

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING - WEDNESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2024

Present:

Councillor Campbell (in the Chair)

Councillors

Baker	Critchley	Jackson	M Smith
Bamborough	Ellison	Jones	Taylor
Benson	Farrell	Marshall	Thomas
Boughton	Flanagan	C Mitchell	Walsh
N Brookes	Galley	D Mitchell	Warne
P Brookes	Hobson	Roberts	Williams
S Brookes	Hoyle	Roe	Wilshaw
Burdess	Hugo	D Scott	
Cartmell	Humphreys	Mrs Scott	
Cooper	Hunter	Sloman	

In Attendance:

Neil Jack, Chief Executive

John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration

Steve Thompson, Director of Resources

Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Partnerships / Monitoring Officer

Lorraine Hurst, Head of Democratic Governance

Sarah Chadwick, Democratic Governance Senior Adviser

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of personal interests were made by Councillors N Brookes, Hobson and Sloman in relation to agenda item 3 'Proposed Rent Review 2024/25' as Council appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited.

The following declarations were made in respect of agenda item 4 'General Fund Revenue Budget, Council Tax and Dedicated Schools Grant 2024/25':

- Councillors Baker, Hugo and Jackson – personal interests in relation to the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority (CFA) precept as Council-appointed representatives of Lancashire CFA
- Councillors Benson and Thomas – personal interests in relation to the concessionary fares savings for the Council as their partners were employees of Blackpool Transport Services Limited
- Councillors Bamborough and Boughton - personal interests in relation to the concessionary fares savings for the Council and prejudicial interests in respect of the savings identified with the tram depot as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Transport Services Limited
- Councillors N Brookes, Hobson and Sloman – prejudicial interests in relation to proposed budget savings for Housing Company recharges and review of company overheads for Blackpool Housing Company Limited /Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited

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- Councillors M Smith and C Mitchell - prejudicial interests in respect of the savings identified with the Sandcastle Waterpark as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Operating Company Limited
- Councillors Farrell and Walsh - prejudicial interests in respect of the savings identified with the Winter Gardens as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited
- Councillors Hoyle, Jones and Wilshaw - prejudicial interests in respect of the savings identified with Enveco as Council-appointed non-executive directors of Blackpool Waste Services Limited.

2 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2024

Resolved: That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 31 January 2024 be signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

Following approval of the minutes, the Mayor, on behalf of the Council, offered congratulations to Councillor Portia Webb and her husband, on the birth of their son.

3 PROPOSED RENT REVIEW 2024/25

The Council considered the recommendations from the Executive meeting on 5 February 2024 on the level of rents and service charges to be charged in connection with Housing Revenue Account dwellings and the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2024/25.

Discussion took place on the proposed levels of rent and affordability as well the impact upon the Housing Revenue Account in the longer term.

Motion: Councillor M Smith proposed (and Councillor Williams seconded):

- ‘1. That the 2024/25 Housing Revenue Account budget as set out in Appendix 3a to the Council report is approved.
2. That rents for all Housing Revenue account properties are increased by 7.7% in 2024/25 to maintain the health and future viability of the Housing Revenue Account in line with official guidance.
3. That the minimum level of Housing Revenue Account balances remain protected at £1 million, as previously agreed.
4. That Housing Revenue Account service charges (as detailed in Appendix 3b of the report) and that other General Fund service charges (as detailed in Appendix 3c of the report) are charged as outlined’.

Prior to voting, five members of the Council requested that the vote on the motion should be recorded. The voting was as follows:

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For the motion: Councillors Bamborough, Benson, Boughton, N Brookes, P Brookes, S Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Cartmell, Critchley, Farrell, Flanagan, Hobson, Hoyle, Hugo, Humphreys, Hunter, Jackson, Jones, Marshall, Roe, M Smith, Taylor, Thomas, Williams - **Total 25.**

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Cooper, Ellison, Galley, C Mitchell, D Mitchell, Roberts, D Scott, M Scott, Walsh, Warne, Wilshaw – **Total 12.**

Abstentions: Councillor Sloman – **Total 1.**

Motion carried: The motion was therefore carried.

4 GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET, COUNCIL TAX AND DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT FOR 2024/25

Members considered the recommendations from the Executive from its meeting on 5 February 2024 in relation to the draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2024/25, setting of Council Tax and proposals for the use of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Members noted the level of precepts that had been set by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority for the forthcoming financial year.

Members firstly considered the budget proposals in relation to Housing Company recharges and review of company overheads for Blackpool Housing Company Limited and Blackpool Coastal Housing Limited.

Motion 1: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

‘To agree a budget saving of £422,000 based on recharges and a review of company overheads for Blackpool Coastal Housing Ltd and Blackpool Housing Company Ltd (ref. Appendix 4b of the Council report)’.

Recorded vote: The Council noted that under the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, there was a requirement for a recorded vote on setting the Council tax and budget. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors Bamborough, Benson, Boughton, P Brookes, S Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Cartmell, Critchley, Farrell, Flanagan, Hoyle, Hugo, Humphreys, Hunter, Jackson, Jones, Marshall, Roe, M Smith, Taylor, Thomas, Williams - **Total 23.**

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Cooper, Ellison, Galley, C Mitchell, D Mitchell, Roberts, D Scott, M Scott, Walsh, Warne, Wilshaw – **Total 12.**

Abstentions: None

Motion 1 carried: The motion was therefore carried.

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Note: Having declared prejudicial interests, Councillors N Brookes, Hobson and Sloman left the meeting during consideration of the above part of the item.

Motion 2: Councillor Williams then proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

‘To agree a level of budget savings of £1.578 million made up by:

- £427,000 for new rent at the Tram Depot from Blackpool Transport Services Ltd
- £500,000 from improved performance from the Sandcastle Waterpark (Blackpool Operating Company Limited) and Winter Gardens (Blackpool Entertainment Company Limited)
- £500,000 from an Enveco dividend (Blackpool Waste Services Limited) and
- £151,000 from a Sandcastle Waterpark rent increase (Blackpool Operating Company Limited)

(ref. Appendix 4b of the Council report)’.

Recorded vote: The Council noted that under the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, there was a requirement for a recorded vote on setting the Council tax and budget. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors N Brookes, P Brookes, S Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Cartmell, Critchley, Flanagan, Hobson, Hugo, Humphreys, Hunter, Jackson, Marshall, Roe, Taylor, Williams - **Total 17.**

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Cooper, Ellison, Galley, D Mitchell, Roberts, D Scott, M Scott, Sloman, Warne – **Total 10.**

Abstentions: None

Motion 2 carried: The motion was therefore carried.

Note: Having declared prejudicial interests, Councillors Bamborough, Boughton, M Smith, C Mitchell, Farrell, Walsh, Hoyle, Jones and Wilshaw left the meeting during consideration of the above part of the item.

Motion 3: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

‘The Council to agree the proposed the remaining recommendations numbered 2.1 to 2.13 as outlined in Agenda Item 4 and updated in the Order of Proceedings (and reproduced below) to reflect decisions taken above and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire precept and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority precept for the financial year 2024/25:

1. To note the recommendations from the Executive at its meeting on 5 February 2024 and updated information as reported to Council.

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2. To note the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire precept for the financial year 2024/25 for a Band D Tax equivalent and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority precept for the financial year 2024/25 for a Band D Tax equivalent.
3. To agree a level of budget savings of £14.3m (£16.3m less the £2m already approved) (ref. paragraphs 10.1 and Appendix 4b of the Council report) incorporating a Council Tax increase of 4.99% made up of 2.99% plus 2% Adult Social Care precept.
4. To agree the level of net expenditure for the General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/2025 of £194,762,000 (ref. paragraph 9.2 and Appendix 4a of the Council report).
5. To note that on 31 January 2024, the National Non-Domestic Rate Return 1 for 2024/25 was formally approved by the Leader of the Council and this has been reflected in Appendix 4a for the financial year 2024/25 and the updated Appendix 4g (Annexes 1 and 2) of the Council report.
6. To agree that the Chief Executive be authorised to take any necessary steps to ensure any staffing savings are achieved (ref. paragraph 11.1 of the Council report).
7. To agree the proposed use of the Dedicated Schools Grant Budget for 2024/25 (ref. paragraph 7.8 and Appendix 4c of the Council report).
8. To agree the allocation of schools funding for 2024/25 (ref. paragraph 7.8 and Appendix 4c of the Council report).
9. To agree that a target level of working balances of £8m by 31 March 2025 and that due regard is given to the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves in the budget proposals for 2024/2025 (ref. section 13 of the Council report).
10. To adopt the formal Council Tax Resolutions set out in the updated Appendix 4g (Annex 1) of the Council report, in so doing agree a Council Tax Requirement of £74,755,000 and a Council Tax Base of 38,756 properties.
11. To note the calculation of Aggregate Amounts as directed by Section 31A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as set out in the updated Appendix 4g (Annexes 1 and 2) of the Council report.
12. To approve a level of Council Tax for the financial year 2024/25 of £1,928.87 at valuation Band D equivalent (a 4.99% increase including the 2% Adult Social Care Precept but excluding the precepts for the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority).
13. To confirm that the aggregate levels of Council Tax for Valuation Bands A to H will be as set out in the updated Appendix 4g of the Council report and set out below':

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Valuation Bands								
Authority	£							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Blackpool Council	1,100.58	1,284.02	1,467.45	1,650.88	2,017.74	2,384.60	2,751.46	3,301.76
Adult Social Care Precept	185.33	216.21	247.10	277.99	339.77	401.54	463.32	555.98
Blackpool Council Total	1,285.91	1,500.23	1,714.55	1,928.87	2,357.51	2,786.14	3,214.78	3,857.74
Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire	175.60	204.87	234.13	263.40	321.93	380.47	439.00	526.80
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	56.49	65.90	75.32	84.73	103.56	122.39	141.22	169.46
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
All parts of the Council's area	1,518.00	1,771.00	2,024.00	2,277.00	2,783.00	3,289.00	3,795.00	4,554.00

Debate took place on the level of proposed Council tax and a range of views were expressed.

Recorded vote: The Council noted that under the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, there was a requirement for a recorded vote on setting the Council tax and budget. The voting was as follows:

For the motion: Councillors Bamborough, Benson, Boughton, N Brookes, P Brookes, S Brookes, Burdess, Campbell, Cartmell, Critchley, Farrell, Flanagan, Hobson, Hoyle, Hugo, Humphreys, Hunter, Jackson, Jones, Marshall, Roe, M Smith, Taylor, Thomas, Williams - **Total 25.**

Against the motion: Councillors Baker, Cooper, Ellison, Galley, C Mitchell, D Mitchell, Roberts, D Scott, M Scott, Sloman, Walsh, Warne, Wilshaw – **Total 13.**

Abstentions: None

Motion 3 carried: The motion was therefore carried.

5 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2024/25 TO 2026/27

Members considered the recommendations from the Executive meeting of 5 February 2024 in relation to the proposed Capital Strategy 2024/25 to 2025/26 and its complimentary document the Property Investment Strategy for 2024/25.

Motion: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To approve the Capital Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27 attached at Appendix 5a of the Council report.

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2. To approve the Property Investment Strategy for 2024/25 attached at Appendix 5b of the Council report’.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

6 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2026/27

The Council considered a report and recommendations of the Executive from 5 February 2024 regarding the Capital Programme for 2024/2025, 2025/2026 and 2026/27.

Members noted that the programme ran concurrently with the 2024/25 revenue budget and projected forward spending for three years at an estimated value of £143.3 million.

Motion: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To approve the Capital Programme for 2024/25 and exemplifications for 2025/26 and 2026/27 as set out at Appendix 6a of the Council report.
2. To agree that Executive decisions will continue to be required for all prudential borrowing schemes (reference paragraph 6.10 of the Council report).
3. To agree to continue with the Single Capital Pot approach as outlined in Section 6 of the Council report with a top slice of 12.5% to allow for investment in key priority areas and overspends that are not otherwise fundable (reference paragraph 6.11 of the Council report).
4. To approve the Capital Prudential Indicators as identified in Appendix 6b of the Council report’.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

7 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024/25

The Council considered the recommendations of the Executive from its meeting on 5 February 2024 on the proposed Treasury Management Strategy 2024/2025, which set out an annual plan of how the Council would manage its investments and cashflows.

Motion: Councillor Williams proposed (and Councillor Taylor seconded):

- ‘1. To approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 including both the Borrowing and Investment Strategies which are set out in Appendix 7c and Appendix 7d to the Council report.
2. To adopt the Treasury Management Policy Statement, three key principles and four clauses taken from the Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (2021 Edition) and set out in Appendix 7b to the Council report.

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3. To approve the revised Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2023/24 and the new Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2024/2025 - 2026/27 which are set out in Appendix 7e to the report.
4. To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2024/25, which will ensure a prudent Minimum Revenue Provision charge in the annual statement of accounts as set out within Appendix 7f to the report'.

Motion carried: The motion was submitted to the Council and carried.

Mayor

(The meeting ended at 8.25 pm)

Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact:
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