

Council**Thursday, 13 February 2020, County Hall, Worcester - 10.00 am****Minutes****Present:**

Mr R P Tomlinson (Chairman), Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mr B Clayton, Mr K D Daisley, Mr P Denham, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr A Fry, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Ms P A Hill, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr R C Lunn, Mr S J Mackay, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Mrs R Vale, Ms S A Webb and Mr T A L Wells

Available papers

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. 1 question submitted to the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance (previously circulated); and
- C. The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2020 (previously circulated).

2175 Apologies and Declaration of Interests (Agenda item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs J A Brunner, Dr C Hotham, Mr P McDonald, Mr J A D O'Donnell and Mr C B Taylor.

Mr M E Jenkins declared an interest in Agenda item 5 – Labour budget amendment 1 as a Trustee of Worcester Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Ms C M Stalker declared an interest in Agenda item 5 – Labour budget amendment 1 as a Trustee of Worcester CAB

Ms S A Webb declared an interest in Agenda item 5 – Labour budget amendment 1 as a Trustee of Bromsgrove CAB

Ms R L Dent declared an interest in Agenda item 5 –

	<p>Labour budget amendment 1 as a Trustee of Bromsgrove CAB</p> <p>Mr A I Hardman declared an interest in Agenda item 6 – Notice of Motion 1 as his son was a Member of Bristol Car Club</p>
<p>2176 Public Participation (Agenda item 2)</p>	<p>Mrs Clements made a comment and asked a question about the provision of free school transport to Upton upon Severn pupils when the Hanley Road is flooded.</p> <p>Mrs E A Eyre presented a petition on behalf of local residents requesting restrictive single yellow lines along Morris Road and Averill Close, Broadway to prevent parking problems.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Mrs Clements and Mrs Eyre for their contribution and said they would receive a written response from the relevant Cabinet Member.</p>
<p>2177 Minutes (Agenda item 3)</p>	<p>RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.</p>
<p>2178 Chairman's Announcements (Agenda item 4)</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>2179 Reports of Cabinet - Matters which require a decision - 2020/21 Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Update 2020-22 (Agenda item 5)</p>	<p>The Council had before it a detailed report on the 2020/21 Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan Update 2020-22, which Cabinet had considered on 30 January 2020 and which the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet were recommending for adoption by the Council.</p> <p>All Councillors had received or had access to the full report and Appendices considered by the Cabinet on 30 January 2020.</p> <p>The Leader introduced the report and moved the recommendation as set out in paragraph 1 of the report; this was seconded by Mr A I Hardman. The Leader explained that the budget sought to: 1) protect the most vulnerable members of society by investing a further £18m into Children's and Adult Social Care to meet demand-led pressures; 2) respond to the public's top priorities – road/pavement improvements, tackling congestion and improving public transport; and 3) support a growing economy with investment in infrastructure and the environment including investment in green energy, a switch to LED lighting, planting of 150k trees, and flood mitigation measures. All these themes underpinned the</p>

Council's Corporate Plan "Shaping Worcestershire for the Future".

Underpinning the budget was a substantial increase in income from a rising Council Tax base benefitting from the development of new homes and businesses. A Council Tax increase was proposed which amounted to a pound a week on a Band D property. These sources of income would generate £15m. Council Tax in this county would remain one of the lowest for comparable county councils in the country. The Government was providing an additional £8.9m for social care in the form of grants and £8.7m to tackle SEND pressures which recognised the demand-led pressures facing councils.

The availability of additional resources had led to the lowest saving and reform programme of under £10m for a number of years. It meant that a small amount of extra resources could be set aside for a Finance Risk Reserve to meet specific in-year budget pressures to avoid dipping into ordinary reserves.

The additional funding would be deployed to meet the Adult Social Care needs of an aging population, help people live independent lives and address the demand from working age disability clients. There would be a £4.5m increase in the Children's Social Care budget to provide services to vulnerable children, support the Council's improvement plan to be a 'good' Council and meet the needs of home to school transport. Over 3 years, £30m had been invested in Adult Social Care and £20m in Children's Social Care.

The budget included £12m for resurfacing roads, £8m for pavement improvements, doubled the budget for cutting congestion and an additional £200k for public transport. The Council was working with the LEP to invest in physical and digital infrastructure and to enable more homes and businesses to be created leading to a higher skilled and better paid workforce. £300k was proposed for the business case to upgrade the rail line to London. The Council was maintaining its commitment to the environment with £2m in the next 2 years invested in street lighting, planting 150k trees over 5 years creating a new woodland that would need to be managed with an extra £100k in the countryside budget and £2m invested in highways drainage and mitigation measures over the next 2 years. The Council would only be purchasing Green Electricity from next year.

He concluded that the budget supported sustainable

growth, addressed the public's key priorities and ensured adequate resources for demand-led services for the most vulnerable whilst continuing to maintain good financial stewardship and a relatively low Council Tax. He commended the budget to Council.

An amendment was moved by Mr R C Lunn and seconded by Mr L C R Mallett proposing:

Amendment 1: Investing in our communities

Labour Group Budget Amendment Proposals 2020/21		
	£	£
One-off investment in the following areas:		
• The Libraries book fund for physical and e-stock		350,000
• IT investment to extend the current digital offer		
o laptops/tablets to hire for use within libraries e.g. http://gethublet.com/project/libraries/		
o development of library app, improved print solution		
o enhance printing offer; printing from devices, print release in all locations to future-proof for self service.		100,000
• Marketing fund to build and maintain library profile and promote usage and benefits		50,000
• Grant support for Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to provide additional assistance to the homeless and helping train Foodbank workers in line with previous scrutiny report.		80,000
• To undertake highway and infrastructure work around the hospitals in the County to relieve traffic congestion in order to promote and secure increased public transport provision at / to the sites		100,000
• Signage to enable the implementation of 20MPH zones in key traffic accident risk areas across the County.		20,000
• To extend the Cabinet's proposal for tree planting.		50,000
	Total	750,000
One-off investment funded from the following areas:		
Use of the Financial Risk Reserve, as originally planned by the Cabinet in the December 2019 Cabinet report before additional income was identified.		(750,000)
	Total	(750,000)

The mover and seconder of the amendment then spoke in favour of its adoption; the key points being:

- The proposals in this amendment would be funded

from within existing resources. It sought to redirect and target funding to areas which had suffered budget reductions, for example £350k to the Library Book Fund to replenish stock and provide laptops/tablets. Assistance would be provided to tackle homelessness with support for the CAB and training for foodbank workers. It was proposed plant an extra £50k trees. Funding would be set aside for appropriate signage/road markings for 20mph speed limits where they were deemed appropriate. The Government had failed to deliver a policy on tackling Adult Social Care which was why the additional 2% precept on Council Tax should be implemented. The amendment addressed specific problems, tackled social justice and was a mixture of prophesy and the pragmatic

- The proposal to provide a grant to the CAB to provide assistance to the homeless was welcomed. Homeless people were desperate to receive advice on matters such as money and how to access services
- The amendment sought to improve public transport to hospitals thereby improving access for vulnerable people, improving traffic flows and tackling congestion issues, alleviate parking issues on hospital sites and surrounding roads, and implement 20mph speed limits where appropriate.

Members also spoke against the amendment:

- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care commented that the amendment represented a cornucopia of proposals that lacked a strategic direction, were already being done to some extent and lacked any revenue consequences, for example the lack of a maintenance budget for the extra tree planting. This amendment would result in a reduction in the Financial Risk Reserve. A reduction of this Reserve could lead to cuts in learning disability and Adult Social Care services and impact on the most vulnerable members of society
- The Leader of the Council emphasised that this proposed additional funding would come from the Financial Risk Reserve which was a buffer against unexpected costs and demands. It was difficult to predict the demand for Adult Social Care services and associated costs and therefore an in-year buffer was sensible. The funding of the Medium-Term Financial Plan was not complete and there

remained a possibility of future service cuts. In addition, the outcome of the impending Fairer Funding Review and Local Government Finance Settlement was not yet known. There was also an overspend of £3.6m in the current budget which could impact on next year's budget. Where members recognised the need for additional funding they could use their Divisional Fund or the Highways Fund. Some of the proposals in the amendment would be subject to recurring expenditure.

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote this amendment was lost.

Those in favour of the motion were: Ms P Agar, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, Ms P A Hill, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr R C Lunn, Mr L C R Mallett, Mrs F M Oborski, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr R M Udall, Mr T A L Wells. (14)

Those against the motion were: Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mr B Clayton, Mr K Daisley, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb. (37)

An amendment was then moved by Mr R C Lunn and seconded by Ms P Agar proposing:

Amendment 2: Investing in our youth

Labour Group Budget Amendment Proposals 2020/21

One-off investment in the following areas:

Conditional upon additional funding being received in line with Government's commitments it is proposed that the additional funds are targeted to support youth services across the County to prevent drugs misuse and greater education	300,000
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Total	300,000
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One-off investment funded from the following areas:

Any additional fund above the budgeted	(300,000)
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Public Health Ring-fenced Grant allocations, and will need to be agreed with the Director of Public Health.

Total	(300,000)
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The mover and seconder of the amendment then spoke in favour of its adoption, the key points being:

- More money needed to be targeted from the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant to support youth services across the county to prevent drug misuse and improve education
- The main emphasis of public health had shifted towards a prevention approach. Attempting to shift Inequalities in health provision was a key issue. A number of elements of the Grant were statutory and there needed to be an increase in the level of discretionary funding. There needed to be more evidence-based actions.

An alteration to the amendment was suggested and accepted by the mover and seconder of the amendment that:

“As the Council has not yet heard the amount of the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant, if there is an uplift available, any services must be targeted to the most at risk and be evidence-based”

In the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:

- The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Public Health commented that the funding available through the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant was not yet known. In addition, the work of the scrutiny task and finish group had not yet been completed. Targeted expenditure on drug misuse was crucial and prevention was key
- The temptations and pressures facing young people particularly through County Lines activities were considerable therefore it was essential to use every possible means to prevent young people entering into the vicious cycle of drug abuse
- A lot of work had been undertaken through the Get Safe initiative to tackle drug misuse through a multi-agency approach and the implementation of prevention strategies
- The lack of support for the youth service was very serious and exacerbated the existing problems with drug misuse

- The use of gateway drugs was a massive issue and an evidence-based and in-depth analysis of how the money should be best spent was needed hence the importance of waiting for the outcome of the scrutiny report
- It was important to continue to work on this problem on a cross party basis and scrutiny had an important role in providing the evidence-base
- The Leader of the Council commented that the Council had not yet received the Public Health Ring-fenced Grant and he would not wish to put the statutory funded or discretionary funded schemes at risk. He welcomed the alterations to the amendment so that any additional monies would be subject to sign off by the Director of Public Health and targeted in the right areas.

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote the amendment as altered was agreed.

Those voting in favour of the amendment were: Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mr B Clayton, Mr K Daisley, Mr P Denham, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr A Fry, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Ms P A Hill, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr R C Lunn, Mr S M Mackay, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Prof J W Raine, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Ms C M Stalker, Mr A Stafford, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb, Mr T A L Wells. (51)

An amendment was then moved by Mr R C Lunn and seconded by Mr L C R Mallett proposing:

Amendment 3: Investing locally

Labour Group Budget Amendment Proposals 2020/21

One-off investment in the following areas:

Increase Councillors' Divisional discretionary monies (WCDF) by £2,500 each to £12,500 per annum	142,500
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Total	142,500
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One-off investment funded from the following areas:

Additional use of the Financial Risk Reserve, as (142,500)
originally planned by the Cabinet in the
December 2019 Cabinet report before additional
income was identified

Total	(142,500)
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The mover and seconder of the amendment then spoke in favour of its adoption, the key points being:

- This amendment called for a very small amount of extra funds received by the Council to be used to top up the Divisional Fund, which had not been increased for a number of years. The Divisional Fund allowed members to target funds in their local area that might not receive funding through other funding streams. In addition, councillors were astute at keeping costs down and in effect represented a spend to save initiative
- Councillors used their Divisional Fund effectively and prudently and often found it necessary to roll over funds at the end of the financial year. In some cases, this might be to enable the funding of more significant/substantial projects.

Members also spoke against the amendment:

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities commented that the problem was that the additional £142.5k funding for the Divisional Fund would be taken from the Financial Risk Fund which was required to address Adult Social Care needs. It could also take funding away from organisations that were helping the most vulnerable in society. There had been an overall underspend of the Fund last year and an underspend was predicted this year and as members were able to roll over funds, the additional funding was not necessary
- There were too many financial pressures to address elsewhere to justify additional funding for the Divisional Fund
- The existing £10k allocation per councillor when combined with the highways monies represented a significant amount of funds for councillors to spend locally. The funds would be better left in the Financial Risk Reserve to meet the needs of the most vulnerable members in society
- The Leader of the Council commented that although he fully supported the Divisional Fund, it was not appropriate to allocate monies from the Financial Risk Reserve to increase it. When the

Fairer Funding Review was known and the Local Government Finance Settlement were finalised, it might be possible to review the Fund.

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote this amendment was lost.

Those in favour of the motion were: Ms P Agar, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, Ms P A Hill, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr R C Lunn, Mr L C R Mallett, Mrs F M Oborski, Mrs M A Rayner, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Mr T A L Wells. (14)

Those against the motion were: Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mr B Clayton, Mr K Daisley, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb. (36)

Those abstaining were Prof J W Raine (1)

An amendment was then moved by Mrs E B Tucker and seconded by Prof J W Raine proposing:

Amendment : Investing in reducing global warming

2017 Group Budget Amendment Proposals 2020/21	£	£
Capital investment in the following areas:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LED Streetlighting – to extend the Cabinet’s proposals and divert a further £1 million in 2020/21 to install c4,300 more LED lights into the existing County Council stock of street lights. This is forecast to save £50,000 of revenue in-year and a recurring £100,000 revenue saving for the following year (2021/22) on the current set tariffs and usage. The revenue saving to be invested as below. 	1,000,000	
Revenue investment in the following areas:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To invest in an audit of the Council’s properties to access and draw up proposals to ensure that the 		50,000

Council's own buildings (excluding schools) will be carbon neutral. It is envisaged and hoped that the funding to carry out the proposals will come from the savings in the energy cost/budgets currently in place for those buildings, as well as grant opportunities.		
[NB For 2021/22 it is anticipated that additional savings as realised from the Street lighting LED initiative would be diverted to Youth Services ; this would be £100,000 per annum all things being equal.]		
Total Capital 2020/21	1,000,000	
Total Revenue 2020/21		50,000
One-off investment funded from the following areas:		
Capital		
To amend the Cabinet's proposals as set out at paragraph 5.7 of the Cabinet report that propose an increase in Highways spend by £6 million to £5 million, thus making available £1m within the current borrowing and investment envelopes.	(1,000,000)	
Revenue		
Use of the anticipated savings from the increased LED conversion, as a part year affect in 2020/21 arising from the Capital amendment set out above.		(50,000)
Total Capital Funding 2020/21	(1,000,000)	
Total Revenue Funding 2020/21		(50,000)

The mover and seconder of the amendment then spoke in favour of its adoption; the key points being:

- Although it was recognised that considerable funding had been included in the budget for environmental measures, there was a lack of focus on the Council's carbon neutral targets. The amendment proposed to take £1m from the road maintenance budget over 2 years to spend on LED street lighting which would fund 4,300 additional lights in the first year. Savings of £50k in the first year and £100k in the second year would be generated. £50k would then be reinvested in an audit of the carbon emissions of Council buildings and a report on the actions necessary to make the building stock carbon neutral. The proposals were self-funded and could attract additional grants. Reductions to the road maintenance budget (for C and unclassified roads) would not have the same impact on carbon emissions

- The LED lighting scheme had been introduced in a slow and piecemeal fashion and had led to a patchwork of LED and sodium lighting which negatively impacted on the visibility of motorists at night
- This amendment contributed, albeit in a small way, to tackling global warming. In addition, it would provide additional funding for the youth service and should be welcomed
- The pay back on the introduction of LED lighting would be 8 years which represented cost savings for the Council. In addition, the cost of electricity was likely to rise and therefore it was important to speed up the programme
- It was queried whether the Council's highways contractor would be able to undertake the £6m roads maintenance improvements. In addition, there would be a negative environmental impact on the road network due to the necessary road works as the programme of works commenced
- It was queried whether the amendment would be more acceptable if the monies came from an alternative source than highways
- The proposals in the amendment would only affect C roads and local estate roads which would have limited impact on congestion.

Members also spoke against the amendment:

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways commented that the proposed significant reduction to the highways maintenance budget was irresponsible and endangered anyone using the public highway. Highways maintenance was an area highlighted as a priority by the public. More potholes would be left unattended which would most impact on cyclists and pedestrians, particularly the elderly. Maintenance of the county road network to high standards saved money in the long term. The budget already had extra funding for LED lighting and the Council had to bear in mind the capacity in the system to undertake the work
- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environment indicated that the Council had a phased carbon-efficient approach to the introduction of LED lighting which he would not wish to undermine
- The best way to contribute to the reduction in carbon emissions was to maintain the standards of the road network to keep traffic flowing and avoid

congestion

- The budget included green proposals aimed at tackling climate change and carbon neutrality however the Council had to balance these objectives with the wishes of local people particularly in relation to the highway network. In particular, this proposal would negatively impact on rural road network in the county
- The Leader of the Council commented that the Council was aiming to meet the public's top priority of keeping all roads in top condition so that the Council could achieve its target of providing a standard of road network within the top quartile in the country. This could not be achieved with the budget reduction proposed in the amendment. The under-investment in the road maintenance could result in additional costs in the future. The Council had included additional funding for street lighting with a measured programme based on best professional advice. In the future the Council would be purchasing green electricity which was more expensive and would be subject to fluctuations in price. If revenue savings could not be guaranteed on a recurring basis then the street lighting programme would be reviewed with the possibility of lights being switched off.

At the conclusion of the debate and on a named vote this amendment was lost.

Those in favour of the motion were: Ms P Agar, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, Ms P A Hill, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr R C Lunn, Mr L C R Mallett, Mrs F M Oborski, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Ms C M Stalker, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr R M Udall, Mr T A L Wells. (14)

Those against the motion were: Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mr B Clayton, Mr K Daisley, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb. (37)

In debating the budget as originally moved and seconded which was subsequently amended the following points were raised:

Comments made in support of the proposed budget included:

- The additional Government funding for Adult Social Care was welcomed
- The budget was progressive and compassionate, continued the transformation agenda and did more than merely balance revenue and expenditure budgets, putting the most vulnerable at the heart of expenditure and investing in infrastructure
- The challenge would be delivering the biggest ever increase in the highways budget. The Government had recently announced a further £0.5m increase in the bus subsidy on top of the planned budget increase in public transport
- The Council had undertaken a reform and efficiency programme to ensure that taxpayers' money was being spent as effectively and efficiently as possible
- The budget included an extra Dedicated Schools Grant for maintained schools and SEND
- The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care commented that it was appropriate, given the uncertainty of future local government finances, that this Council proceeded with caution with its budget. There was a danger that the pressures in children and adult social care had been underestimated. The Council must continue to reform and produce a Community Strength based model to promote independent living. This model would be piloted in Bromsgrove
- The increase in the bus subsidies should bring real resilience to the network, particularly in rural areas
- The further investment in pavements and infrastructure was welcomed, particularly in respect of the Malvern Science Park
- The budget should be supported albeit it did not do enough to tackle the climate emergency. The proposed improvements to the Hoobrook Roundabout were particularly welcomed.
- The Leader of the Council commented that the key thing for the sustainability of the Council was to get a good outcome from the Fairer Funding Review and grow the Council's resource base which was why he was reluctant to undermine the financial resilience of the Council by taking monies out of reserves.

Comments made against the proposed budget included:

- The draft budget included an allocation of £1.1m from reserves to fund services but this now appeared to be inappropriate. Although there were good aspects to the budget, an opportunity had been missed to fund those services in most desperate need. The Government had failed to address the funding crisis in Adult Social Care and it was imperative to address these budgetary constraints.

On a named vote **RESOLVED** that:

- a) **The budget requirement for 2020/21 be approved at £346.246 million as set out at Appendix 1B having regard to the proposed Transformation and Reforms Programme set out in Appendix 1C;**
- b) **The Council Tax Band D Equivalent for 2020/21 be set at £1,311.05 which includes £116.04 relating to the ring-fenced Adult Social Care Precept, and the Council Tax Requirement be set at £279.130 million which will increase the Council Tax Precept by 3.99% in relation to two parts:**
 - **1.99% to provide financial support for the delivery of outcomes in line with the Corporate Plan ‘Shaping Worcestershire’s Future’ and the priorities identified by the public and business community**
 - **2.00% Adult Social Care Precept ring-fenced for Adult Social Care services in order to contribute to existing cost pressures due to Worcestershire’s ageing population;**
- c) **The Capital Strategy 2020-23 and Capital Programme of £338.594 million be approved as set out at Appendix 1D and 1E and Section 9 of the report;**
- d) **The Earmarked Reserves Schedule as set out at Appendix 2 be approved;**
- e) **The Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators set out at Appendix 4 be approved;**
- f) **The Council’s Pay Policy Statement set out at**

Appendix 5 be approved; and

- g) The Labour Group's Amendment 2 be approved subject to the proviso that as the Council has not yet heard the amount of the Public Health Ring Fenced Grant, if there is an uplift available, any services must be targeted to the most at risk and be evidence-based.**

[NB Appendices referred to are those presented to 30 January 2020 Cabinet.]

Those in favour of the motion were: Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mr R M Bennett, Mr G R Brookes, Mr B Clayton, Mr K Daisley, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr S M Mackay, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Ms R Vale, Ms S A Webb, Mr T A L Wells. (41)

Those against the motion were: Ms P Agar, Mr P Denham, Mr A Fry, Ms P A Hill, Mr R C Lunn, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms C M Stalker, Mr R M Udall. (8)

Those abstaining were: Mr M E Jenkins, Prof J W Raine (2)

2180 Reports of Cabinet - Summary of decisions taken (Agenda item 5)

The Leader of the Council reported the following topics and questions were asked on them:

- Scrutiny Report: Quality Assurance of Care and Nursing Homes
- Annual Update to the School Organisation Plan 2019
- School Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2021/22, Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes 2021/22 and Fair Access Protocol for Worcestershire Schools
- Responding to Change of Age Range requests from Maintained Community Schools or Change of Age Range Consultations from other types of Schools
- New Primary School Alternative Provision for Kidderminster
- Review of Delivery Model for Medical Education

Provision

- Rural Connected Communities – West Mercia 5G Project.

2181 Notice of Motion 1 - Marked Bays for Car Club Vehicles (Agenda item 6)

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion standing in the names of Prof J W Raine, Mr M E Jenkins, Mrs E B Tucker, Mrs F M Oborski and Mr T A L Wells.

The Notice of Motion was moved by Prof J W Raine and seconded by Mr T A L Wells who both spoke in favour of it.

The Motion being in relation to the exercise of an executive function then stood referred to Cabinet for a decision.

2182 Notice of Motion 2 - Creche and childcare facilities at County Hall, Worcester (Agenda item 6)

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr R C Lunn, Ms C M Stalker and Mr R M Udall.

The motion was moved by Mr R C Lunn and seconded by Ms C M Stalker who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

In the ensuing debate the following points were made:

- The motion called on the Cabinet Member to prepare a report on the possibility of establishing a creche at County Hall, Worcester. A creche could be an income generator for the Council as well as benefitting Council staff and visitors to County Hall
- The provision of a creche at County Hall would be of great benefit to staff to assist with childcare and could improve staff morale and productivity. The Council might also wish to consider the introduction of doggie day care facility
- The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning commented that she would always support initiatives that improved engagement with employees and encouraged good parenting. Officers had previously looked at the need for and feasibility of a creche in 2016 but she was happy to look at it again and report to Cabinet.

On being put to the vote, the motion was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: “This Council calls on the Cabinet Member with Responsibility to bring a report to Cabinet on the introduction of a creche and childcare

**2183 Notice of
Motion 3 -
Carbon
Emissions
Impact
Assessment
(Agenda item 6)**

facilities for employees and others located at County Hall, as a potential income generation project”

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mrs E B Tucker, Mr M E Jenkins, Prof J W Raine, Mr T A L Wells and Mrs F M Oborski.

The motion was moved by Mr M E Jenkins and seconded by Prof J W Raine who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

The following amendment was moved by Mr A P Miller and seconded by Mrs F M Oborski and accepted as an alteration by the mover and seconder of the motion which therefore became the substantive motion:

“In 2019 this Council approved a motion calling for Worcestershire to be carbon neutral by 2050. We know that the Council is working on proposals to reduce its carbon emissions, but it is important that reducing our carbon emissions is an integral part of our plans and projects.

Therefore, when determining the viability of potential projects, we need to ensure that their Environmental Impacts are assessed and used in our decision-making process.

The Council calls on the Cabinet to ensure that for all future projects an assessment of their environmental impact is included, with this being used to assess the viability of competing schemes.”

In the ensuing debate, the following points were made:

- The purpose of the motion was to ensure that the Council’s target to become carbon neutral by 2050 was central to every decision taken by the Council. The sooner the Council acted on reducing carbon emissions, the easier it would be to achieve this target
- Each project should be assessed in terms of its carbon budget and how it achieved the Council’s carbon emission target not just on its financial viability. These proposals were not burdensome but did emphasise the Council’s commitment to tackling climate change
- The Cabinet Member with responsibility for Environment highlighted the work that the Council was already undertaking to tackle climate change.

The proposed amendment sought to ensure that all aspects of the Council's work was covered.

On being put to the vote, the substantive motion was agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED "In 2019 this Council approved a motion calling for Worcestershire to be carbon neutral by 2050. We know that the Council is working on proposals to reduce its carbon emissions, but it is important that reducing our carbon emissions is an integral part of our plans and projects.

Therefore, when determining the viability of potential projects, we need to ensure that their Environmental Impacts are assessed and used in our decision-making process.

The Council calls on the Cabinet to ensure that for all future projects an assessment of their environmental impact is included, with this being used to assess the viability of competing schemes."

2184 Annual Report of the Chief Executive (Agenda item 7)

The Chief Executive presented his report to Council which covered various topics.

The Chief Executive answered a broad range of questions from members.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Executive for his report.

2185 Question Time (Agenda item 8)

One question had been received by the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance and had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The answer to the question is attached in the Appendix.

2186 Reports of Committees (Agenda item 9)

The Committee received the report of the Pensions Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

The meeting was adjourned from 1.00pm to 1.45 pm and ended at 3.00pm.

Chairman

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COUNCIL 13 FEBRUARY 2020 - AGENDA ITEM 8 – QUESTION TIME

Questions and written responses provided below.

QUESTION 1 – Mr P Middlebrough will ask Marcus Hart:

“This winter there have been many occasions when students who live in Upton upon Severn and attend Hanley Castle High School have been unable to walk to school because of the closure due to flooding of Hanley Road and so have needed to use motorised transport.

This entails a round trip of at least 15 miles depending on which other roads are flooded. These students live within the statutory walking distance or 3 miles and so are not entitled to school travel assistance.

What steps will the Cabinet Member take to ensure that free school travel assistance is available on days when Hanley Road is flooded.”

Answer

It is the parents’ duty to ensure their child can get to school. Where appropriate, the Council, in line with the Home to School Transport Policy, will provide transport to support parents in their duty. The policy sets the statutory walking distance at 3 miles for children over the age of eight. For parents, whose children live within that statutory distance, it is the parents’ responsibility to ensure the child can access the school either walking or via a car.

We have spoken to Hanley Castle High School and they informed us that the impact of the flooding has been minimal. The majority of children are driven to school and parents appear to be happy to follow the diversions set up to ensure their children can still attend school. The school has not, to its knowledge, received any complaints about this issue.

In terms of free school travel assistance, the difficulty is this is not something permanent that we would have some better discretion. It would frankly be operationally impossible to provide transport at short notice and set up a scheme where there would be free school transport for parents and if we did it for Hanley Castle High School we would have to do it elsewhere in the county. Whilst I sympathise with parents and particular sympathy with the local member, for having to deal with this issue, I don’t think on this occasion that we would be able to commission an operational service where there might be other more pragmatic solutions available.

Supplementary question

In response to the supplementary question, the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Education and Skills agreed to look at the possibility of establishing a voluntary self-determined school travel scheme which could be rolled into practice when Hanley Road is flooded to allow children to attend Hanley Castle High School. He also agreed on behalf of the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Highways to look at the practicalities of making a safer footway along Hanley Road to allow pupils to walk/cycle to Hanley Castle High School when the road is flooded.

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