

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Cabinet

Wednesday, 6 February 2019 at 7.30 pm

Councillors Present:

P K Lamb (Chair)	Leader of the Council
M G Jones	Cabinet Member for Housing
A C Skudder	Cabinet Member for Resources
B A Smith	Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement
P C Smith	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development and Deputy Leader
G Thomas	Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability

Also in Attendance:

Councillor C A Cheshire and D Crow

Officers Present:

Natalie Brahma-Pearl	Chief Executive
Kevin Carr	Legal Services Manager
Karen Hayes	Head of Corporate Finance
Chris Pedlow	Democratic Services Manager
Clem Smith	Head of Economy and Planning

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor C J Mullins

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21 November 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

3. Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

4. Matters referred to the Cabinet and Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

It was confirmed that no matters had been referred to the Cabinet for further consideration.

5. 2019/20 Budget and Council Tax

The Leader of the Council presented report FIN/462 of the Head of Corporate Finance, which set out the Budget and level of Council Tax for the year 2019/2020. It was noted that the report detailed each of the Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Accounts that combine together to formulate 'The Budget'. In proposing the level of Council Tax for the Financial Year 2019-2020, each of those accounts identified had been considered. The proposed Council Tax for 2019/20 be increased by 2.49%, which was one of the lowest in the County. The Leader emphasised that the Budget follows the agreed Budget Strategy including achieving a balanced budget over a 3 year period. However, through the combined proposals it had ensured that the Council had a balanced budget over the one year. It was noted that the budget has a focus on income generation to fund reduction in Grant funding.

The report also sought approval of the Pay Policy Statement for 2019/2020.

The Cabinet noted the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report presented by Councillor Cheshire and its comments to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 4 February 2019.

Councillor Jones also spoke on the report.

RESOLVED

That Full Council be recommended to the approval of the following items regarding the 2019/20 Budget:

- a) to approve the proposed 2019/20 General Fund Budget including savings and growth as set out in section 6 and Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of report FIN/462,
- b) to approve the proposed 2019/20 Housing Revenue Account Budget as set out in Section 10 and Appendix 3 of report FIN/462,
- c) to approve the 2018/19 to 2021/22 Capital Programme and funding as set out in Paragraph 11.4 of report FIN/462,
- d) to agree that the Council's share of Council Tax for 2019/20 be increased by 2.49% from £198.99 to £203.94 for a band D property as set out in paragraphs 5.5.1 and 13.3 of report FIN/462,
- e) to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2019/2020 as outlined in paragraph 16.3 and Appendix 6 of report FIN/462.

Reasons for the Recommendations

To provide adequate funding for the proposed level of services and to fulfil the statutory requirement to set a Budget and Council Tax and report on the robustness of estimates.

6. Treasury Management Strategy 2019/2020

The Leader of the Council presented report FIN/464 of the Head of Corporate Finance. The strategy covered two main areas, Capital related matters and treasury management issues. It was noted that the Council was required to produce a Treasury Management Strategy.

The Leader stated that the purpose of the report was to show how the Council intends to invest, over long and short terms, the money it holds both in its reserves and collects, to ensure that the Council was making best use of that money. The Council's investment criteria was based on three principles, security, investment and yield in that order. However part of our investment strategy states that we would not invest in unethical investments as shown in section 7.3 of report FIN/464.

It was noted that there were no material changes to the Investment Strategy in Section 7 and Appendix 3 of the report compared with the 2018/2019 Strategy. Also that the report takes into account the revenue and capital implications arising in the 2019/20 Budget and Council Tax report (FIN/462).

Councillor Cheshire presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 4 February 2019. The Commission were pleased with the success with the rate of return that the in-house team were able to achieve on the Council's investments. It also noted that there might be a need in the future for the Council to look beyond the income from property acquisition.

Councillors Skudder and Thomas also spoke on the report and questioned that going forward, could the Council's ethical investment policy be expanded to consider company ecological position. The Leader commented that he would be happy in the future to look at adding such a category to the ethical investment policy.

RESOLVED

That Full Council be recommended to approve

- a) the Treasury Prudential Indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement contained within Section 5 of report FIN/464;
- b) the Treasury Management Strategy contained within Section 6 of report FIN/464;
- c) the Investment Strategy contained within Section 7, and the detailed criteria included in Appendix 3 of report FIN/464;

Reasons for the Recommendations

The Council's financial regulations, in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management, requires a Treasury Management Strategy to be approved for the forthcoming financial year. This report complies with these requirements

7. Capital Strategy 2019/2020

The Leader of the Council presented report FIN/467 of the Head of Corporate Finance. The report was a new requirement and detailed how the Council would manage their investments and financing of capital resources to contribute towards achieving its key objectives and priorities.

Councillor Cheshire presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 4 February 2019.

Councillor Thomas also spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

RESOLVED

That Full Council be recommended to approve the Capital Strategy

Reasons for the Recommendations

The Council's financial regulations, in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management, requires a Capital Strategy to be approved for the forthcoming financial year. This report complies with these requirements.

8. Allocating Monies Collected Through Community Infrastructure Levy - Infrastructure Business Plan 2019/20

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development presented report PES/302 of the Head of Economy and Planning, which provided the findings of the first Annual review of Crawley's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Programme. The report set out proposed changes to the Infrastructure Business Plan (IBP), included the removal, following advice from the CCG, of the potential investment in a Bewbush medical centre at Bewbush Pavilion, which was acknowledged by the Cabinet was desperately needed with the impact of Kilnwood Vale. But instead investment to funding two new consultant rooms at both Saxonbrook Medical Centre, Northgate and at Pound Hill Medical Group respectively.

The report also detail the result of the one year pilot Crowdfund Crawley scheme. The scheme had proved to be successful with over £12k worth of funding being provided to community lead schemes/ projects across the Borough and as a result of this it was proposed that the scheme be renewed for a further year.

Councillor Cheshire presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 4 February 2019. The Commission commented that they were pleased with the success of the crowdfunding schemes and hoped that a further thought could be made over the potential for some offline applications form for the scheme, rather than just through the Spacehive portal.

Councillors Jones and Skudder all spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

- a) approves the proposed revised CIL strategic infrastructure spend priorities presented in the Infrastructure Business Plan (Appendix A) set out in Section 6 to report PES/304, to the end of 2021/22.
- b) notes that the Infrastructure Business Plan, including the funding programme, will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis to take into account any changes in strategic infrastructure priorities and fluctuations in CIL receipts compared to the forecast. The next review is proposed to take place in February 2020.
- c) approves extending the Crowdfund Crawley pilot scheme until the end of March 2020 and for the scheme to be reviewed again in February 2020. 2.2.4. To approve the recommendation to broaden the requirement as to when the Council will consider making a pledge from the Neighbourhood Improvement Fund, to include projects which achieve 10 individual pledges for funding. (See Section 11.7 of report PES/302)
- d) approves the application of the CIL administrative fee, capped at 5% of total receipts per annum. (See section 5.3.1 and Section 7 of report PES/302).

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. By approving the revised CIL Infrastructure Business Plan, it will give clarity as to the projects identified as a priority for delivery using CIL finances and it will also provide a clear audit trail.
2. The extension to the Crowdfund Crawley programme will allow the Council to better evaluate the impact that the programme has had. By broadening the requirement that the Council will consider making a pledge, this should enable individual projects which have struggled to get initial 'buy in' from the general public to gain support, building further confidence in the Crowdfund programme.
3. By approving the application of the CIL administration fee, this will allow the Council to offset administrative expenses incurred by the Council due to its role in the collection, management and distribution of CIL.

9. Review of Statement of Licensing Policy made under the Licensing Act 2003

The Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability presented report HCS/08 of the Head of Community Services which sought approval for the Statement of Licensing Policy 2019-2024. The Cabinet were informed that under the Licensing Act 2003, the Council as the Licensing Authority was required to determine and publish a 'Statement of its Licensing Policy' at least once every five years. The only proposed changes to the previous policy related to legislation changes.

As part of the statutory process for reviewing the policy, a 12 week period consultation was held, however there was only one response, that being from WSCC's Public Health Team. Their comments over the need to highlighting the effects of alcohol on individuals' behaviour and the long term damage of drinking, had been incorporated as the part of the Alcohol and Health foreword to the policy.

The proposed Statement of Licensing Policy for 2019-2024, was set out in Appendix B to report HCS/08, and it had regard to the Section 182 Guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Councillor Cheshire presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 4 February 2019. The Commission raised some concerns whether there was a need within the Town for a Cumulative Impact Policy, over the number of premises that could serve alcohol.

Councillors Skudder and B. Smith spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

RESOLVED

That the that Full Council approves and adopts the proposed revised Statement of Licensing Policy 2019-2024 made under the Licensing Act 2003 (Appendix B to report HCS/08).

Reasons for the Recommendations

To agree and develop the proposed strategy to discharge the Council's role in its capacity of Licensing Authority for the 5 year period 2019–2024

10. 2018/2019 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3

The Leader of the Council presented report FIN/466 of the Head of Corporate Finance to the Cabinet which provided a summary of the Council's actual Revenue and Capital spending up to the 3rd Quarter ending December 2018. It identified the main variations from the approved spending levels and any potential impact on future budgets.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

- a) notes the projected outturn for the year 2018/2019 as summarised in report FIN/466.
- b) approves additional capital budgets funded from the existing business rates pool and S106 as identified in paragraphs 8.2 and 8.3 of report FIN/466.

Reasons for the Recommendations

To report to Members on the projected outturn for the year compared to the approved budget.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Cabinet concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.55 pm

P K LAMB
Chair