



Summary of the decisions taken at the Budget Council meeting held on 23 February 2026

| Agenda Item No. | Agenda Item | Decision |
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| 7 | <p>Members' Allowance Scheme 2026/2027</p> <p>Report of Assistant Director Law & Governance and Monitoring Officer</p> <p>Purpose of report</p> <p>To determine the levels of the allowances to be paid to Members for the forthcoming 2026/2027 financial year and proposed changes to the Members' Allowance Scheme, following the consideration of the report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (the "Panel") attached at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Council resolves:</p> <p>1.1 To consider the levels of allowances to be included in the 2026/2027 Members' Allowances Scheme, and whether the Panel's recommendations (as set out at paragraph 3.1 of this report and section 2) should be adopted or modified in any way.</p> <p>1.2 To authorise the Assistant Director Law and Governance to prepare an amended Members' Allowances Scheme, in accordance with the decisions of Council for implementation with effect from 1 April 2026.</p> | <p>Resolved</p> <p>(1) That having given due consideration, the following levels of allowance be included in the 2026/2027 Members' Allowance Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That the Basic Allowance be increased in in line with the 2026/2027 staff pay award, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026.• That the current combined Special Responsibility Allowance covering both the Chair of the Licensing Acts Committee and Chair of the General Licensing Committee end, and separate SRAs be introduced for the Chair of each Committee at the current combined SRA level.• That all Special Responsibility Allowances be increased in in line with the 2026/2027 staff pay award, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026.• That the co-optees allowance be increased in in line with the 2026/2027 staff pay award, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026. |

| Agenda Item No. | Agenda Item | Decision |
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| | <p>1.3 To authorise the Assistant Director of Law and Governance to take all necessary action to revoke the current (2025/2026) Scheme and to publicise the revised Scheme pursuant to The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).</p> <p>1.4 To thank the Independent Remuneration Panel for its report and confirm a fee of £300 for each Panel Member for the work carried out on this review; and to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Law & Governance to apply the same final percentage increase to the IRP fee, in line with the staff pay award (when agreed), for any reviews carried out in 2026/2027.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Independent Persons allowance be increased in in line with the 2026/2027 staff pay award, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026. • That Dependents' Carers' and Childcare Allowances remain at the current level, are paid on the basis of the actual costs incurred up to the maximum hourly rate set out below and to a maximum cap of 40 hours per month, subject to production of receipts and cannot be paid to a member of the claimant's household: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Childcare: £10 per hour ○ Dependent Relative care - £20 per hour • That mileage remain at the current level in line with HMRC approved mileage rates, and if any adjustments are implemented by HMRC then the revised rates should be applied to Members' travel allowances effective from the date of implementation by HMRC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bicycles: 20p per mile ○ Motorcycles (any cc) – 24p per mile ○ Motor Vehicles (any cc) – 45p per mile ○ Electric or similar specialised vehicles – 45p per mile • That the rates for subsistence allowance remain at the current level in line with the maximum staff subsistence levels, with claims permitted on approved duties of over 5 |

| Agenda Item No. | Agenda Item | Decision |
|-----------------|-------------|---|
| | | <p>hours outside the district*, subject to the submission of receipts (*subsistence allowances cannot be claimed for any duties within the district as the basic allowance is deemed to cover all within district expenses).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Breakfast: £7.50 ○ Lunch: £10.50 ○ Tea / coffee: £4.00 ○ Evening Meal: £12.50 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● That Democratic Services continue to book overnight accommodation if required. ● That there be no change to the list of approved duties for which claims may be made. ● That Non-Executive Director allowances be increased in in line with the 2026/2027 staff pay award, when agreed, rounded up to give 12 equal payments and backdated to 1 April 2026 and costs recharged to the relevant company. <p>(2) That the Assistant Director Law and Governance be authorised to prepare an amended Members' Allowances Scheme, in accordance with the decisions of Council for implementation with effect from 1 April 2026.</p> <p>(3) That the Assistant Director of Law and Governance be authorised to take all necessary action to revoke the current (2025/2026) Scheme and to publicise the revised Scheme pursuant to The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as</p> |

| Agenda Item No. | Agenda Item | Decision |
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| | | <p>amended).</p> <p>(4) That the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) be thanked for its report and a fee of £300 be confirmed for each Panel Member for the work carried out on this review and authority be delegated to the Assistant Director Law & Governance to apply the same final percentage increase to the IRP member fee, in line with the staff pay award (when agreed), for any reviews carried out in 2026/2027.</p> |
| 8 | <p>Budget Setting and Corporate Plan for 2026/2027 and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy up to 2030/2031</p> <p>Report of Assistant Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)</p> <p>Purpose of report</p> <p>To consider and agree the Budget Setting for 2026/27 and MTFS 2030/31 as per the recommendations.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Council resolves to:</p> <p>1.1 Have regard to the statutory report of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 25 report) at Appendix 3 in approving recommendations 1.2 – 1.10.</p> <p>1.2 Approve the proposed Fees and Charges schedule for 2026/27 (Appendix 7) and statutory notices be placed where required.</p> <p>1.3 Consider and note the Equality</p> | <p>Resolved</p> <p>(1) That, having due regard, the statutory report of the Chief Finance Officer (Section 25 report) be noted.</p> <p>(2) That the proposed Fees and Charges schedule for 2026/27 be approved and it be noted that statutory notices would be placed where required.</p> <p>(3) That, having given due consideration, the Equality Impact Assessments of the Budget be noted.</p> <p>(4) That the Corporate Plan Vision and Strategy be noted.</p> <p>(5) That the Annual Delivery Plan be approved.</p> <p>(6) That, in relation to the Revenue Budget Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the following net directorate revenue budgets for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2026 be agreed.</p> |

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| | <p data-bbox="475 237 863 309">Impact Assessments of the Budget (Appendix 8)</p> <p data-bbox="379 344 863 416">1.4 In relation to the Corporate Plan (Section 4.1) to:</p> <p data-bbox="459 452 903 564">1.4.1 Note the Corporate Plan Vision and Strategy set out in Appendix 1.</p> <p data-bbox="459 600 884 712">1.4.2 Approve the Annual Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 2.</p> <p data-bbox="379 748 906 931">1.5 In relation to the Revenue Budget Strategy (Section 4.2) and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (Section 4.6) to approve:</p> <p data-bbox="459 967 906 1263">1.5.1 The net revenue budget for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2026, as set out in Table 4.2.1, and further analysed in the Budget Book provided at Appendix 12.</p> <p data-bbox="459 1299 927 1594">1.5.2 The MTFS and Revenue Budget 2026/27 (Sections 4.6 and 4.2 respectively), including the Savings Proposals and Investments included at Appendices 4 and 5 respectively.</p> <p data-bbox="379 1630 874 1702">1.6 In relation to Council Tax (Section 4.2.51) to approve:</p> <p data-bbox="459 1738 927 2033">1.6.1 An increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2026 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £163.50 per annum.</p> | <table border="1" data-bbox="1070 271 1525 994"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1070 271 1331 371">Directorate</th> <th data-bbox="1335 271 1525 371">Net budget 2026/27 £m</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 378 1331 479">Chief Executive's Office</td> <td data-bbox="1335 378 1525 479">2.402</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 486 1331 517">Resources</td> <td data-bbox="1335 486 1525 517">9.978</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 524 1331 580">Neighbourhood Services</td> <td data-bbox="1335 524 1525 580">8.888</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 586 1331 642">Place and Regeneration</td> <td data-bbox="1335 586 1525 642">0.865</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 649 1331 705">Service Sub-total</td> <td data-bbox="1335 649 1525 705">22.133</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 712 1331 768">Corporate Costs</td> <td data-bbox="1335 712 1525 768">6.655</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 775 1331 831">Policy Contingency</td> <td data-bbox="1335 775 1525 831">2.179</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 837 1331 916">Development Funds</td> <td data-bbox="1335 837 1525 916">1.300</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1070 922 1331 994">Net Cost of Services</td> <td data-bbox="1335 922 1525 994">32.267</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p data-bbox="959 1043 1490 1263">(7) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Revenue Budget 2026/27, including the Savings Proposals and Investments be approved.</p> <p data-bbox="959 1299 1506 1554">(8) That an increase in the Basic Amount of Council Tax for Cherwell District Council for the financial year beginning on 1 April 2026 of £5, resulting in a Band D charge of £163.50 per annum, be approved.</p> <p data-bbox="959 1590 1506 2033">(9) That, following consultation undertaken in November and December 2024 which showed 88% support for the introduction, the implementation from 1 April 2027 of a premium (second homes premium) of 100% for dwellings that are no one's sole or main residence and are substantially furnished be approved.</p> | Directorate | Net budget 2026/27 £m | Chief Executive's Office | 2.402 | Resources | 9.978 | Neighbourhood Services | 8.888 | Place and Regeneration | 0.865 | Service Sub-total | 22.133 | Corporate Costs | 6.655 | Policy Contingency | 2.179 | Development Funds | 1.300 | Net Cost of Services | 32.267 |
| Directorate | Net budget 2026/27 £m | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chief Executive's Office | 2.402 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Resources | 9.978 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Development Funds | 1.300 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Net Cost of Services | 32.267 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>1.6.2 From 1 April 2027 the implementation of a premium (second homes premium) of 100% for dwellings that are no one's sole or main residence and are substantially furnished, following consultation undertaken in November and December 2024 which showed 88% support for the introduction.</p> <p>1.6.3 That the mandatory notice of 12 months to all owners of second homes that a premium will commence from 1 April 2027 be issued.</p> <p>1.6.4 That relevant exceptions be applied as set out by Government guidance (Appendix 24).</p> <p>1.6.5 It be noted that the Council Tax Base 2026/27 was determined at the Executive meeting held on 6 January 2026:</p> <p>a) for the whole Council area as 60,654.5 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended ("the 1992 Act")]; and</p> <p>b) For dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates as in the</p> | <p>(10) That it be approved that the mandatory notice of 12 months to all owners of second homes that a premium will commence from 1 April 2027 be issued.</p> <p>(11) That it be approved that relevant exceptions be applied as set out by Government guidance (Appendix 24 to the report).</p> <p>(12) That it be noted that that the Council Tax Base 2026/27 was determined at the Executive meeting held on 6 January 2026:</p> <p>a) for the whole Council area as 60,654.5 [item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended ("the 1992 Act")].</p> <p>b) For dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish Precept relates (Appendix 23 to the report).</p> <p>(13) That it be agreed that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) is £9,917,011.</p> <p>(14) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the 1992 Act:</p> <p>a) £162,009,253 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the 1992 Act,</p> |

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| | <p style="text-align: center;">attached Appendix 23.</p> <p>1.6.6 That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2026/27 (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) is £9,917,011.</p> <p>1.6.7 following amounts be calculated for the year 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the 1992 Act:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) £162,009,253 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the 1992 Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b) £145,153,645 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the 1992 Act.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">c) £16,855,608 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at</p> | <p>taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils and any additional special expenses.</p> <p>b) £145,153,645 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the 1992 Act.</p> <p>c) £16,855,608 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the 1992 Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the 1992 Act).</p> <p>d) £277.90 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses).</p> <p>e) £6,938,598 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the 1992 Act as per the attached Appendix 23.</p> |

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| | <p>3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the 1992 Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the 1992 Act).</p> <p>d) £277.90 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses).</p> <p>e) £6,938,598 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish Precepts and Special Expenses) referred to in Section 34(1) of the 1992 Act as per the attached Appendix 23.</p> <p>f) £163.50 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e)</p> | <p>f) £163.50 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T(1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates.</p> <p>(15) That it be noted that for the year 2026/27 the Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the 1992 Act, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1038 1294 1485 1825"> <thead> <tr> <th>Valuation Band</th> <th>Oxfordshire County Council</th> <th>Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>£</td> <td>£</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>1,337.85</td> <td>198.85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>1,560.83</td> <td>232.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>1,783.80</td> <td>265.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>2,006.78</td> <td>298.28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>2,452.73</td> <td>364.56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>2,898.68</td> <td>430.85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>G</td> <td>3,344.63</td> <td>497.13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H</td> <td>4,013.56</td> <td>596.56</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>(16) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the 1992 Act, hereby sets the amounts shown in Appendix 24 to the report as</p> | Valuation Band | Oxfordshire County Council | Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley | | £ | £ | A | 1,337.85 | 198.85 | B | 1,560.83 | 232.00 | C | 1,783.80 | 265.14 | D | 2,006.78 | 298.28 | E | 2,452.73 | 364.56 | F | 2,898.68 | 430.85 | G | 3,344.63 | 497.13 | H | 4,013.56 | 596.56 |
| Valuation Band | Oxfordshire County Council | Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | £ | £ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A | 1,337.85 | 198.85 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | 1,560.83 | 232.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C | 1,783.80 | 265.14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D | 2,006.78 | 298.28 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | 2,452.73 | 364.56 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| F | 2,898.68 | 430.85 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G | 3,344.63 | 497.13 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H | 4,013.56 | 596.56 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>above by Item T(1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish Precept or special item relates.</p> <p>1.6.8 It be noted that for the year 2026/27 the Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the 1992 Act, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="461 1335 898 1861"> <thead> <tr> <th>Valuation Band</th> <th>Oxfordshire County Council</th> <th>Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley</th> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>£</td> <td>£</td> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>1,337.85</td> <td>198.85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>1,560.83</td> <td>232.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>1,783.80</td> <td>265.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>2,006.78</td> <td>298.28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>2,452.73</td> <td>364.56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>2,898.68</td> <td>430.85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>G</td> <td>3,344.63</td> <td>497.13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H</td> <td>4,013.56</td> <td>596.56</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>1.6.9 The Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the 1992</p> | Valuation Band | Oxfordshire County Council | Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley | | £ | £ | A | 1,337.85 | 198.85 | B | 1,560.83 | 232.00 | C | 1,783.80 | 265.14 | D | 2,006.78 | 298.28 | E | 2,452.73 | 364.56 | F | 2,898.68 | 430.85 | G | 3,344.63 | 497.13 | H | 4,013.56 | 596.56 | <p>the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2026/27 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.</p> <p>(17) That the Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2026/27 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the 1992 Act.</p> <p>(18) That the Capital Bids and Capital Programme be approved.</p> <p>(19) That the Capital and Investment Strategy 2026/27, including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, be approved.</p> <p>(20) That the Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2026/27 be approved.</p> <p>(21) That a minimum level of General Balances of £8.011m be approved.</p> <p>(22) That the Reserves Policy be approved.</p> <p>(23) That the Medium-Term Reserves Plan be approved.</p> <p>(24) That the Pay Policy Statement, as required by the Localism Act 2010, be approved.</p> <p>(25) That a Pension Fund prepayment for the years 2026/27 – 2028/29 of £5.028m be approved.</p> <p>(For information, having been proposed, seconded and debated, on</p> |
| Valuation Band | Oxfordshire County Council | Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | £ | £ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A | 1,337.85 | 198.85 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B | 1,560.83 | 232.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| D | 2,006.78 | 298.28 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E | 2,452.73 | 364.56 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| F | 2,898.68 | 430.85 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G | 3,344.63 | 497.13 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H | 4,013.56 | 596.56 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>Act, hereby sets the amounts shown in Appendix 24 as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2026/27 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.</p> <p>1.6.10 The Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2026/27 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the 1992 Act.</p> <p>1.7 In relation to the Capital Programme and related strategies (Section 4.3) to approve:</p> <p>1.7.1 The Capital Bid(s) and Capital Programme at Appendices 17 and 18 respectively.</p> <p>1.7.2 The Capital and Investment Strategy 2026/27 (Appendix 19), including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy.</p> <p>1.7.3 The Treasury Management Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, and Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2026/27 (Appendix 21).</p> <p>1.8 In relation to reserves (Section 4.4) to approve:</p> <p>1.8.1 A minimum level of General Balances of £8.011m as supported by Appendix 15.</p> | <p>being put to the vote, the Cherwell Conservative and Independent Alliance amendment was lost.)</p> |

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|------------------------|--|-----------------|
| | <p data-bbox="459 271 852 344">1.8.2 The Reserves Policy (Appendix 14).</p> <p data-bbox="459 383 932 490">1.8.3 The medium-term reserves plan described in Appendix 16.</p> <p data-bbox="379 528 868 602">1.9 In relation to the Pay Policy Statement approve:</p> <p data-bbox="459 640 924 786">1.9.1 The Pay Policy Statement, as required by the Localism Act 2010, detailed in Appendix 9.</p> <p data-bbox="379 824 916 898">1.10 In relation to the Pension Fund (Section 4.5) to:</p> <p data-bbox="459 936 911 1081">1.10.1 Approve a pension fund prepayment for the years 2026/27 – 2028/29 of £5.028m.</p> | |