



**Committee: Budget Planning Committee**

**Date: Tuesday 25 July 2023**

**Time: 6.30 pm**

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

## **Membership**

### **Councillor Patrick Clarke (Chairman)**

Councillor Tom Beckett  
Councillor Donna Ford  
Councillor Matt Hodgson  
Councillor Adam Nell  
Councillor Barry Wood

### **Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)**

Councillor Becky Clarke MBE  
Councillor David Hingley  
Councillor Simon Lytton  
Councillor Dorothy Walker  
Councillor Sean Woodcock

## **AGENDA**

### **1. Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members**

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

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

### **3. Minutes (Pages 5 - 8)**

To confirm as correct records the minutes of the meetings held on 7 March 2023 and 23 May 2023.

### **4. Chairman's Announcements**

To receive communications from the Chairman.

### **5. Urgent Business**

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

## 6. **Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024-25** (Pages 9 - 14)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance

### **Purpose of report**

To enable members to consider the proposed banded scheme for Council Tax Reduction for 2024-25.

The current scheme was introduced from April 2020 following a period of consultation and engagement. In general, it has been well received with limited contact from customers. It is proposed to continue with the current scheme, updated for inflationary factors.

The scheme assesses the maximum level of Council Tax Reduction based on the net income of the applicant and household members, the main principles of the scheme remain unchanged. Pensioners are protected and continue to be eligible to receive 100% Council Tax Reduction

If the applicant or partner is in receipt of a passported benefit such as Income Support Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) income based and income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or receiving War widows or War disablement pensions they will be placed into the highest band and will receive 100% Council Tax Reduction.

Working age households will receive a discount, depending on their level of income and the band that they fall into.

The current scheme is understood by customers and has enabled them to budget for their council tax payments, and this is reflected in the Council Tax collection rates with Cherwell being the highest performer across the county for 2022-23.

The current scheme reduces the number of changes that the customer will experience with less bills and notification letters generated and enables better personal budgeting. There is still a lot of financial uncertainty for many customers and in the current financial climate with the ongoing cost of living crisis it is therefore recommended that the existing scheme should be retained for 2024.25.

### **Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 To note the contents of the report, and any financial implications for the Council.
- 1.2 To recommend to Executive that the current scheme (adjusted for inflationary factors) is retained for 2024/25

## 7. **Budget Process 2024-25** (Pages 15 - 44)

Report of Assistant Director of Finance

### **Purpose of report**

This report summarises the approach Cherwell District Council (CDC) intends to take in order to set its 2024/25 budget and 5-year Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period to 2028/29 and revises the Reserves Policy.

## **Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To note the contents of Appendix 1.

### **8. Monthly Finance Performance Report (Pages 45 - 80)**

Report of Assistant Director of Finance

#### **Purpose of report**

This report summarises Cherwell District Council's (CDC's) Outturn position for revenue and capital for 2022/2023 and gives the Committee the opportunity to consider the financial aspects of the report.

The council has been successful in delivering a revenue outturn position for 2022/23 with an overall minor underspend of (£0.001m). This is a significant achievement under the current economic circumstances.

The Council has an in-year capital underspend of (£14.958m) against a budget of £24.413m, of which £14.273m is requested to be reprofiled in future years. This represents an overall decrease in the total cost of schemes of (£0.685m) due to a number of schemes no longer going ahead.

#### **Recommendation**

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 To note the contents of this report.

### **9. Review of Committee Work Plan (Pages 81 - 82)**

To review the Committee Work Plan.

**Councillors are requested to collect any post from their pigeon hole in the Members Room at the end of the meeting.**

## **Information about this Meeting**

### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence should be notified to [democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto: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.

### **Evacuation Procedure**

When the continuous alarm sounds you must evacuate the building by the nearest available fire exit. Members and visitors should proceed to the car park as directed by Democratic Services staff and await further instructions.

### **Access to Meetings**

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named below, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting.

### **Mobile Phones**

Please ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off.

### **Queries Regarding this Agenda**

Please contact Matt Swinford, Democratic and Elections Team [democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@cherwell-dc.gov.uk), 01295 221534

**Yvonne Rees**  
**Chief Executive**

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