



Committee: Executive

Date: Monday 5 February 2024

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, Oxon OX15 4AA

Membership

Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)

Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Donna Ford
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Dan Sames

Councillor Adam Nell (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Sandy Dallimore
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Eddie Reeves
Councillor Nigel Simpson

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest that they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.

3. Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

The Chairman to report on any requests to submit petitions or to address the meeting.

4. Minutes (Pages 9 - 14)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2024.

5. Chairman's Announcements

To receive communications from the Chairman.

6. **Budget Setting for 2024/25 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy up to 2028/29** (Pages 15 - 216)

(Please note Appendix 3 is not used in this report)

Report of the Assistant Director of Finance (S151)

Purpose of report

To consider and approve the Budget Setting for 2024/25 and MTFs 2028/29 as per the recommendations.

Executive Summary

This report is the culmination of the Budget and Business Planning process for 2024/25 to 2028/29 and sets out the Executive's proposed Business Plan, Annual Delivery Plan and related revenue budget for 2024/25, medium term financial strategy to 2028/29, capital programme to 2028/29 and all supporting policies, strategies, and information to recommend to Council.

The Council adopts a forward looking and anticipatory approach to its financial management, with the Peer Review acknowledging the Council is in a "strong position" regards its 2024/25 budget in the September 2023 Progress Review. The Council plans for, and continues to succeed in, encouraging and facilitating economic growth across the district. This success flows through to the Council's finances, reflected in the level of income received from business rates and the New Homes Bonus grant.

The Council has proactively monitored both the economic situation and Government announcements over the past 12 months and devised and implemented a budget and business planning strategy that has delivered within the constraints identified, consulting on a proposed balanced budget in November 2023. The Council was able to identify the risk of interest rate rises at an early stage, locking in low interest rates for all of its planned borrowing requirements, meaning only new borrowing requirements will need to be taken at higher rates.

The proposed net budget for the council is £26.9m, which is a decrease of £1.4m from 2023/24. The council plans to fund £0.6m of budget pressures and will deliver £1.8m of savings proposals and operational efficiencies as part of the 2024/25 budget. A Band D Council Tax of £153.50 is proposed for the year which is an increase of £5 compared to 2023/24. The Capital Programme for the period 2024/25 – 2028/29 is proposed to be £40.4m.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- 1.1 Delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer (S151), following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Member for Finance, to complete the legal Council Tax calculations once all the information required has been received and submit a separate report to Council.
- 1.2 Delegate authority to the S151, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Member for Finance, to make appropriate changes to the Executive's proposed budget to Council including policies and plans.

The Executive recommends to Council as follows:

- 1.3 Approve the proposed Fees and Charges schedule for 2024/25 (Appendix 7) and statutory notices be placed where required.
- 1.4 Consider and note the Equality Impact Assessments of the Budget (Appendix 8 and 8b)
- 1.5 In relation to the Business Plan (Section 3.1) to approve:
 - 1.5.1 The Business Plan set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.6 In relation to the Revenue Budget Strategy (Section 3.2) and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (Section 3.5) to approve:
 - 1.6.1 The net revenue budget for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2024, as set out in Table 3.2.1, and further analysed in the Budget Book provided at Appendix 12.
 - 1.6.2 The MTFS and Revenue Budget 2024/25 (Sections 3.5 and 3.2 respectively), including the Savings Proposals and Pressures included at Appendices 4 and 5 respectively.
- 1.7 In relation to Council Tax to approve:
 - 1.7.1 An increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2024 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £153.50 per annum.
- 1.8 In relation to the Capital Programme and related strategies (Section 3.3) to approve:
 - 1.8.1 The Capital Bids and Capital Programme at Appendix 17 and 18 respectively.
 - 1.8.2 The Capital and Investment Strategy 2024/25 (Appendix 19), including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, and the revised 2023/24 MRP Policy (Appendix 20).
 - 1.8.3 The Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2024/25 (Appendix 21).
- 1.9 In relation to reserves (Section 3.4) to approve:
 - 1.9.1 A minimum level of General Balances of £6.1m as supported by Appendix 15.
 - 1.9.2 The Reserves Policy (Appendix 14).
 - 1.9.3 The medium-term reserves plan described in Appendix 16.
- 1.10 In relation to the Pay Policy Statement approve:

1.10.1 The Pay Policy Statement, as required by the Localism Act 2010, detailed in Appendix 9.

7. Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25 (Pages 217 - 228)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance and Assistant Director – Customer Focus

Purpose of report

This report presents the proposed Annual Delivery Plan for 2024/25, aspiring to be a tool to achieve the vision, aims and ambitions of our Council as contained in our Council’s Business Plan on behalf of the local communities and businesses we are here to serve.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To approve the Annual Delivery Plan 2024/25.

8. Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 (Pages 229 - 296)

Report of Assistant Director – Wellbeing and Housing

Purpose of report

To consider and approve the Council’s new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To approve the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 and accompanying Action Plan.

9. Developing a Kidlington Infrastructure and Community Asset Strategy (Pages 297 - 302)

Report of Corporate Director Communities

Purpose of report

To respond to the question raised at council in December 2023 to provide resource and budget to enable the development of a new vision for Kidlington cognisant of the growth allocated in the 2020 Local Plan Partial Review and to provide ongoing oversight of development.

Recommendations

The Executive recommends:

- 1.1 To develop a Kidlington Infrastructure Strategy in 2024/25 and resource to provide oversight to its ongoing delivery.

10. Researching Solar Energy Requirements (Pages 303 - 308)

Report of Corporate Director Communities

Purpose of report

To seek funding support for the 2024/25 budget to provide resource and budget to better understand the requirements for solar energy within Cherwell District

Recommendations

The Executive recommends:

- 1.1 To plan in the 2024/25 budget for the undertaking of research into the requirements for solar energy within Cherwell.

11. Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report Quarter 3 2023 (Pages 309 - 384)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance and Assistant Director – Customer Focus

Purpose of report

To give Executive an update on how well the council is performing in delivering its priorities, managing potential risks, and balancing its finances for 2023/24 up to the end of Quarter 3 2023.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the Council's Performance, Risk and Financial report for the current financial year up to the end of Quarter 3 2023 and its contents.
- 1.2 To approve the reserve requests in Appendix 5.
- 1.3 To approve the use of Policy Contingency of £1.476m to mitigate the lower than budgeted in-year income of S31 grant.
- 1.4 To note the repurposing of £0.030m from the Fairway Flats Refurbishment project for the works at Cope Road Banbury approved by S151 under delegation powers.

12. Deddington Neighbourhood Plan (Pages 385 - 480)

Report of Assistant Director – Planning and Development

Purpose of report

To consider the Examiner's report on the draft Deddington Neighbourhood Plan (the "Draft Neighbourhood Plan") to determine whether the Draft Neighbourhood Plan, incorporating modifications should proceed to referendum.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve all the Examiner's recommendations and modifications (Appendices 1 and 2) to enable the Plan, incorporating the recommended modifications (Appendix 3), to proceed to a referendum.
- 1.2 To authorise the issue of a 'decision statement' confirming the Executive's decision including that the Plan will now proceed to a referendum.
- 1.3 To authorise the Assistant Director – Planning and Development to make any minor presentational changes and corrections necessary to ready the Plan for referendum.

13. Sale of Bodicote House Site, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA (Pages 481 - 490)

Report of Corporate Director of Resources

Purpose of Report

Bodicote House site has been marketed for sale, to facilitate the Council moving to new offices. The report seeks delegated authority and approval to proceed with the Heads of Terms attached to the Exempt part of this report and enter negotiations for the sale contract.

Parts of this report contain commercially sensitive information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and others. That information is exempt from publication and included in the exempt version of this report.

Recommendations

Executive recommends:

- 1.1 To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Property and the S151 Officer, to proceed with the Heads of Terms attached to the Exempt part and enter into negotiations for the sale contract with Lucy Developments Ltd.
- 1.2 To delegate authority to the Assistant Director Law & Governance to enter into Heads of Terms.

14. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following report contains exempt information as defined in the following paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972.

3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Members are reminded that whilst the following item has been marked as exempt, it is for the meeting to decide whether or not to consider it in private or in public. In making the decision, members should balance the interests of individuals or the Council itself in having access to the information. In considering their discretion members should also be mindful of the advice of Council Officers.

No representations have been received from the public requesting that this item be considered in public.

Should Members decide not to make a decision in public, they are recommended to pass the following recommendation:

“That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

15. Sale of Bodicote House, White Post Road, Bodicote, OX15 4AA (Pages 491 - 530)

** Please note exempt Appendix 5 will follow **

Exempt report of Corporate Director Resources

(This report is exempt from publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972. This report contains commercially sensitive information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and others.)

16. Readmittance of the Press and Public

The meeting to resolve to readmit the press and public to the meeting.

17. Urgent Business

The Chairman to advise whether they have agreed to any item of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence should be notified to democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or 01295 221534 prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the

start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item.

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare the fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

This agenda constitutes the 5 day notice required by Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 in terms of the intention to consider an item of business in private.

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Queries Regarding this Agenda

Please contact Natasha Clark, Democratic and Elections democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221534

Shiraz Sheikh
Monitoring Officer

Published on Friday 26 January 2024