

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 28 January 2020 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
Councillor Carmen Griffiths (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Nathan Bignell
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Lucinda Wing
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Apologies for absence: Councillor Andrew McHugh

Officers: Adele Taylor, Executive Director: Finance (Interim) & Section 151 Officer
Dominic Oakeshott, Assistant Director (Interim) - Finance
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

39 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

40 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 January 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

41 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

42 Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief Scheme for 2020-2021

The Committee considered a report from the Executive Director: Finance (interim) which detailed the proposed Local Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme for 2020-2021.

The Executive Director: Finance (interim) advised the Committee that the scheme remained largely unchanged from previous years and had been designed to reduce the administrative burden for eligible businesses by automatically awarding the relief.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That Executive be recommended to endorse and recommend to Council to adopt the Local Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme for 2020-2021.

43 **Monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report - November 2019**

The Committee considered a report from the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) and the Assistant Director: Performance and Transformation that detailed monthly performance, risk and finance monitoring for November 2019.

The Assistant Director of Finance advised the Committee that incorrect figures had been quoted in the report.

Paragraph 3.16, Revenue Position, should have referred to an increase in the overspend by £58k, not from £58k. The one-off underspend in the same paragraph should have read £1.55m, not £1.46m.

With regards to the details relating to the Finance overspend, the figures quoted in the table were correct, however the narrative referred to a £41k overspend rather than £61k.

In paragraph 3.17, the Capital Programme summary, the column headed 'prior period variances' should have read £103k not £21k.

In response to questions from the Committee regarding agency staff costs in Environmental Services, the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) explained that the team had some long-term sickness absence cases that required agency staff to cover.

With regard to queries raised relating to the repair of the biomass heater, and the profitability of the commercial waste collection, the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) agreed to circulate responses to the Committee from relevant officers after the meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

44 **Review of Committee Work Plan**

The Committee considered the indicative work programme for the rest of the current year.

The Assistant Director: Finance advised the Committee that work would start on the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2021-22 at the March 2020 meeting, and the Committee would have a bigger role in the budget setting process going forward.

Resolved

- (1) That the Work Plan be noted.

45 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

46 **Executive Director: Finance (Interim)**

The Chairman advised the Committee that it was the last meeting the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) would be attending, as she was leaving the council to start new employment at another Local Authority. The Chairman thanked the Executive Director for her hard work and help during her time at the Council and wished her well in her future employment.

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

Chairman:

Date: