

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

Held in the Council Chamber, The Symington Building, Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough

COUNCIL

25 February 2019

commencing at 6.30 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Bowles (Chairman)

Councillors: Mrs Ackerley, Bannister, Bateman, Mrs Beesley-Reynolds, Bilbie, Mrs Burrell, Champion, Dann, Dunton, Elliott, Evans, Galton, Graves, Hadkiss, Hallam, Dr Hill, Holyoak, King, Knowles, Liquorish, Modha, Nunn, Mrs. Page, Rickman, Mrs Robinson, Rook, Mrs Simpson, Spendlove-Mason, Tomlin and Mrs Wood

Officers: S. Hamilton, B. Jolly, M. Perris, N.Proudfoot, S. Riley and V.Wenham

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Brodrick, Chapman, Hall, Hammond and Mrs Johnson

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman made the following announcements regarding a significant number of events she has recently attended and participated in as follows:-

- Market Harborough Rotary Club dinner
- A dinner hosted by the Chairman of the Leicestershire County Council at Castle House, Leicester
- A mock Council event with children from Meadowdale Primary School, Market Harborough

DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none.

MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor Bannister and seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that: the Minutes of the Council meeting held on the 28th January 2019 be received and adopted.

It was moved by Councillor Bannister and seconded by Councillor King and

RESOLVED that: the Minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 8th January 2019 be received and adopted.

REPORT OF THE LEADER

Councillor Bannister, Leader, presented his report, as set out below,

Government Consultation on plans to overhaul the waste system.

On February 18th the Government announced plans to overhaul the waste system in England. This Council looks forward to participating in the consultations announced as some of the proposals could have far reaching effects for our residents and businesses.

As well as making businesses and manufacturers pay the full cost of recycling or disposing of their packaging waste, householders may see the existing recycling system simplified so that consumers will know with clarity what items they can recycle. There is a proposal for a Deposit Return Scheme for cans, plastic and glass bottles which I personally welcome.

There may be implications for this Council and its householders in the areas of food waste collections and charging for collecting garden waste. We need to understand fully what is to be proposed and how this Council can position itself to be ready for any changes that may be coming in the proposed legislation. I can assure Members this Council will be fully engaged in the consultation process.

Kibworth

Continuing on the theme of improving our environment, I welcome the District Council's investment in a new air monitoring station at Kibworth Harcourt. The monitor will be used by the Council to analyse hourly trends and test, more accurately, against air quality standards set by the Government. This will help inform the Kibworth Air Management Action Plan as we seek to improve the air quality along this small stretch of the A6 in the village.

X3 Bus Service

A number of representations have been made to me about the changes Arriva announced with regard to its X3 bus service particularly about the withdrawal of its service from the southern estate of Market Harborough between 10am and 4pm. It is a matter of deep regret that Arriva did not extend the courtesy to the Council of its intentions until the announcement was made so close to the date when these changes are to come into effect. It leaves little time to do anything to relieve the disruption to our residents that use this service.

We have been in touch with Neil O'Brien MP over this matter and he has had talks with Arriva. I have discussed the matter with the Cabinet Member at the County Council who has responsibility for the provision of bus services in the County. CC Blake Pain is acutely aware of the disruption and is working on a number of scenarios that in the medium term may offer some help to our residents.

The actions of Arriva only give impetus to this Council's desire to set up a Strategic Public Transport Partnership for the District to prevent such precipitous actions being taken by our public transport providers in the future. I am meeting Neil O'Brien MP on Friday this week asking for his support for this Partnership as well as to get a briefing on his latest discussions with Arriva.

Tourism Update

I wish to update Members on some changes in the way in which the District promotes the many tourist attractions we have. The District's partnership with Leicestershire Promotions ends this March and I wish to give thanks for all their help and support over the last few years. Leicestershire

Promotions came into partnership with the Council when the Council was just finding its way with promoting tourism in the District so I am grateful for their assistance.

Happily HDC have now developed the capability of boosting tourism in-house and we are unveiling new plans next month demonstrating the Council's continued commitment to boosting tourism in the District with such events as the Classic Car Show, bringing in more coach parties to the District, taking advantage of the opportunities of a revamped Market Harborough train station to attract visitors from London and the North as well as to work closely with local festival organisers. A new tourism website is to be launched to promote local attractions and businesses as well as a new tourism guide.

Alberto Costa MP and myself have also both written independently to Highways England asking for the provision of a heritage sign near to Junction 20 to advertise the heritage assets in Lutterworth and elsewhere in the District.

Broughton Astley

Being a former member of the Parish Council in Broughton Astley I am always pleased to see improvements in this well run village – which is the third largest settlement within the District. Very recently HDC have agreed the transfer of some open space land to the Parish so that it can be enhanced as the Parish have plans for a bus shelter and Notice Board for this land. HDC have recently installed an electric car charging point on our car park in the village; we will be installing new and updated litter bins in the village, we have taken effective enforcement planning action in the village and we are currently engaging in a very productive and constructive way with the Broughton Astley Open Space Society who have some really good ideas about working in partnership with the District on how to further improve the many open spaces the Council owns in the village.

Comments on the Leader's report

Councillor Knowles expressed his support for the Government consultation on the waste system, and suggested that there needed to be an emphasis on traceability and accountability, in order that information regarding the origin and destination of plastics is known. He also highlighted the importance of ensuring "food waste containers" are part of the review.

In regard to the X3 bus service, Councillor Knowles welcomed Neil O'Brien's involvement. He reported that a petition from residents with 369 signatures had been sent to Arriva, together with a resident's suggestion detailing a proposal to add one extra bus in the middle of the day, leaving Harborough Market at 13.00 hours. Arriva has not yet replied. Councillor Knowles commented that Harborough District Council might want to consider a small budgetary contribution in the future towards these bus services, given the extent of cuts to the service.

Councillor Knowles also highlighted the "Invest in Harborough" breakfast event which is taking place at the Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground on the 1st March from 8.00am to 9.30am.

Councillor Galton informed Councillors that there are six or seven bus services under threat in the District, and hopes that a whole district approach is taken with discussions with Leicestershire County Council, as £400,000 is due to be taken out of the subsidised network. Councillor Galton advised that he has seen the passenger statistics for the 747 service from Leicester to Uppingham and 6,000 passenger journeys were taken in a month.

Councillor Graves commented that Broughton Astley had made an offer for a small piece of and but to date had not yet had a reply from Harborough District Council. Also fairly recently he highlighted a road junction safety related issue and had asked action to be taken and this hasn't yet happened.

Councillor King is very appreciative that an air monitoring station has been installed, and would like to know when data will be available. He also reported that the changes to the X3 bus service also impact very significantly in Kibworth. Councillor King reported that a meeting is in the process of being arranged very shortly with the bus services and other public service providers to discuss public transport across the District. He also commented that it is important that Harborough District Council make representations to Arriva.

Councillor Dann asked when the new and updated litter bins will be installed in Broughton Astley. He also asked for information regarding members of the public attending the turf cutting event at the Broughton Astley Leisure Centre.

Councillor Spendlove-Mason commented that he has used public transport on a number of occasions recently, and feels very strongly that the X3 bus service should be maintained.

Leader's response

Councillor Bannister thanked Cllr Knowles for his comments. He agreed that the traceability of plastics is very important and with regard to the consultation process concerning food waste, the Harborough District Council has a wealth of experience and therefore can engage fully with the government on this issue.

In relation to the X3 bus service he would be very interested to hear from Councillor Knowles when he has heard back from Arriva regarding the proposal for the extra bus. Councillor Bannister reported that he has heard that Arriva think that the provision of one extra bus on the Southern Estate may cost them over £100,000. Councillor Bannister would be very interested to see how Arriva responds to Councillor Knowles. Councillor Bannister thanked all the Councillors who had contributed to the discussion associated with bus services, and in particular the X3. He commented that the Council wants to discuss all aspects of public transport and set up a public transport partnership to enable this to happen on a strategic level, in order that all the issues can be brought together in a single forum, which will include public transport providers, and hopes that the whole of the Council will endorse this.

Regarding the road junction query from Councillor Graves, the issue was raised as a Notice of Motion at the November 12th 2018 Council Meeting where a full answer was provided. In regard to the open space, Councillor Bannister commented that there has been quite a lot of open discussion and correspondence between Broughton Astley Parish Council and Harborough District Council, and in particular with the Parish Councillor who is leading on this particular issue.

In regards to the questions from Councillor Dann, the Leader advised that he doesn't have the specific date as to when the litter bins will be installed but will ensure that the information is emailed to both Councillor Dann and Broughton Astley Parish Council. Furthermore he advised that the Chairman of the Broughton Astley Parish Council has been in touch with him regarding the turf cutting event and this will take place on the 5th March '19.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE PUBLIC

There were none.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS

There were none.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2019

1. CORPORATE PLAN AND CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN 2018/19 TO 2020/21

The Executive on 11th February 2019 had noted the revised versions of the three-year (2018/19 to 2020/21) Corporate Plan, Corporate Delivery Plan and Strategic Performance Dashboard.

The Council's attention was drawn to the list of key achievements as set out at Appendix A to the officer's report.

It was moved by Councillor Hadkiss, seconded by Councillor Bannister and

RESOLVED that the revised versions of the three-year (2018/19 to 2020/21) Corporate Plan, Corporate Delivery Plan and Strategic Performance dashboard, as set out at Appendices A, B and C to the officer's report, be approved.

Summary of Reasons

The Corporate Plan and Corporate Delivery Plan are documents which outline the Council's Vision, Priorities, and Critical Outcomes and associated Key Activities for the period 2018/19 to 2020/21.

Both of the documents are underpinned by the Council's vision, which is:

"to secure a prosperous future for the people of Harborough District."

Three priorities were identified for the 2018/19 to 2020/21 years. Both the Corporate Plan and the Corporate Delivery Plan are structured around the delivery of these three priorities:

- **The Place:** an enterprising, vibrant place
- **The People:** a healthy, inclusive and engaged community
- **Your Council:** innovative, proactive and efficient

The Corporate Plan is an overarching, external, public document which sets out the Council's vision for the District, its ambitions and priorities and how it will work with its partners and the community to ensure that living in, working in, and visiting the District is the best possible experience. It is based on information about the area and customer feedback and identifies how the Council will achieve its vision.

The Corporate Delivery Plan is the Council's high-level plan which sets out how it will deliver its vision and priorities through Critical Outcomes and Key Activities.

2. 2019/20 REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Executive on 11th February 2019 had considered a report detailing the 2019/20 Budget and Capital Programme. The budget had been prepared on the basis of a series of estimates on Government funding, cost pressures and income forecast. In addition, the Executive proposed a series of growth and savings proposals, aiming to deliver the Council's priorities within a reducing level of funding from Central Government.

The Council was advised that Harborough District's Council's, Council Tax for 2019/20 is still lower than the Leicestershire average and less than the Council Tax set in 2012/13. The Council has the

highest core spending power in Leicestershire despite having the lowest level of settlement funding from central government. This recognises the Council's success in generating locally generated income, for example New Homes Bonus and retained business rates.

The budget is well balanced drawing on earmarked reserves where necessary, and requiring a negligible use of the general reserve to fund it. Over the last six years core Government funding has decreased by over £2.1 million. During this period savings have been made of £1.6 million, and income generated of over £2.5 million, more than £4 million in total. The Council has been able to protect and invest in front line priorities, including investing in support to businesses and helping the vulnerable within the community.

Some of the key headlines within the budget and capital programme are:- success in the Business Rate Pilot Scheme bid, which is anticipated to yield £0.5 million in extra funding; a small increase of £12k in the New Homes Bonus; growth in housing has generated a £84k lift in the Council Tax base; funding is continuing for Community Grants of £50k and support to Sports and Leisure activity of £25k through use of the VAT Shelter Reserve; investment has been made in property funds and full Council has approved commercial investments, which will generate over £200,000 of increased investment returns; and an ambitious Capital Programme of £57.1 million to include: The Grow On Space, provision for new and refurbished Leisure Centre facilities, development of De Verdon Road site, commercial property investment, Harborough housing fund and play area equipment.

The budget reports set down transparently and clearly the impact of the new Special Expense policy adopted by Council in December, and this policy created a fair and equitable system for all residents of the District.

Councillor Hallam and the Finance Team were congratulated on the positive budget, which was echoed by a number of Councillors.

It was moved by Councillor Hallam, seconded by Councillor Bannister and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) Funding be approved for an Environmental Crime Enforcement Officer for a period of 12 months funded from General Fund Reserve and Appendices A, A(i) and D of the officer's report be updated (as attached) to reflect this change;
- (ii) The 2019/20 General Fund Revenue Account Net Expenditure Budget of £12,299,619 as set out in Appendix A of the report, be approved on 25th February 2019, resulting in a 0% increase in the District Band D Council Tax for 2019/20;
- (ii) The 2019/20 General Fund Revenue Account Net Expenditure Budget of £12,299,619 as set out in Appendix A of the report, be approved on 25th February 2019, resulting in a 0%¹ increase in the District Band D Council Tax for 2019/20;
- (iii) The General Fund Budget as set out in Appendix A be approved;
- (iv) The Capital Programme as set out in Appendix E of the report be approved.

¹ This is the official measure of Council Tax as prescribed by MHCLG and is based on the total budget requirement of the Council including services provided to all residents in the District and where the Council provides services to particular localities which are provided by Parishes elsewhere (Special Expenses). Special Expenses and the Harborough District Council element are split out on the Council Tax Bill and are detailed in paragraph 4.2.18 of the report.

Recorded vote

For: Cllrs Mrs Ackerley, Bannister, Bateman, Beesley-Reynolds, Bilbie, Champion, Dann, Evans, Hadkiss, Hallam, Holyoak, King, Liquorish, Modha, Nunn, Mrs Page, Rickman, Mrs Robinson, Rook, Spendlove-Mason, Tomlin and Mrs Wood (22)

Against: None

Abstention: Cllrs Bowles, Burrell, Dunton, Elliott, Galton, Graves, Dr Hill, Knowles and Mrs Simpson (9)

Summary of Reasons

The Council must set a balanced budget to discharge its duties and responsibilities by the 11th March 2019. The duty to recommend a budget to the Council rests with the Executive.

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE

It was moved by Cllr Bannister, seconded by Cllr King and

RESOLVED that the report from the Executive be received.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Councillor Dann presented the Scrutiny Commission report as set out below:-

There is only one Scrutiny-related item for me to report on to this meeting of Council – this is the meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Panel, held on 24th January.

Performance Scrutiny Panel:

The Panel scrutinised the revised versions of the Corporate Plan and Corporate Delivery Plan for 2018/19 to 2020/21 and the Council's budget proposals for 2019/20.

The meeting was made open to all Members of the Council and Members of The Executive also attended to answer questions. Feedback from the Panel, in the form of its draft minutes, was passed to the Executive for consideration at its meeting on 11th February.

Future Scrutiny Events

The final cycle of Scrutiny meetings will start in March. The Performance Scrutiny Panel will be meeting on 21st March and the Communities Panel on 28th March. As I mentioned in my last report, the Scrutiny Commission will now be meeting two times each year and no meeting is planned for this cycle.

At the time of writing, the following items are planned for consideration - further details are included in the full Scrutiny Workplan, which is available to view in the ["Public Documents" section on CMIS](#).

Performance (21/03/2019):

- Quarterly Financial Performance, Quarter 3
- Performance, End of Quarter 3
- Risk and Opportunity Management, End of Quarter 3
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)

- Property Strategy
- Capital Strategy

Communities (28/03/2019):

- Progress on Neighbourhood Plans
- Harborough District Community Lottery

Finally, Councillor Dann would like to thank all Members who contributed to the Scrutiny of the Council's budget proposals prior to their consideration by the Executive and by Council this evening.

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Council considered the report which detailed the Council's proposed prudential indicators for the period 2019/20 to 2021/22 and set out the forecast treasury activities over the same period.

The report fulfilled four key requirements of local government legislation as follows:

- The reporting of the prudential indicators as required by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;
- The Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy, which sets out how the Council will pay for capital assets through revenue each year;
- The Treasury Management Strategy, in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the public services; and
- The Annual Investment Strategy in accordance with the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) investment guidance.

It was moved by Councillor Hallam, seconded by Councillor Bannister, and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the capital prudential indicators and limits for 2019/20 to 2021/22 contained within Appendix A to the report be approved.
- (ii) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement, contained within Appendix A to the report be approved.
- (iii) the Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20 and the treasury prudential indicators contained in Appendix A to the report be approved.
- (iv) the Annual Investment Strategy 2019/20 contained in Appendix A and the detailed criteria included in Appendix B to the report be approved.
- (v) the inclusion of Market Harborough Building Society on the list of approved counterparties be approved.

Summary of Reasons

The Local Government Act 2003, as amended, and supporting regulations requires the Council to "have regard to" the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice to set Prudential and Treasury Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Council is also required by the Local Government Act 2003 to undertake an annual review of its policy for calculating the minimum revenue provision (MRP) for repayment of external debt.

The Act requires the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy. This sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.

COUNCIL TAX 2019/20

The Council considered the report to determine the District Council's precept upon the Collection Fund, and to determine the level of Council Tax in respect of the District Council, the Leicestershire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Combined Fire Authority and the various Parish / Town Councils within the District.

In order to formulate its decisions, the Council considered the following issues :-

- The overall General Fund Net Revenue Budget
- The level of balances
- The level of central government funding
- The proposed level of Council Tax for District services

The report detailed the breakdown of the Council Tax charged to all residents of the District and those charged to specific localities (special expenses) where the District Council is providing services which are delivered by Parish and Town Councils elsewhere.

There is a zero percent increase in the overall Band D Council Tax, which means that the Council Tax is still lower than in 2012/13.

The Officer's report details the breakdown of the Council Tax charged to all residents of the District and those charged to specific localities (special expenses) where the District Council is providing services which are delivered by Parish and Town Councils elsewhere. The Harborough District Council element on the bill will show as a 0.5% reduction on last year. Special Expenses vary between localities and were detailed in the budget report and are detailed in Appendix B to the report.

The report also details changes in parish precepts. Parishes have the freedom to determine increases without the constraints of a referendum. However, the level of some precepts and increases in recent years encourages scrutiny.

It was moved by Councillor Hallam, seconded by Councillor Bannister and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Council's precept demand upon the Collection Fund (the Council Tax Requirement) be set at £5,905,909.
- (ii) the District Council Band D Council Tax be set at £167.97, a £Nil increase on the current financial year, all other bands being determined in accordance with the relevant Sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended.
- (iii) the precept demands and level of Band D Council Tax of the Leicestershire County Council, the Police & Crime Commissioner, the Combined Fire Authority and the various Parish Councils within the District be determined as set out in

this report. All other bands being determined in accordance with the relevant Sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended.

Recorded vote

For: Cllrs Mrs Ackerley, Bannister, Bateman, Beesley-Reynolds, Bilbie, Mrs Burrell, Champion, Dann, Evans, Hadkiss, Hallam, Holyoak, King, Liquorish, Modha, Nunn, Mrs Page, Rickman, Mrs Robinson, Rook, Spendlove-Mason, Tomlin and Mrs Wood (23)

Against: None

Abstention: Cllrs Bowles, Dunton, Elliott, Galton, Graves, Dr Hill, Knowles and Mrs Simpson (8)

Summary of Reasons

The Council is statutorily required to determine its own Council Tax Requirement and, taking into account precepts determined by the other precepting authorities, to determine the Council Tax for the 2019/20 financial year.

ACCEPTANCE OF DELEGATION FROM RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

The Council considered the report regarding the acceptance of the delegation of grounds maintenance services from Rutland County Council. Harborough District Council operates an integrated Environmental Services Contract across the district with FCC Environmental Ltd since 2009, with the contract ending in March 2023.

The service provision on this contract is of a high standard across all four service areas including, domestic waste collection, commercial waste collection, street cleansing and grounds maintenance.

The grounds maintenance service has by recommendation been promoted to other third parties; commercialisation of this service in particular has seen Harborough District take on additional contractual work for grounds maintenance at Schools, Clubs, Parish Councils etc.

Rutland County Council approached HDC later last year to see what service could be provided by HDC, through the Environmental Services contract. Analysis of the contract specification for Rutland was similar to services provided for HDC, making the delegation and provision of the service relatively easy to provide. The delegation will provide Rutland County Council with a significant improvement in service delivery and further improve existing joint working relationships between both authorities.

It was moved by Councillor Bateman, seconded by Councillor Rickman and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the acceptance of delegation from Rutland County Council is approved (subject to approval by Rutland County Council), to provide Grounds Maintenance Services commencing 1 March 2019 for 3 years.
- (ii) the finalisation of the delegation and associated contract variations with FCC Environment Ltd, be delegated to the Head of Environment Services, Economic Development and Major Project in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Portfolio Holder.

Summary of Reasons

Harborough District Council was approached by Rutland County Council after their current contractor had significant service delivery issues.

As Harborough District Council (HDC) has an integrated Waste Management, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance Contract which operates at a high standard and provides an excellent level of service; talks between both parties commenced to see if HDC could provide this through a delegation for the next 3 years until Rutland's contracts were re-tendered for commencement in 2022.

The delegation would further build on the two authorities' joint working, with possible an option to discuss future contracts as part of both council's contracts expiring in 2022 and 2023.

URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman reminded Councillors that it was not appropriate to engage in politicking during full Council meetings

The Meeting ended at 8.34 p.m.