

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Council

**Date:** Friday, 24 February 2023

**Venue:** Council Chamber - Civic Offices

**PRESENT:**

M J Ford, JP  
(Mayor)

F Birkett  
(Deputy Mayor)

**Councillors:** Ms C Bainbridge, I Bastable, Mrs S M Bayford, R Bird, Mrs P M Bryant, Miss J Burton, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, H P Davis, S Dugan, Mrs T L Ellis, J M Englefield, D G Foot, N R Gregory, D J Hamilton, Miss T G Harper, Mrs P Hayre, Mrs C L A Hockley, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Mrs J Needham, P Nother, Ms S Pankhurst, Mrs K K Trott, N J Walker, Mrs S M Walker and S D T Woodward



**1. PRAYERS**

The meeting commenced with a short service of prayer led by the Mayor's Chaplain, Reverend Mike Terry.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs F Burgess and S Ingram.

**3. MINUTES**

Councillor J M Englefield joined the meeting during this item.

RESOLVED that the Mayor be authorised to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 15 December 2022.

**4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor was pleased to announce that he is looking forward to his gala ball which will take place on 22 April and asked if any members felt able to donate any raffle prizes they would be gratefully received for his charities.

**5. EXECUTIVE LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Executive Leader was delighted to be able to announce that [Lee Victory Festival](#) will be held at Solent Airport, Daedalus on 22nd - 24th September 2023 by permission of Fareham Borough Council

The Executive Leader stated that that the significance of this location was that the former HMS Daedalus airfield during Operation Overlord on 6th June 1944 saw 435 sorties flown from there making it the busiest single airfield on D-Day. In all, over 2,000 sorties were flown from this airfield, the majority in the first ten days of operation. Now as Solent Airport @ Daedalus, owned and operated by Fareham Borough Council it provides an amazing space for the event to be located and lends itself to the name of the event as the efforts from this airfield ultimately led to the allied forces WWII Victory.

The Executive Leader announced that Fareham Borough Council is proud to be supporting Lee Victory Festival by hosting a major part of the event at Solent Airport, Daedalus. The iconic airfield, its aircraft and crews played such a decisive role in D-Day that it is natural to include it in the festival. The armed forces are a huge part of our communities, and it is right that we celebrate their contribution in this way. It is also good to share an event between Fareham and Gosport, both proud towns steeped in military history.

The Executive Leader stated that a report regarding the King's Coronation is being taken to the next Executive and will provide a number of plans for consideration:

- (a) the Council promotes how residents can hold their own street parties and get involved with the national initiatives, The Big Lunch and The Big Help Out over the Coronation weekend;
- (b) commemorative Coronation mugs are gifted by the Council to all primary school children in the Borough;
- (c) a bespoke, commemorative seat is installed at The Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Park;
- (d) a free community event hosted by the Council, promoted as The Big Lunch, is held at Park Lane Recreation Ground on Sunday 7 May;
- (e) The King's Cypher is engraved into a diamond shaped area of external brickwork on the Fareham Live building and;
- (f) a special Coronation link is added to the Mayoral chain.

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

### **Health and Public Protection**

#### Police and Crime update.

The Executive Member announced the appointment of a New Chief Constable for Hampshire & Isle of Wight. Scott Chilton joined the force yesterday and, with the support of the Police Crime Commissioner, has committed to re-introducing local bobbies back to the community by April 2024.

The Police and Crime Panel has voted to support the Police and Crime Commissioner's precept increase of £15. The additional money will be used to fund 50 additional new police officers. Hampshire and Isle of Wight is on track to deliver 600 new officers by April 2023: the 50 new officers will take the total uplift in officer numbers to 650 by March 2024.

The Executive Member stated that she has made representation to the Chief Inspector and the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding anti-social behaviour, in particular illegal car meets and speed racing, and was pleased to report that the police have launched operation Chromium, resulting in a step up of enforcement action, prosecuting, and seizing cars.

As part of the Home Office's Safer Streets Programme, Fareham and other local authorities have recently secured significant funding to invest in various crime prevention initiatives.

The Executive Member reminded all members that the virtual bystander training sessions dedicated for local councillors would be taking place at 1.30pm on Monday 27 February. As some members were unable to make this

date, the Executive Member was pleased to confirm that she has received a selection of alternative dates and invited members to contact her if they are interested in taking part. By taking part, members will be showing support for this initiative.

## **Leisure and Community**

### Position Statement re delivery of community and voluntary support services

The Executive Member announced that Fareham Borough Council has and will continue to recognise the importance and value of the voluntary and community sector within the Borough to serve its community. The current contract with One Community for the provision of this support is due to end at the close of March.

As is usual in these circumstances, the Council went out to tender. The existing provider, One Community, declined to bid. It therefore became necessary to undertake a review as our requirement has changed significantly. With this in mind, the decision was taken not to award a contract in the same way that we have done in the past but to deliver the service in an alternative way.

The Council has an obligation to ensure that the services it funds meet the varying needs of its customers in the most financially efficient way. It is for this reason that the way this support will be delivered following the end of the current contract with One Community is being reviewed.

A report will be considered by the Executive in April setting out the proposed way forward which more effectively responds to the needs of the Borough. It will be the Executive that considers this proposal in the first instance and changes will only be made with their full backing.

The Executive Member stated that the Council would like to place on record its thanks to One Community and, in particular, to all the volunteers who provide fantastic support across the Borough of Fareham. The community can rest assured that good quality support regarding the Council's 'Big 3' of governance, funding and volunteering remains a priority and this will be reflected in the new arrangements being proposed. Full details will be confirmed when agreed by the Council's Executive.

## **7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were reminded that the Monitoring Officer had granted a dispensation to all Members to enable discussion and a decision to be taken at item 15 – Finance Strategy, Capital Programme, Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2023/24.

## **8. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS**

There were no petitions presented at this meeting.

## **9. DEPUTATIONS**

A written deputation was submitted by Mr Gareth Jones in respect of the minuting of deputations.

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

(1) Minutes of meeting Monday, 9 January 2023 of Executive

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 09 January 2023 be received; and
- (b) the recommendations contained in minute 9(1) be considered at item 19 of the agenda.

(2) Minutes of meeting Monday, 6 February 2023 of Executive

RESOLVED that

- (a) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on Monday 06 February 2023 be received;
  - (b) the recommendations contained in minute 9(1) be considered at item 15(2) of the agenda;
  - (c) the recommendations contained in minute 9(2) be considered at item 16 of the agenda;
  - (d) the recommendations contained in minute 9(3) be considered at item 18 of the agenda; and
  - (e) the recommendations contained in minute 9(4) be considered at item 17 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, 14 December 2022 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 14 December 2022 be received.

(2) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 18 January 2023 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 18 January 2023 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 25 January 2023 of Planning Committee

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 25 January 2023 be received.

- (4) Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 15 February 2023 of Planning Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 15 February 2023 were tabled at the meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday 15 February 2023 be received; and
- (b) the recommendations contained at minute 7 be accepted and accordingly that the Council agrees:
  - (i) the revised budget for 2022/23;
  - (ii) the base budget for 2023/24;
  - (iii) the revised discretionary planning charges for 2023/24 (with amended date as referenced in the minutes) as set out on Appendix B to the report.
- (5) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 31 January 2023 of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Committee

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing & Regulatory Affairs Committee held on Tuesday 31 January 2023 be received;
- (b) the recommendations contained in minute 8 – Spending Plans 2023/24 be accepted and accordingly that the Council agrees:
  - (i) the revised revenue budget for 2022/23; and
  - (ii) the base budgets for 2023/24; and
- (c) the recommendations contained in minute 9 – Fees and Charges 2023/24 be accepted and accordingly that the Council agrees the Fees and Charges for 2023/24.

## 12. REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY PANELS

- (1) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 17 January 2023 of Climate Change Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel held on Tuesday, 17 January 2023 be received.

- (2) Minutes of meeting Monday, 23 January 2023 of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Panel held on Monday, 23 January 2023 be received.

- (3) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 26 January 2023 of Streetscene Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Streetscene Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 26 January 2023 be received.

- (4) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 9 February 2023 of Housing Scrutiny Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 09 February 2023 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 2022/24**

- (1) Suspension of Standing Order 2.15 and 2.16

Councillor D J Hamilton joined the meeting during this item.

Having been duly proposed by Councillor S D Martin and seconded by Councillor I J Bastable, it was RESOLVED that:

- (a) the provisions of Standing Order 2.15 be suspended to allow the Executive Leader of the Council to speak on matters referred to in items 15(2) and 15(3) for longer than five minutes; and also to allow the Spokesman for the Opposition Group 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 - 06 February 2023

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

- (a) the capital programme and financing of £37,768,800;
- (b) an overall revised revenue budget for 2022/23 of £10,987,300
- (c) a revenue budget for 2023/24 of £11,897,100;
- (d) a council tax for Fareham Borough Council for 2023/24 of £180.46 per band D property, which represents a £5.24 per year increase when compared to the current year and is within referendum limits;
- (e) an unchanged Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24; and
- (f) that the Council continues to disregard the whole of any incomes prescribed in the Housing Benefit (War Pensions Disregards) Regulations 2007 and the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012.

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 stated that he was sure that Members would agree that the Council continues to respond to the needs of its residents and businesses in a time of ever-growing demand and therefore announced that he would like to begin the presentation with a wholehearted thank you to all the Council staff and to his fellow Councillors for their continued dedication and professionalism. With regard to the budget, he stated that he would like to add particular thanks to Andy Wannell and his finance team without whom, in financial terms, this Council would not be the envy of many of its neighbours for prudent budgeting.

The Executive Leader pointed out that throughout the presentation members would see examples of a prudent but also ambitious approach with capital investments across the Borough and stated that while the Council continues to plan carefully to meet the current and future needs of residents, it must be acknowledged that the Council also faces continued financial challenges, further impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. The Executive Leader therefore recommended a very small increase of just one penny per day council tax increase for 2023/2024 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 spaces. This year the beautiful Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Park was officially opened, and the imposing Gate Guardian sculpture can now be seen up close. We started the project to celebrate Her Majesty's awesome Platinum Jubilee and ended it as a tribute to her incredible reign.



The Borough opened two new sponsored tree planting areas, the Queen's Copse and Platinum Copse, also in honour of the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee and her desire for a green canopy hence the 21,000 trees planted at the Jubilee Park. Suitable tributes are now being planned for the King's Coronation.

The Executive Leader was pleased to say that for over 25 years Fareham in Bloom has brought residents together to showcase their gardens. Hundreds of entries were submitted in a range of categories this year, with hundreds of votes being cast by our residents to choose the winners.

The Council manages 46 children's play areas across the Borough and has been working to upgrade many of them with inclusive equipment. This year, we successfully installed a wheelchair swing at Holly Hill Play Area which was the suggestion of Alex Bufton and inspired by her daughter, Doris. We have also installed communication boards that allow children who are unable to speak to be able to communicate with their friends and family at three play areas across the Borough: at Kenwood Road, Kites Croft Close and Blackbrook Park. These were the suggestion of Hollie Shilling and inspired by her son, Alfie

The Executive Leader stated that we were also pleased to unveil a new digital screen within Fareham Shopping Centre to provide information to the local community, providing another way to inform local residents of the latest news and events. The screen replaces Council Connect which featured four printed posters so also reduces our need for physical print.

In September, the remodelling of the Fareham Live site began. This is one of the most significant developments of the year and it is great to see the swift progress being made, with completion planned for early 2024.

The Executive Leader was pleased to have recently announced the award of £1m as part of the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. Over the next two years, around £800,000 will be spent on planning for, and delivering, improved community facilities in two areas that experience comparatively high levels of deprivation – Fareham North West and Fareham South. In addition to our community help, £200,000 has been committed to supporting local businesses and the economy.

Work is taking place on the Town Centre Masterplan Work, which will provide a framework for ambitious regeneration proposals. The Osborn Road Car Park demolition and replacement planning application was recently submitted. This greatly improved parking facility will support Fareham Live and the broader town centre for many years to come.

This year's Christmas light switch on attracted the largest crowd to date, with thousands of people enjoying the festive decorations, music, performers and activities. The community also gathered in great numbers for the Platinum Jubilee Beacon Lighting at Portchester Castle. Once more our younger residents were able to enjoy Access All Areas.

Following its success, our Live, Love Local campaign promoting local traders, has been extended. The Council continues to support local businesses hit by the pandemic with the remaining £2.3m of COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund being paid out.

The Executive Leader stated that Businesses need more than just financial help and that's why the Council invested £270k of Welcome Back Funding into projects and events to encourage residents back into the community to spend locally. Alongside this, we have organised business support clinics in partnership with the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership at Fareham Innovation Centre.

Solent Airport and the two business parks at Daedalus form the area's largest employment site. The number and diversity of new businesses located there continues to grow. The Executive Leader was pleased to confirm that all business hangars are now let at Daedalus.

In March 2022, a £4.7M investment programme for the Airport was approved. This will enable its continued safe operation and help deliver the Council's Vision to develop a vibrant and sustainable airfield. The investment includes the installation of aeronautical ground lighting, with a planning application recently being submitted.

The Stubbington Bypass officially opened in May. This forms a significant part of wider plans for improving access to Fareham and Gosport. Welborne Garden Village continues to progress and in June was shortlisted for a national planning award for 'Planning Permission of the Year'. The Executive Leader stated that he knew that all members have been impressed with the quality of the Welborne proposals and that even the naysayers appear mostly on-side now. In May, the Council was awarded £65,000 by the Government to move forward with plans for rail services at Welborne. This funding will be used to develop a business case to attract potential investment partners.

The Fareham Local Plan 2037 is undergoing independent examination, following the public hearings that took place earlier this year and subsequent consultation on the main modifications to the plan.

The Executive Leader stated that the Council doesn't just plan for development by others. Construction is nearing completion at Sir Randal Cremer House, Station Road, Portchester. This will deliver 16 sheltered housing apartments for older residents. A financial donation from the Randal Cremer Cottages Trust has helped towards the cost of this project. The planning application for the redevelopment of Assheton Court was approved in January of this year and redevelopment will commence in 2023.

The Executive Leader was pleased to say that Emergency Accommodation at 92 Gordon Road is complete and ready for use, lessening the need to place people in Bed and Breakfast emergency accommodation, which in recent years has been a sizeable cost.

The Council has committed £1.5 million to environmental upgrades to its housing stock, with around 159 Council properties already receiving energy saving improvements so far.

The Executive Leader state that managing the effects of climate change is a concern for many of our residents. It is also a key priority for the Council. This year our first Climate Change Action Plan progress report was published, highlighting what we have achieved so far and the next steps in our journey.

Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil also known as HVO, is a biofuel that produces significantly less carbon emissions than diesel. In addition to fuelling our garden waste vehicles as part of a trial, we expanded its use to our fleet of small diesel vehicles.

The Council worked in partnership with organisations to help residents reduce their energy bills. For example, over 1,000 residents signed up to the Solar Together scheme. This programme offers high-quality solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and battery storage through a group-buying scheme. We have also worked in partnership to promote the Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP) and Warmer Homes programmes, that target support to low-income households living in less energy efficient homes.

The Executive Leader stated that as part of the Council's considered response to the financial challenges we face, a number of opportunities for additional income generation have been explored during the last few years. Our successful 'Clip and Collect' garden waste service has just seen its first year of operation, with renewals remaining high for the next 12 months. Over 20,000 homes signed up means that there are actually more people using the paid-for service than used the free service. In addition, a review following the first 12-months of coastal charging saw a small increase to hourly charges and a concessionary season ticket rate for our residents.

The Executive Leader announced that, even though the Council has achieved a great deal already, further savings still need to be made. The financial year 2023/24 will see a further one-off settlement from central government. The Fair Funding Review has been deferred until the start of the 2025/26 financial year and the chances are that finances for district councils will not benefit from this review, mainly due to pressures in other areas such as social care and education. As part of this funding decision there will also be a business rate reset in 2023 which will see changes to rateable values affecting how much we collect in business rates.

As well as funding reductions the Council must also plan for other budget pressures that will see spending increase over the next few years. There will be a need to provide for changing demand for parking income, Hampshire County Council's arrangements for recycling, the emerging waste strategy from the Government, the cost of planning appeals, the increasing pressure of maintaining Council assets and managing our woodlands, all of which come at a cost to the council. There are also expectations and demands from customers that incur additional costs, particularly around areas such as keeping the Borough tidy or maintaining the high standards of our parks and open spaces. This all comes on top of the current cost of living crisis that has seen many households struggle with energy costs.

The Executive Leader stated that, as with all Medium-Term Finance Strategies, the five-year outlook for the Council's finances is based on best

estimates at this point. These figures include a 3% increase in council tax if approved by Members. There have been calls for councils to be able to increase their council tax by more than 3% but these have been rejected by the government.

This means that Fareham will continue to fall behind other local authorities as Fareham's band D council tax remains £75 below the average district council tax and is in excess of £200 per year below the highest band D tax. These councils will be able to increase their council tax by upwards of £11, that is double the proposed increase for Fareham thus making the gap between prudent councils and the others even greater.

This year the Council has a balanced budget for 2022/23 which at the revised stage may still require the use of some of the Council's reserves. For next year there will also be a need to use reserves to balance the 2023/24 budget even with a 3% increase in council tax. Looking ahead to future years - the shortfall will continue to grow towards the end of the strategy period to an extent where the deficit will be £2.5m per year by 2025/26, even with a 3% increase in council tax, but there will be no useable reserves to balance the budget after the 2024/25 financial year. Without action from the Council, the cumulative deficit will be approaching £7m by the end of 2026/2027. These figures include all the assumptions and known changes to the budgets but more importantly do not include provisions for new priorities such as climate change, town centre regeneration or waste collection charges.

The Executive Leader stated that climate change is a popular topic at the moment with pledges to be carbon neutral by 2030, however, to achieve this there must be investment in services. This is difficult considering the deficit position. The cost-of-living crisis has seen inflation top 10%, and bank base rates increase to their highest levels since 2008, currently at 4%. The town centre also requires further investment, and this remains a priority for the council.

At this point, the Executive Leader turned his attention to the Council's capital programme. The General Fund capital programme for the next five years is a very generous £37 million, focussed on delivering schemes that accord with the Council Priorities.

The biggest scheme the Council has over the next five years is the development of the Fareham Live project. This project will see investment of over £16m with a view to the facility being handed over to us later this year. Working alongside this project will be the removal of the 50-year old Osborn Road Multi Story Car park as the facility comes to the end of its useful life. It will be replaced by a surface car park.

This is a fully funded programme, paid for partly from resources that the Council has accumulated, with a large proportion attracted from external sources, thereby protecting the Council taxpayers.

At the end of the five years, by 2027, it is estimated that there will be a surplus of £5 million which represents a contingency of just 13.5% 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 five years. It is important to realise that the programme relies heavily on capital receipts, revenue contributions of almost £8 million and borrowing arrangements of just over £37million.

Despite all of the committed capital spend there will still be a need to spend just under £200 million over 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. The cost of running the Housing Revenue Account in 2023-24 is estimated to be just under £14.2 million. The principal source of funding is from rents. Almost 91% of the annual income is from rental charges for dwellings and garages. The average weekly rent in Fareham will be £104.41 in 2023-24 which represents an increase of 7%. This increase is lower than the usual rent increase of CPI plus 1% but due to the pressures on household finances the increase has been capped for 2023/24.

As part of the Housing Revenue Account the next five years will see a £25 million investment in Council properties which will include 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 the Council also has a large investment in its housing stock and outlined some of the projects:

- Sir Randal Cremer House (Station Rd, Portchester – 16 sheltered flats) project circa £2.8M, will complete this spring.
- Capella Close (Stubington Lane – 11 shared ownership houses) project circa £2.5M, will also complete this spring.
- Previous completed development at Rose Court on Highlands Road (18 apartments). Project cost circa £3M.
- Proposed redevelopment of Assheton Court in Portchester which is a sheltered housing scheme looking to provide 60 sheltered flats replacing the dated building that has just 33 units. Planning permission for the redevelopment is now in place. The redevelopment will commence this year at a likely cost of £20m. This brings the total programme to £45m.

The Executive Leader announced that he was pleased to be able to present a budget which does maintain the support of residents. Previously the Council has asked residents if they supported council tax increases and the vast majority accepted the need for increases with some willing to go higher than the 3% proposed increase due to the high quality of the services they receive from this Council.

The Executive Leader stated that the gross budget for 2023/24 will see the Council spend over £50 million with a net budget totaling £11.9 million which is almost £1.1 million more than the base budget for the current year. 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 established as a result. These key principles are the basis for preparing the General Fund Revenue budget for 2023/24.

The Executive Leader also stated that fundamentally, and most importantly, the budget must be, and it is, balanced. That is to say there is sufficient income to meet planned costs. Secondly, the budget must be sustainable, providing sufficient flexibility to respond to changing needs and demands in the future. And, just as importantly, we need to be confident that the budget is robust, providing sufficient resources to fulfil our pledges, targeting resources where they are most needed. Where spending pressures are known, they have been fully allowed for in the budget, and the sources of income to pay for the services have been carefully estimated to reflect a realistic position. Savings and opportunities have been built into the budget but only those which are secured have been included, providing a high degree of certainty, and limiting the risk of a budget deficit during the year. This is a strong position, providing certainty for customers, for employees and ourselves that the Council can continue with the level and quality of services that have been delivered since the current administration took control nearly a quarter of a century ago.

The Executive Leader went on to state that despite receiving one of the lowest levels of Government support in Hampshire and taking account of the impact of the unprecedented economic climate, it has been possible to set a net budget of £11.9 million for 2023-24. With funding from business rates and government grants taken into account, the sum of £7,965,355 must be raised from Fareham's Council taxpayers. Fareham's Council Tax base for 2023-24 is 44,139 which shows an increase of 137 band D properties over the 2022/23 figure. This is along with around 2,580 properties receiving assistance through the council tax support scheme. Dividing the amount to be raised from our taxpayers by the tax base gives a Council Tax for band D properties of £180.46.

With Fareham's proportion of the Band D council tax rising by £5.24 this year it remains a small element of the overall increase of £94.63 for 2023/2024. The Police and Crime Commissioner will be increasing her share of council tax by £15 with the Hampshire Fire Service showing an increase of £5. The biggest increase will be from Hampshire County Council who will be raising its council tax by the maximum allowed for their services. The increase will be 2% for the social care precept and 3% going on ordinary council tax which gives a total increase of 5% or a £69.39 rise for a band D property.

The Executive Leader stated that times remain tough and that he therefore was in a position where it was necessary to say to our customers that Council Tax for Fareham will need to increase in line with government guidelines. In real terms, this is still below the level we would have had if we had increased Council Tax in line with inflation each year.

The overall position for Fareham's Band D taxpayers will be:

- Fareham Borough Council £180.46

- Hampshire County Council £1,460.25
- Police and Crime Commissioner £251.46
- Hampshire Fire and Rescue £80.43

This gives a total for a Band D property of £1,972.60, which represents a 4.2% increase over the 2022/23 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 and that he had proposed a capital programme for the next 5 years valued at £37 million. He further stated that he was able to confirm that although the Council has seen further funding reductions by way of a loss of New Homes Bonus a balanced budget has been set. In line with Central Government policy we have increased Council Tax although, considering the reductions to our funding, it is a remarkable achievement to have kept council tax so low and, even with a £5.24 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 that Fareham has most properties in Band C where the Council Tax for two adults will be £160.41 which is an increase of just a penny a day for Council services which in total costs the average home in the borough just £3 per week.

On that note, the Executive Leader asked Members to approve the recommendations set out under Item 15(3) on the meeting's agenda, commenting that this makes Fareham's Council Tax one of the lowest "district" rates in the country which he stated was quite impressive, when considering that, at the same time, the majority of councils will receive more Government support per dwelling than Fareham.

During the debate on this item, several Councillors gave 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.

Having been duly proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor S D Martin and following debate on this item, on it being put to the meeting, the recommendations (a) to (f), as outlined on page 4 of the agenda, were declared CARRIED with 28 voting in favour and 1 abstention.

(Councillors Mrs C Bainbridge, I J Bastable, Mrs S M Bayford, R Bird, F W Birkett, Mrs P M Bryant, Miss J Burton, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, H Davis, S Dugan, Mrs T Ellis, D Foot, M J Ford; N Gregory, D J Hamilton, Miss T Harper, Mrs P Hayre, Mrs C L A Hockley, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Mrs J Needham, P Nother, Ms S Pankhurst, Mrs K K Trott, N J Walker, Mrs S Walker and S D T Woodward voting in favour and Councillor J M Englefield abstaining.)

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

- (a) the capital programme and financing of £37,768,800;

- (b) an overall revised revenue budget for 2022/23 of £10,987,300;
  - (c) a revenue budget for 2023/24 of £11,897,100;
  - (d) a council tax for Fareham Borough Council for 2023/24 of £180.45 per band D property, which represents a £5.24 per year increase when compared to the current year and is within referendum limits;
  - (e) an unchanged Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24; and
  - (f) that the Council continues to disregard the whole of any incomes prescribed in the Housing Benefit (War Pensions Disregards) Regulations 2007 and the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012.
- (3) Council Tax for 2023/24 for Fareham Borough Council, Hampshire County Council, Hampshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Authority

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.

Having been duly proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor S D Martin, on the recommendations being put to the meeting, they were declared CARRIED with 28 voting in favour and 1 voting against.

(Councillors Mrs C Bainbridge, I J Bastable, Mrs S M Bayford, R Bird, F Birkett, Mrs P M Bryant, Miss J Burton, Mrs L E Clubley, M R Daniells, H Davis, S Dugan, Mrs T Ellis, D Foot, M J Ford, N Gregory, D J Hamilton, Miss T Harper, Mrs P Hayre, Mrs C L A Hockley, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Mrs J Needham, P Nother, Ms S Pankhurst, Mrs K K Trott, N J 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 24 February 2023 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base 2023/24 for the whole Council area as 44,139.4 [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 2023/24 is £7,965,355;
- (3) notes that the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2023/24 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-
  - (a) £50,212,900 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) £42,247,545 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) £7,965,355 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) £180.46 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) £180.46 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 2023/24 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

Valuation Bands							
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Fareham Borough Council							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
120.31	140.36	160.41	<b>180.46</b>	220.56	260.66	300.77	360.92

Hampshire County Council							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
845.69	986.63	1,127.58	<b>1,268.53</b>	1,550.43	1,832.32	2,114.22	2,537.06

Hampshire County Council – Adult Social Care							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
127.81	149.12	170.42	<b>191.72</b>	234.32	276.93	319.53	383.44

Police and Crime Commissioner for Hampshire							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
167.64	195.58	223.52	<b>251.46</b>	307.34	363.22	419.10	502.92

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
53.62	62.56	71.49	<b>80.43</b>	98.30	116.18	134.05	160.86

Aggregate of Council Tax Requirements							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1,315.07	1,534.25	1,753.42	<b>1,972.60</b>	2,410.95	2,849.31	3,287.67	3,945.20

- (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 2023/24 is not excessive.

## 16. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET AND CAPITAL PLANS 2023/24

The Mayor invited Councillor Mrs K K Trott to present her amendment at which point Councillor Mrs Trott advised the meeting that her Motion was being withdrawn. The Mayor accepted this Motion was withdrawn.

Having been duly proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor S D Martin, and on having been put to the meeting, the recommendations of the Executive, as outlined on page 5 of the agenda, were CARRIED with 24 voting in favour and 5 against.

(Councillors, I Bastable, Mrs S Bayford, R Bird, F Birkett, Mrs P M Bryant, Miss J Burton, Mrs L E Clublely, M R Daniells, H Davis, S Dugan, Mrs T Ellis, D Foot, M J Ford, N Gregory, Miss T Harper, Mrs P Hayre, Mrs C L A Hockley, Mrs K Mandry, S D Martin, Mrs J Needham, Ms S Pankhurst, N J Walker, Mrs S Walker and S D T Woodward voting in favour and Councillors Mrs C Bainbridge, J M Englefield, D Hamilton, P Nother and Mrs K K Trott voting against).

RESOLVED that the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 06 February 2023 in respect of the Housing Revenue Account Budget and Capital Plans 2023/24 be accepted and, accordingly, the Council agrees that:

- (a) rents be approved for Council Dwellings, as set out in paragraph 21 of the report, with effect from 01 April 2023;
- (b) rents for Council garages be increased by 7% with effect from 01 April 2023;
- (c) the revised budget for 2022/23 be approved; and

(d) the base budget for 2023/24 be approved.

**17. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2023/24**

Having been duly proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor S D Martin and on having been put to the meeting, the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 06 February 2023, contained at item 9(4) of the agenda were accepted.

RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy 2023/24 be approved.

**18. CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND CAPITAL STRATEGY 2023/24**

Having been duly proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor S D Martin and on having been put to the meeting, the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 06 February 2023, contained at item 9(3) of the agenda, be accepted.

RESOLVED that the Capital Programme and Capital Strategy 2023/24 be approved.

**19. APPROVAL OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023/24**

Having been duly proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor S D Martin, and on having been put to the meeting, the recommendations of the Executive made at its meeting on 09 January 2023, contained at item 10(1) of the agenda, be accepted.

RESOLVED that the updated Pay Policy Statement 2023/24, as annexed to the Medium-Term Finance Strategy, be approved.

**20. CREATION OF COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

The Council received a report by the Head of Democratic Services inviting members to consider the creation of a sub-committee to act as an Appointment Panel to select and appoint a new Chief Executive Officer.

Having been duly proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor S D Martin, the recommendations contained in the report were agreed.

The Executive Leader confirmed that the Committee membership would be Councillors S D Martin, Mrs K K Trott and S D T Woodward with Councillors Mrs C Bainbridge and Mrs C L A Hockley as deputies.

RESOLVED that the Council agrees:

- (a) to create a sub-committee to act as an Appointment Panel to consist of Councillors S D T Woodward, S D Martin and Mrs K K Trott; and
- (b) that the sub-committee meets at times and dates to suit the recruitment process, as advised by the Director of Support Services.

## **21. APPOINTMENTS OF COMMITTEES AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS**

The Council received a report which provided details of the calculations for political balance relating to the allocation of seats on committees and panels, as required to be determined by the Council as soon as is practicable, following a change to the political group membership.

The report asked the Council to appoint the nominations of the political groups to committees and also to appoint the role of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for each committee.

On having been duly proposed by Councillor S D T Woodward and seconded by Councillor S D Martin, and on having been put to the meeting, the recommendations contained in the report were agreed.

RESOLVED that the Council approves:

- (a) the committee functions and number of seats on each committee for the remainder of the municipal year ending in May 2023, as listed at paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of the report;
- (b) the allocation of seats to political groups for the remainder of the municipal year ending in May 2023, as set out in Appendix A to the report;
- (c) the nominations of the political groups to seats on committees, deputies and spokesmen, for the remainder of the municipal year ending in May 2023, as set out in Appendix B to the report; and
- (d) the appointment of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for each committee for the remainder of the municipal year ending in May 2023, as set out in Appendix B to the report.

(The meeting started at 5.00 pm  
and ended at 6.58 pm).