

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 6 January 2020 at 6.30 pm

- Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
Councillor Carmen Griffiths (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Nathan Bignell
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor David Hughes
Councillor Andrew McHugh
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Fraser Webster
Councillor Sean Woodcock
- Substitute Members: Councillor Hugo Brown (In place of Councillor Lucinda Wing)
- Also Present:: Councillor Barry Wood - Leader of the Council
Councillor George Reynolds - Deputy Leader of the Council, and Lead Member for Leisure and Sport
Councillor Colin Clarke - Lead Member for Planning
Councillor Ian Corkin - Lead Member for Customers and Transformation
Councillor John Donaldson - Lead Member for Housing
Councillor Tony Ilott - Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance
Councillor Richard Mould - Lead Member for Performance
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Hannah Banfield
Councillor Andrew Beere
Councillor John Broad
Councillor Shaida Hussain
Councillor Ian Middleton
- Apologies for absence: Councillor Conrad Copeland
Councillor Lucinda Wing
- Officers: Adele Taylor, Corporate Director: Finance (Interim) & Section 151 Officer
Dominic Oakeshott, Assistant Director (Interim) - Finance
Joanne Kaye, Strategic Business Partner
Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive
Simon Furlong, Corporate Director - Communities
Nick Graham, Director of Law and Governance / Monitoring Officer
Graeme Kane, Chief Operating Officer
Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisational Development
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

33 **Declarations of Interest**

6. Budget Setting for 2020/21 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/24.

Councillor Nicholas Mawer, Declaration, in any capital bids related to Audio Visual equipment, due to working for a manufacturer of Audio Visual system components.

34 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 October 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

36 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

37 **Budget Setting for 2020/21 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/24**

The Committee considered a report and presentation from the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) that gave details of the budget setting process for 2020/21, and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2020/24.

The presentation gave details of the current assumptions around funding based on national headlines, corporate budgets and the medium term financial picture.

The report detailed various Growth, Savings and Spend to Save bids, as well as capital bids that were being proposed for the 2020-2021 financial year. Revenue implications of the Capital bids were also included.

The Executive Director: Finance (Interim) reminded the Committee that a balanced budget was required for the 2020-2021 financial year only, however work was already underway relating to future financial years to help reduce the impact of expected changes to funding.

The Chief Executive and Corporate Directors were in attendance at the meeting, in order to give more details and answer questions from the Committee regarding the Growth, Savings, Spend to Save and Capital bids.

With regard to GRW011 and GRW045, the creation of a Finance and HR Apprentice post, the Committee requested that consideration be given to recruiting apprentices across the Council, not just in Finance and HR.

In response to queries regarding CAP031, Car Parking Action Plan Delivery, the Chief Operating Officer confirmed that details relating to electric vehicle charging points had been included in the plan.

In connection with GRW033, Kidlington masterplan delivery project, the Committee requested that following the successful installation of Changing Place accessible toilets in Banbury and Bicester, consideration be given to providing this facility in Kidlington.

The Committee requested clarification on the 'miscellaneous' title for SAV028. The Executive Director: Finance (Interim) explained that over 100 properties within the Council's property portfolio had had their budgets reviewed, and the subsequent savings had been grouped together under the miscellaneous heading.

With regard to SAV025, increasing car parking charges, the Chief Operating Officer advised the Committee that inflation had risen since 2011, resulting in an increase in the cost of providing Council car parks. Parking charges had however not increased over the same period of time.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) confirmed that income from car parking could not be used to subsidise all other areas of a budget, it was only possible for Councils to recover the costs of providing the car parking service and environmental improvements.

The Chief Operating Officer advised the Committee that various options had been considered during the recent Scrutiny review on car parking, and all relevant details had been included in the end of review report submitted to Executive in September 2019.

At the request of the Committee, the Chief Operating Officer agreed to circulate more information relating to the proposed increases in car parking charges.

The Chief Executive reminded the Committee that they could request the removal of any proposals from the budget setting process, however alternative proposals would need to be made in order to replace anything that was removed.

In response to questions regarding GRW006, responding to Climate Emergency, the Chief Operating Officer advised the Committee that a report in response to the Council Motion adopted in July 2019 had been considered at the Executive meeting that had taken place earlier that evening. Details of the upcoming Member workshop on Climate Change were being finalised and would be circulated to Members in due course.

With regards to CAP006, Community Centre works, the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) agreed to circulate information to the Committee regarding which community centres would be having new roofs.

The Committee requested that consideration be given to the provision of solar panels on the replacement roofs of the community centres.

The Executive Director: Finance (Interim) advised the Committee that public consultation on the budget proposals would be undertaken over the coming four weeks, and during that time the Accounts, Audit and Risk Committee would be considering the affordability aspect of the budget setting at its meeting later in January.

Final budget proposals would be presented to Full Council on 24 February 2020, in order to meet statutory deadlines for the issuing of Council Tax bills.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) advised that the currently projected figures for the reduction in funding from 2021/2022 were estimates based on the consultations that had been underway. Until more details emerged, they remained estimates. However, planning for a possible reduction needed to start now, and a number of options were under consideration.

The Committee thanked the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) for the comprehensive presentation.

It was proposed by Councillor Nicholas Mawer and seconded by Councillor Douglas Webb that the report and presentation of the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) be noted, and that Executive be advised that the Budget Planning Committee support the budget proposals detailed in the report and presentation, subject to the following:

- i. Consideration being given to the provision of a Changing Space toilet in Kidlington
- ii. The provision of solar panels on the replacement roofs of Council owned community centres
- iii. Consideration being given to the recruitment of apprentices across the Council

Resolved

- (1) That the report and presentation of the Executive Director: Finance (Interim) be noted
- (2) That Executive be advised that Budget Planning Committee support the budget proposals detailed in the report and presentation, subject to the following:
 - i. Consideration being given to the provision of a Changing Space toilet in Kidlington
 - ii. The provision of solar panels on the replacement roofs of Council owned community centres

- iii. Consideration being given to the recruitment of apprentices across the Council

38 **Review of Committee Work Plan**

The Executive Director: Finance (Interim) advised the Committee that there were no changes to the indicative work programme previously published with the agenda for the October 2019 meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the verbal update be noted.

The meeting ended at 9.54 pm

Chairman:

Date: