

**COUNCIL**  
**THURSDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> FEBRAURY 2018**

**MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION**

**CABINET**

**WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2018**

**72. Budget 2018/19 and Beyond (Minute For Confirmation)**

Councillor Russell Holland, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Commercialisation, and the Corporate Director for Resources and Growth, submitted a joint report proposing a budget for 2018/19, setting out an indicative budget for 2019/20 and providing the financial context for 2020/21 onwards.

It was noted that, under the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet is required to recommend a budget to Council as part of its formal council tax setting responsibilities.

In the absence of Councillor Holland due to illness, Councillor David Renard, the Leader of the Council, introduced the report, briefly summarising the budget proposals for 2018/19 and indicative proposals for 2019/20, and placing these in the context of the Swindon Programme response to continuing financial challenges for local government and the increasing demand for services.

Following his introduction of the report, Councillor Renard, supported by Councillors Oliver Donachie, Fionuala Foley, Brian Ford and Garry Perkins and the Corporate Director, Resources and Growth, responded to questions put by Councillor Jim Grant on the following matters:

- a) Pressures on the Adult Social Care budget and the rationale behind the recommendation to Council that the specific adult social care precept should be 2% in 2018/19.
- b) The projected overspend in respect of children's social care in the current financial year due to increased demand, and the feasibility of reintroducing Sure Start and Children's Centres.
- c) The effectiveness of the Council's schools improvement plan and the proposed addition of a School Improvement post to increase capacity of the School improvement team.
- d) The reduced level of income from housebuilding in 2018/19, referred to in Appendix 4 to the report, and recognition that this income would still be realised in future.
- e) The role and function of Forward Swindon Ltd and the possibility of that role and function being brought "in-house".

Resolved – (1) That the following be noted:

- a) The medium term financial context and impact on Swindon of the draft Local Government Finance settlement.
- b) The projected out-turn for 2017/18.
- c) That the Council does not foresee any need to replenish general reserves as part of the 2018/19 budget setting process.
- d) The consultation feedback, summarised in Appendix 3, in relation to the budget proposals.
- e) That the detailed Dedicated Schools budget for 2018/19 has been set within the provisional funding envelope of £176.765m.
- f) That, in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) confirms the robustness of the estimates underlying the recommended Budget and having reviewed the financial risks being faced by the Council concludes that the proposed minimum level of general reserves (£6m) is adequate in the context of the earmarked reserves held, specific contingencies and the proposed budget risk contingency of £2.1m.

**(2) That Council be recommended that, subject to any changes resulting from the Government's announcement of the final local government finance settlement for 2018/19:**

- a) The 2018/19 Budget be set at £140.224m.**
- b) The Council Tax be increased by 4.99%, comprising 2.99% for the basic amount of council tax and a specific adult social care precept of 2%.**
- c) It be determined that the proposed increase in the basic amount of Council Tax for 2018/19 is not excessive in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011 and therefore does not trigger the requirement for a referendum.**

(3) That the 2017/18 virements, set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be agreed.

(4) That the council tax exemption scheme for Swindon care leavers under the age of 21, as set out in paragraph 3.12 of the report, be approved.

(5) That the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Commercialisation, be authorised to extend any Exemption or Council Tax Discount for Swindon Care Leavers between the age of 21 and 25, where good reason or hardship is shown.

(6) That the continuation of the scheme for disregarding refugees with permission to remain but no income from the Council Tax calculation of households be approved.

(7) That the local business rate relief schemes, as set out in paragraphs 3.14 to 3.16 of the report, be approved.

(8) That the medium term financial strategy, set out in Appendix 6 to the report, be endorsed.

(9) That the specific reserves held in support of the 2018/19 Revenue Budget, set out in Appendix 5 to the report, and the approach to funding transitional commitments as set out in paragraphs 3.25 to 3.27 of the report, be agreed.

(10) That the Director of Finance be authorised to balance any changes between the provisional local government finance settlement and the final numbers expected to be released in mid-February by adjusting the budget risk contingency.

(11) That the Corporate Director, Resources and Growth, be authorised to appoint PPS, under the Teckal exemption in Regulation 12 Public Contract Regulations 2015, to carry out the relevant technical work, including planning applications, and grid connection applications, and to advise on transaction structure, marketing and consideration of bids for the proposed Mannington battery storage project on the basis set out in paragraphs 3.35 to 3.42 of the report and other such future schemes to be offered to the market for renewable energy strategy delivery, solar development, storage, heat and transport on Council owned land.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

### **73. Capital Programme 2018-19 (Minute For Confirmation)**

Councillor Russell Holland, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Commercialisation, and the Corporate Director for Resources and Growth, submitted a joint report on new Capital Programme requirements for the 2018/19 Financial Year.

In the absence of Councillor Holland due to illness, Councillor David Renard, the Leader of the Council, introduced the report, which, as with the previous report, included proposals for 2018/19 and indicative proposals for 2019/20.

#### **Resolved – That Council be recommended to approve:**

- a) The distribution of the Devolved Formula Capital Grant once it has been received from Government, as detailed in paragraph 3.13 of the report.**
- b) A budget of £2.582m for the schemes referred to in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.13 of the report and detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.**
- c) A total budget of £4.429m for the 2018/19 local priority Highways and Transport schemes, referred to in paragraphs 3.14 to 3.187 of the report and detailed at Appendix 2 to the report.**
- d) A total budget of £3.493m for 2018/19 for Corporate & Property schemes as referred to in paragraphs 3.19 to 3.20 of the report and detailed at Appendix 3 to the report.**
- e) A total budget requirement of £1.427m for Children's & Older Peoples proposals as referred to in paragraph 3.21 to 3.22 of the report and detailed at Appendix 4 to the report.**
- f) The use of CIL receipts as detailed in paragraph 3.23 of the report to support the existing capital programme of works at Junction 16.**

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

**74. Treasury Strategy Statement 2018/19 (Minute For Confirmation)**

Councillor Russell Holland, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Commercialisation, and the Corporate Director for Resources and Growth, submitted a joint report on the Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19, including Prudential Indicators up to 2020/21, the Annual Investment Strategy, and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement.

**Resolved – That Council be recommended to approve the Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Prudential Indicators, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.**

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.