual Fareham in Bloom returned again this year. Over 150 entries were submitted in a range of categories. The winners were chosen by a public poll with hundreds of votes being cast by our residents.

The Executive Leader stated that in October, the newly refurbished Fareham Leisure Centre was opened, with local BMX Freestyle Olympic medallist, Declan Brooks helping to unveil the refurbished centre. The Council invested over £6m in the centre which now features state-of-the-art facilities including a climbing wall, soft play area and indoor splash pad that is suitable for those with accessibility needs. Visitors to the highly successful Holly Hill Leisure Centre can now also enjoy a new steam room and sauna. Working in partnership with Everyone Active, both centres now have 'Changing Places' accredited accessible toilet facilities, allowing people with profound and multiple learning and/or physical disabilities to be able to use and enjoy both Leisure Centres. This brings the Council's total investment in its leisure centres this year up to almost £7m. The Council has also made a commitment to invest nearly £450,000 in improvements to community buildings over the next few years helping to ensure that these vital hubs can continue to thrive in the Borough.

The Executive Leader stated that he was sure everyone would agree that the pandemic has highlighted the kindness, support and dedication of many of the Borough's residents, charities and organisations. To recognise their achievements in exceptional times the Council launched the COVID Heroes Award which celebrates those organisations and individuals of all ages who have worked tirelessly to support people in need during the pandemic and, having helped choose the winners, he was proud to say there were many worthy examples of residents and organisations working tirelessly during challenging times to support and improve the lives of vulnerable Fareham residents.

Following the first COVID lockdown, the Council approved the allocation of £30,000 to provide small voluntary organisations with a one-off payment of £250. The focus of these grants was to reduce the financial burden posed by the additional costs and lost income experienced because of the COVID restrictions. The Executive Leader was pleased to say that the Council was able to extend the scheme by an additional year.

The Executive Leader stated that one of the most significant developments of the year took place in October when the Executive agreed to restart work on Fareham's new arts and entertainment venue, Fareham Live. After extensive preparatory work, the project was put on hold at the end of 2020 due to the uncertainties in the arts and entertainment sector created by the pandemic. The £13m venue, which is now due to open at the end of 2023, will bring a thriving cultural and community venue to the heart of the town. It also forms the first phase of the Council's ambitious regeneration plans for the Civic Quarter and will help attract wider investment into the town centre.

After the cancellation of 2020's Christmas light switch on due to the pandemic, it was good to see thousands of people of all ages enjoying the 2021 event. As part of the festivities, traders along West Street were offered a free set of Christmas lights to display. This, together with all of the other Christmas decorations, music, performers and activities made for an event to remember.

Building on the success of the Council's Shop Local and Eat Local campaigns, the Live, Love Local campaign was launched before Christmas. This has been very well received by local traders, many of whom feature in a blog that celebrates the quality produce and service found at local traders, cafes and restaurants across the Borough.

The Executive Leader stated that as Members know, the pandemic has seen many businesses struggle and the Council has continued to work hard during the year to support local companies. As part of the Council's efforts, over £34 million in government grants has been awarded to local businesses during the last two years. £25m in rate relief has helped take some of the pressure off those businesses that were struggling to pay their business rates bills. The Council is still working on the latest schemes and there are 10 more to be completed between now and the end of the financial year resulting in a further £2.6m in rate reliefs and another £1m in grants. The different grants available to firms can be confusing, but the Council's Grants Helpline has helped local businesses pinpoint government grants for which they may be eligible. By being flexible in its approach, the Council has also helped business who have struggled with the terms of their rent, by coming up with revised payment

terms to help them with their cash flow. The Council has also supported workers in the Borough who have had to isolate as a result of the test and trace rules, issuing just under £300,000 in two years, with more to come as the scheme continues until the end of March.

The Executive Leader stated that the Council understands that businesses need more than just financial help and that the Council has therefore developed a bespoke package of support to local companies. Enterprise South was commissioned in the Spring to provide local traders across the Borough with a six-week programme of training webinars and one-to-one financial advice as part of the Save the High Street campaign and over 75 firms have so far benefited from free training on topics ranging from digital support through to specialist guidance on priority sectors such as marine engineering. In addition, the Council offered a free voucher to local businesses worth up to £1,000 for COVID related legal or financial advice. The Executive Leader stated that town and district centres were hit hard by the pandemic. The Council has encouraged a safe return to them by providing signage and COVID marshals, some of whom are the Council's own employees, to offer advice and guidance to visitors.

Turning to Solent Airport and the two business parks at Daedalus, the Executive Leader stated that these form the area's largest employment site. The number and diversity of new businesses located there continues to grow. To help meet this growing demand, four new dedicated business units, ready for occupiers at Faraday business park were constructed following a £5.6m investment. Several prospective tenants have expressed their interest in the units with discussions ongoing. In line with the Council's push to be environmentally sustainable, the new business units have the highest energy performance rating, solar photovoltaic panels and the capability for electric car charging.

The Executive Leader was pleased to be able to say that the financial position for Daedalus this year has been positive, with overall income projected to exceed expenditure by just under £150,000. Over the next five years, income from both airside and non-airside activities is expected to grow annually. To support its continued growth during the medium term, there will be a focus on funding potential infrastructure improvements through income generated at the site through rents and charges.

The Executive Leader stated that Welborne Garden Village has passed some major milestones during the last 12 months. In July, Hampshire County Council agreed to be the lead organisation delivering the new M27 Junction 10 which unlocked £50 million in funding pledged by Buckland and a further £42 million offered by the Government through a Housing Infrastructure Grant. This means that funding is now secured for this critical upgrade which will see Junction 10 turned into an all moves junction. December saw outline planning consent being issued for Buckland's plans for Welborne, making it the largest ever development scheme to be approved by the Council. This means preparatory work can now begin onsite to deliver the 6,000 home new community.

The Executive Leader stated that following a Borough-wide consultation on the Revised Publication Version of the Local Plan in the summer, the plan was

submitted to the Government Inspector for examination in September. The Inspector's public hearing sessions will start next month and it is anticipated that the final plan will be adopted by the Council later this year.

The Executive Leader stated that the Council hasn't just planned for development by others in the Borough. Over the past year, the Council has made significant commitments and investments in its own housing stock by developing new homes and making improvements to those already built.

In December, Fareham Housing secured planning consent to build 16 sheltered housing apartments for older residents on the site at Station Road in Portchester. While the building will be owned and managed by Fareham Housing, a financial donation from the Randal Cremer Cottages Trust is helping towards the cost of this project. This gesture will be reflected by naming the building 'Sir Randal Cremer House' after the Nobel Prize winner who was born in Fareham. The Executive Leader further stated that last autumn, the tenants of Assheton Court and local residents were asked to comment on redevelopment ideas for the sheltered housing scheme. This project will bring forward additional badly needed homes for older people, with a planning application due to be submitted this year.

In June, construction of a new Affordable Housing development, Rose Court, was completed. It is built on the old Hampshire Rose site on the corner of Highlands Road and has 18 one and two bedroom apartments. All are available at a Social Rent thanks to a £1.2m grant from the Homes and Communities Agency. This means that tenants will be able to live in high quality housing whilst paying the most affordable form of rent.

In the Autumn, the Council committed £500,000, supplemented by £1m from the Government's Local Authority Delivery Fund, towards energy efficiency improvements in the Council's social housing stock. Over 130 potential properties have been identified so far, helping to both tackle fuel poverty and improve the quality of life for many of the Council's tenants whilst also reducing their carbon footprint.

The Executive Leader acknowledged that climate change is a growing concern for many residents. It is also a key priority for the Council which has committed to becoming carbon neutral in its operations by 2030. To help achieve this ambitious goal, a Climate Change Action Plan containing 44 projects was approved in June. The Executive Leader stated that the Council has moved quickly since the plan was approved. The procurement of the Council's first 100% electric vehicle was followed by approval for a 12-month trial into the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil. Also known as HVO, this is a biofuel that produces 88% less carbon emissions than diesel. For those who have signed up to the new garden waste collection service, bins will be emptied into vehicles fuelled by HVO. Plans are now being made to expand the use of the fuel to more of the Council's fleet if the trial proves to be successful.

The Executive Leader stated that whilst the main focus of the Council's Action Plan is on reducing the Council's carbon footprint, the Council recognises its leadership role and is working to support wider emission reductions across the Borough where it can. With this in mind, the Council has worked in partnership with energy efficiency consultancy and installer, City Energy, to

offer low-income households living in less energy efficient homes free improvements. These have included measures such as solar panels, new insulation, double glazing, or even a new front door. The Executive Leader stated that, as part of a consortium of 22 Councils the Council was successful in a £15.7m bid to the Government's Sustainable Warmth scheme. This will allow more residents earning a low income and living in energy inefficient homes to receive free energy upgrades. The new scheme will launch in the spring and will be widely publicised across the Borough.

The Executive Leader stated that as part of the Council's considered response to the financial challenges faced, a number of opportunities for additional income generation have been explored during the last few years. One such area is Garden Waste Collections which is a discretionary service. Fareham Borough Council was the last Council in Hampshire to begin charging for the collections when it opened early bird subscriptions in September. The Executive Leader was pleased to be able to say that the new service has proven popular with residents, with approaching 18,000 households signing up so far. Putting this into context, only around 20,000 homes were regularly using the free single sack service. Customers can choose from one of two bin sizes, both of which allow much more garden waste to be collected when compared to the old sack. Collections commenced at the beginning of this month and the Executive Leader was pleased to say that the start of the new service has gone smoothly, with many customers providing positive feedback.

The Executive Leader stated that Solar powered payment terminals were installed in a number of Council coastal car parks in the summer and Fareham Borough Council was the last Council along the whole of the south coast from Cornwall to Kent to introduce coastal charging. To help ensure that regular users can enjoy the best value, heavily discounted annual season tickets also went on sale to the public, costing approximately 22p for daily use.

The Executive Leader stated that one of the major challenges faced by the Council is to try and keep an eye on changes that might affect the balance of spend against the funding sources available and he outlined a number of these:

The spending review for all local authorities was delayed again by COVID-19, with one year finance settlements being used from 2020/21. Whatever the outcome of the review, it is unlikely to be good news for district councils with the care sector having such a large need for funding. There is also likely to be a business rate reset where the rateable values of properties could be changed.

The Executive Leader stated that as we emerge from two years of COVID-19 restrictions, the way in which the economy will react remains unknown. As a Council we have seen increases in expenditure and reductions in income. Some of these changes, particularly around town centre parking income, remain slow to recover to pre-COVID-19 levels. He further stated that the April 2021 pay award has not yet been agreed which is going to delay the 2022 award. There will also be a pension valuation which could impact the amount that the employer pays for those in the scheme.

The Executive Leader stated that Members will have heard the recent announcements around the levelling up fund, and this is an area that will evolve over the next financial year. He indicated that we will also see lots of work around climate change. One of the big areas affecting everyone in the Borough will be the Environment Bill, which will see changes to how household waste is collected and disposed of. The Council's Opportunities team continues to find areas where money can be saved, or extra income generated.

The Executive Leader stated there is a need to be aware of service demands as they evolve to meet the needs of customers in ever challenging times. Ensuring that decisions made in the past are still the right ones and that income from the Council's investments continue to help keep council tax to acceptable levels are also key. The review of the corporate strategy is due during 2022 and could impact on the budgets as we find out what matters to residents.

The Executive Leader stated that although recent times have been challenging and will continue to be so into the future, the Council is still going through a period of investment in the borough and reminded Members of some of the larger investment schemes. Fareham Live is likely to cost in the region of £13m with a view to the new facility opening in late 2023, hopefully with the annual pantomime. Osborn Road Multi Storey car park will see investment of at least £5m going forward. The proposed development of Assheton Court in Portchester is a sheltered housing scheme looking to provide 60 – 70 sheltered flats with a likely start date of late 2022 or early 2023. Investment at Solent Airport at Daedalus is continuing and will see a further £9m spent creating new units to rent out as well as air ground lighting and performance-based navigation.

The Executive Leader stated that by 2026, it is estimated that there will be a surplus of £6 million capital which represents a modest contingency of 8.1% of the overall programme, but this relies on every scheme being completed on time and within budget. Surplus resources are required to cover these situations and also for new schemes that may come online during the next 5 years. It is important to realise that the programme relies heavily on capital receipts, revenue contributions of almost £6 million to fund the programme and borrowing arrangements of just over £23million. The Executive Leader stated that despite all the committed capital spend it is important to note that there will be a need to spend just under £200 million in the next 30 years to make sure that all of the Council's assets remain fit for purpose and to keep them operational.

The Executive Leader turned to the revenue budget for Council housing and stated that the cost of running the Housing Revenue Account is estimated to be just under £13 million in 2022-23, with the principal source of funding being from rents. Almost 91% of the annual income is from rent of dwellings and garages with the average weekly rent in Fareham being £97.26 in 2022-23. Following a consultation exercise in February 2019, the Government now allows the Council to increase the weekly rent by CPI as at September of the previous year plus 1%. This means that from April 2022 rents will increase by 4.1%. The Executive Leader further stated that as part of the HRA, the next 5 years will see a £29 million investment in Council properties including

improvements, acquisitions and a new build programme. In October 2018 the Government abolished the cap on HRA borrowing which, although good news, must be treated with some caution as the funds available through borrowing need to be serviced without undermining the financial stability of the Council's HRA. The Executive Leader stated that at this point, he wanted to highlight that only 16% of the £46.7m spent on Council services was funded by Council Tax in 2020/21 and that a range of sources fund the services the Council provides. These sources include revenue from prudent investments, rents and charges alongside business rates and the New Homes Bonus. The impact of COVID-19 meant the Council had to draw down just over £1m from its reserves last year. However, the largest share of funding comes from specific housing benefit grants and reimbursements.

The Executive Leader announced he was pleased to be able to present the budget which maintains the support of residents. The Executive Leader stated the Council had asked its residents if they supported the £5 proposed Council Tax increase and the vast majority were in favour of it. Each year, in recognition of the economic conditions at the time, the Council determines how the budget should be prepared for the following year. The Medium-Term Finance Strategy was considered in January of this year, and clear budget setting principles were determined as a result. The net budget for 2022/23 will amount to £10.8 million and is almost £516,000 more than the base budget for the current year. With funding from business rates and grants totalling £3,077,864, the sum of £7,710,136 must be raised from Fareham's Council taxpayers. Fareham's Council Tax base for 2022/23 is 44,000 which shows an increase of 198 band D properties over the 2021/22 figure. This is along with around 2,691 properties receiving assistance through the council tax support scheme which will benefit those homeowners to the tune of almost £4million. Dividing the amount to be raised from our taxpayers by the tax base gives a Council Tax for band D properties of £175.22. So, with Fareham's proportion of the council tax rising £5 this year it remains a small element of the overall increase of £60.37 for 2022/23.

The Executive Leader stated the Police and Crime Commissioner will be increasing her share of council tax by £10 with the Hampshire Fire showing an increase of £5. The biggest increase will be from the County Council which is raising its council tax by the maximum allowed for its services. The increase will be 1% for the social care precept and 2% going on ordinary council tax which gives a total increase of 3% or a £40.37 rise for a band D property.

The Executive Leader stated that times remain tough and after another very challenging year with no further information on the future of council finances, he was in a position where the Council must say to its customers that Council Tax for Fareham will need to increase for a seventh time since 2009. In real terms, this is still below the level had Council Tax been increased in line with inflation each year. The overall position for Fareham's taxpayers will be:

- Fareham Borough Council £175.22
- Hampshire County Council £1390.86
- Police and Crime Commissioner £236.46
- Hampshire Fire and Rescue £75.43



This gives a total for a Band D property of £1,877.97, which represents a 3.3% increase over the 2021/22 figure.

The Executive Leader stated that he had outlined a budget that delivers all services at a cost equivalent to a level seen a decade ago. He had also proposed a capital programme for the next 5 years valued at £74 million.

The Executive Leader confirmed that although the Council has seen further funding reductions by way of a loss of New Homes Bonus a balanced budget has been set. And, in line with Central Government policy, it has increased Council Tax for only the seventh time in 13 years. Considering the reductions to the Council's funding over that time, it is a remarkable achievement to have kept council tax so low. The Executive Leader stated that this is why, even with a £5 increase, Fareham will still have one of the lowest council tax band D charges in the country.

The Executive Leader ended his presentation by reminding members of the value that Fareham residents receive from the Council. Most properties in Fareham are Band C. The proposed Council Tax for two adults living in a Band C property will be £155.75 next year, an increase of just 1p per day which the Executive Leader hoped Members would agree that to receive all the high-quality services that the Council provides for less than £3 a week can only be considered excellent value for money.

On that note, the Executive Leader asked Members to approve the recommendations set out under Item 15(2) on the agenda, commenting that this makes Fareham's Council Tax one of the lowest "district" rates in England. Quite impressive when considering that, at the same time, 90% of councils will receive more Government support per dwelling than Fareham.

During the debate on this item, several Councillors gave their thanks to the Chief Executive Officer and to all Officers who work hard to deliver the services of the Council, particularly during the past two years. They also thanked the Deputy Chief Executive Officer and his Officers in the finance team for their work for this budget.

Following debate on this item, and on being put to the meeting, the recommendations (a) to (e), as outlined on page 4 of the agenda, were declared CARRIED with 26 voting in favour and 1 voting against.

(Councillors I Bastable, Mrs S Bayford, Mrs J Bull, Mrs P M Bryant, T M Cartwright MBE, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, P J Davies, T Davies, S Dugan, Mrs T Ellis, M J Ford, J Forrest, N Gregory, Miss T Harper, Mrs C L A Hockley, G Kelly, Mrs J Kelly, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Miss S Pankhurst, R H Price JP, Mrs K K Trott, N K Walker, Mrs S Walker and S D T Woodward voting in favour and Councillor J M Englefield voting against).

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Executive be accepted and accordingly, the Council approves:

(a) the capital programme and financing of £44,990,900;

(b) an overall revised revenue budget for 2021/22 of £10,494,800;

- (c) a revenue budget for 2022/23 of £10,788,000;
  - (d) a council tax for Fareham Borough Council for 2022/23 of £175.22 per band D property, which represents a £5.00 per year increase when compared to the current year and is within referendum limits; and
  - (e) an unchanged Council Tax Support Scheme for 2022/23.
- (3) Council Tax for 2022/23 for Fareham Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

The Council considered information tabled at the meeting: a schedule showing the formal calculations for setting the Council Tax and a graphical breakdown of council tax rates, as attached to these minutes.

On the recommendations being put to the meeting, they were declared CARRIED with 26 voting in favour and 1 voting against.

(Councillors I Bastable, Mrs S Bayford, Mrs J Bull, Mrs P M Bryant, T M Cartwright MBE, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, P J Davies, T Davies, S Dugan, Mrs T Ellis, M J Ford, J Forrest, N Gregory, Miss T Harper, Mrs C L A Hockley, G Kelly, Mrs J Kelly, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Miss S Pankhurst, R H Price JP, Mrs K K Trott, N K Walker, Mrs S Walker and S D T Woodward voting in favour and Councillor J M Englefield voting against).

RESOLVED that the Council:

- (1) notes that on 25 February 2022 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base 2022/23 for the whole Council area as 44,002.6 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")];
- (2) calculates that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2022/23 is £7,710,136;
- (3) notes that the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-
  - (a) £46,738,100 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
  - (b) £39,027,964 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
  - (c) £7,710,136 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).

- (d) £175.22 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.
- (e) £0.00 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (f) £175.22 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
- (4) notes that the County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner along with Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below.
- (5) in accordance with Sections 30 and 38 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2022/23 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

## Valuation Bands

Fareham Borough Council							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
116.81	136.28	155.75	<b>175.22</b>	214.16	253.10	292.03	350.44

  

Hampshire County Council							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
817.97	954.29	1,090.62	<b>1,226.95</b>	1,499.61	1,772.26	2,044.92	2,453.90

  

Hampshire County Council – Adult Social Care							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
109.27	127.49	145.70	<b>163.91</b>	200.33	236.76	273.18	327.82

  

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
157.64	183.91	210.19	<b>236.46</b>	289.01	341.55	394.10	472.92

  

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
50.29	58.67	67.05	<b>75.43</b>	92.19	108.95	125.72	150.86

Aggregate of Council Tax Requirements							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1,251.98	1,460.64	1,669.31	<b>1,877.97</b>	2,295.30	2,712.62	3,129.95	3,755.94

- (6) That in accordance with the set of principles set by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for the year, it is determined that the relevant basic amount of council tax for 2022/23 is not excessive.

## 16. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND CAPITAL PLANS 2022/23

On being put to the meeting, the recommendations of the Executive, as outlined on page 5 of the agenda, was CARRIED with 26 voting in favour and 1 against.

(Councillors I Bastable, Mrs S Bayford, Mrs J Bull, Mrs P M Bryant, T M Cartwright MBE, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, P J Davies, T Davies, S Dugan, Mrs T Ellis, M J Ford, J Forrest, N Gregory, Miss T Harper, Mrs C L A Hockley, G Kelly, Mrs J Kelly, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Miss S Pankhurst, R H Price JP, Mrs K K Trott, N K Walker, Mrs S Walker and S D T Woodward voting in favour and Councillor J Englefield voting against).

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 07 February 2022 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account Budget and Capital Plans 2022/23 be accepted and, accordingly, the Council agrees that:

- (a) rents be approved for Council Dwellings, as set out in paragraph 23 of the report, with effect from 01 April 2022;
- (b) rents for Council garages be increased by 3.8% with effect from 01 April 2022;
- (c) the revised budget for 2021/22 be approved; and
- (d) the base budget for 2022/23 be approved.

## 17. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2022/23

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 07 February 2022, contained at item 11(4) of the agenda be accepted and that, accordingly, the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy 2022/23 be approved.

## 18. CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/23

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 07 February 2022, contained at item 11(5) of the agenda, be accepted and,

accordingly, that the Council approves the Capital Programme and Capital Strategy 2022/23.

**19. APPROVAL OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23**

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 10 January 2022, contained at item 11(1) of the agenda, be accepted and accordingly, that the Council approves the updated Pay Policy Statement 2022/23, as annexed to the Medium-Term Finance Strategy.

**20. GAMBLING - STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 01 February 2021, contained at item 11(3) of the agenda, be accepted and accordingly, that the Council approves the Gambling Statement of Principles 2022-2025.

**21. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

There were no changes made at this meeting to the Appointments of Seats on Committees.

(The meeting started at 5.00 pm  
and ended at 7.15 pm).