

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 29 October 2019 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
Councillor Carmen Griffiths (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Nathan Bignell
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Lucinda Wing
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members: Councillor Mark Cherry (In place of Councillor Barry Richards)
Councillor Tony Ilott (In place of Councillor David Hughes)

Also Present:: Councillor Tom Wallis

Apologies for absence: Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Fraser Webster

Officers: Adele Taylor, Corporate Director: Finance (Interim) & Section 151 Officer
Dominic Oakeshott, Assistant Director (Interim) - Finance
Belinda Green, Operations Director - CSN Resources
Tallulah Willis, Systems, Performance and Subsidy Officer
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

26 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

27 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 September 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

29 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

30 **Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report - August 2019**

The Committee considered a report from the Executive Director – Finance (Interim) and Assistant Director – Performance and Transformation that detailed Finance Monitoring for August 2019.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Executive Director – Finance (Interim) explained that Disabled Facility Grants were linked to referrals from Oxfordshire County Council, therefore any reduction in the amount of appropriate schemes referred would mean a reduced amount of grants being awarded.

Resolved

(1) That the report be noted.

31 **Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2020-2021**

The Committee considered a report which detailed a proposed new Council Tax Reduction Scheme, and suggested levels of Council Tax discounts and reductions for 2020-2021.

The Operations Director – CSN Resources explained that a comprehensive consultation process had been carried out regarding the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Information had been published on the council website and on social media platforms, events had been held in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington, as well as letters and phone calls to residents already in receipt of discounts.

It was proposed by Councillor Mawer and seconded by Councillor Bignell that Option 1, a new banded income Council Tax Reduction Scheme for those of working age, be recommended to Executive for consideration as the Council Tax Scheme for 2020-2021.

It was proposed by Councillor Mawer and seconded by Councillor Webb that, having given due consideration, Executive be recommended to retain the following level of Council Tax discounts and premiums for 2020-2021:

- Discount for second homes at zero
- Discount for empty homes (unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) at 25% for 6 months and thereafter at zero
- The discount for empty homes undergoing major repairs at 25% for 12 months and thereafter at zero
- The empty homes premium of an additional 100% for properties that have remained empty for more than 2 years

Resolved

- (1) That the report and financial implications for the Council be noted.
- (2) That Option 1, a new banded income Council Tax Reduction Scheme for those of working age, be recommended to Executive for consideration as the Council Tax Scheme for 2020-2021
- (3) That, having given due consideration, Executive be recommended to retain the following level of Council Tax discounts and premiums for 2020-2021:
 - Discount for second homes at zero
 - Discount for empty homes (unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) at 25% for 6 months and thereafter at zero
 - The discount for empty homes undergoing major repairs at 25% for 12 months and thereafter at zero
 - The empty homes premium of an additional 100% for properties that have remained empty for more than 2 years

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Review of Committee Work Plan

The Committee considered the indicative committee work plan.

The Chairman advised the Committee that in the event of a General Election being called on 12 December, he would discuss with officers the possibility of postponing the meeting currently scheduled for 10 December.

Notwithstanding the possible postponement, the Executive Director – Finance (Interim) explained that the management team would be in attendance for the next meeting of the Committee, to go through the draft budget for the 2020-2021 financial year and answer any questions. All Members of the Council would be encouraged to attend.

Resolved

- (1) That the verbal update be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.54 pm

Chairman:

Date: