

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 February 2023 at 7.01 pm

Present:-

Cllr N Hedges – Chairman

Cllr T O'Neill – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr H Allen, Cllr L Allison, Cllr M Anderson, Cllr S C Anderson, Cllr M Andrews, Cllr S Baron, Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr J Beesley, Cllr D Borthwick, Cllr P Broadhead, Cllr M F Brooke, Cllr N Brooks, Cllr D Brown, Cllr S Bull, Cllr R Burton, Cllr D Butler, Cllr D Butt, Cllr J J Butt, Cllr E Coope, Cllr M Cox, Cllr M Davies, Cllr L Dedman, Cllr B Dion, Cllr B Dove, Cllr B Dunlop, Cllr M Earl, Cllr J Edwards, Cllr L-J Evans, Cllr G Farquhar, Cllr D Farr, Cllr L Fear, Cllr A Filer, Cllr D A Flagg, Cllr S Gabriel, Cllr M Greene, Cllr N Greene, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr M Haines, Cllr P R A Hall, Cllr P Hilliard, Cllr M Howell, Cllr M Iyengar, Cllr C Johnson, Cllr T Johnson, Cllr A Jones, Cllr J Kelly, Cllr D Kelsey, Cllr R Lawton, Cllr M Le Poidevin, Cllr L Lewis, Cllr A Martin, Cllr C Matthews, Cllr S McCormack, Cllr D Mellor, Cllr P Miles, Cllr S Moore, Cllr L Northover, Cllr S Phillips, Cllr K Rampton, Cllr Dr F Rice, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr R Rocca, Cllr M Robson, Cllr V Slade, Cllr A M Stribley, Cllr T Trent, Cllr M White, Cllr L Williams and Cllr K Wilson

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Bagwell, N Decent, R Maidment, M Phipps, V Ricketts and D Mellor who would be arriving late.

2. Declarations of Interests

Councillor J Beesley declared an interest in respect of agenda item 7 – Cabinet Minute No. 106 - Bournemouth Towns Fund update, as the owner of the Royal Arcade was a client of his consultancy firm. Councillor Beesley confirmed that he would leave the Chamber for the duration of the item. Councillor S Gabriel declared an interest in respect of agenda item 10 - Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023/24, as he managed two of the leisure centres in Poole.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

Regarding the public question from Mr S Mills, it was suggested that the minute should read that BCP Council had committed to transitioning the entire region to zero carbon by 2050, not 2015. Subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Announcements and Introductions from the Chairman

The Chair outlined the events he had attended since the previous meeting, including a Hall and Woodhouse Community Chest Charity Awards evening and a Maltese Government Tourism Study Group.

The Chair informed Council of the recent passing of former Poole Councillor Philip Goodall. Councillor Matthews relayed his personal experience of working with Councillor Goodall, and Council was upstanding for a period of respectful silence.

The Chair invited any statements resulting from decisions taken by the Standards Committee. Councillor Farr apologised for remarks made concerning the deputy editor of the Bournemouth Echo and users of social media.

In response to a query regarding an expected apology from Councillor Mellor, the Monitoring Officer advised that if an apology was not forthcoming during the meeting, then the matter would be referred back to the Standards Committee.

The Chair advised that he would be varying the order of business to consider agenda item 7 – Bournemouth Towns Fund update following item 10 - Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023/24.

5. Public Issues

A – Public Questions

Public Question from Soo Chapman

"Well-being is at its heart" of BCP's Big Plan, while neighbourhood plan aims are environmentally "educating, encouraging and assisting the local population". Yet the terms "Anthropocene" and "decarbonisation at speed and scale" are negligently absent.

Addressing deforestation, pollution, oceanic dead zones, loss of biodiversity, mass extinctions, collapsing ecosystems, weakening Gulf Stream, overfishing, overpopulating, resource constraints and accelerating climate migrations are NOWHERE to be seen. Despite "final warning" alerts from the UN, the King, the Pope and global scientists.

Don't the Nolan principles mean exposing and confronting carbon bombing projects so that "children will flourish" as BCP claim?

Response by Councillor M Greene

Tackling climate change continues to be an unprecedented global challenge, and through our climate and ecological emergency ambitions we have a solid foundation from which we are continuing to strive to make a real difference.

In March, Members of the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be presented with a new draft Climate Action Strategy, which will address many issues raised in this question. This will aim to ensure that the actions being taken will reduce the impact of climate change and its effects on residents, businesses and organisations, as well as our natural environment and biodiversity in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole.

Ensuring we have a sustainable environment underpins all our decision making, and this holds true in how we are addressing the significant challenges posed by climate change. Activities include our Transforming Travel programme, reducing air pollution through initiatives like School Streets; and our Cleaner, Greener, Safer programme where over 10,000 trees have been planted across the area.

Public Question from Daniel Parkin

Will the current leader commit to an inquiry, ideally external, on the Bayside Restaurant, which lost the Council £176,000 when swingeing financial constraints were being imposed elsewhere. Questions would include: was there, or was there not, a business plan; why was this not open to tender to experienced restaurateurs; why was it set up in a flood zone without planning consent; why was it only open for four weeks, when most businesses need at least that to identify teething problems; and why only open at the tail-end of summer? Any immediate answers would be welcome.

Response by Councillor B Dunlop

A mixed management model is used for the various seasonal catering offers along the seafront; this helps share the risk and introduces external expertise with the intention to generate longer term proposals for these types of facilities on the beach. Doing this allows the Council to identify the best way to deliver operations moving forward.

Bournemouth Air Festival has had a hospitality marquee for many years. In 2019, the Council upgraded the offer, and continued to work with the same external, experienced event company in order to provide a higher quality hospitality offer. The new marquee offer has been very successful.

Given the high spec of the marquee and the fact that the infrastructure was going to be in place for the Air Festival, there was clearly an opportunity to extend the time and pilot a fine dining experience during the busiest time of the season.

A series of budget scenarios and projections were produced for Bayside, to inform financial decision making. However, a site-specific business plan was not produced as it formed part of the overarching commitment to create a more vibrant environment.

There were several unpredictable factors that led to the loss in this location and in light of this we will commit to reviewing the process of tendering for pop-up catering in the future to ensure we always get value for money.

Whilst Bayside did not deliver as expected, it is this bold approach to seafront enhancement over the years that has steadily increased the surplus delivered back to the Council to fund other essential services to benefit all residents, this year, predicted at £6m.

B – Public Statements

Statement from Natascha McAllister Chief Executive of Sedcat (South East Dorset Community Accessible Transport) (read out by the Chief Executive)

- Sedcat contributes towards BCP Community Strategy Priority - Fulfilled lives.
- Sedcat provides a personalized Community Transport service to BCP's most vulnerable residents, relieving future long-term financial pressures on BCP health and social care services.
- Sedcat has been receiving a modest grant of the same amount for the past 10 years whilst continuously expanding services.

Should funding be cut from BCP, Sedcat would find itself in financial difficulties and this would lead to a reduction in services to the most vulnerable community members resulting in an increased demand on health and social care services and loss of income to local businesses.

6. Cabinet 11 January 2023 - Minute No 105 - Council Tax - Tax base 2023/24

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Philip Broadhead, presented the report and recommendations as set out on the agenda.

In doing so, it was highlighted that, due to an improved collection rate and a higher growth in the number of expected properties, the total estimated Tax base for 2023/24 had increased to 144,839.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor M Greene.

Council moved to a vote where the motion as follows was carried.

RESOLVED that: -

- (a) the report for the calculation of the council's tax base for the year 2023/24 and the tax base be approved; and**
- (b) pursuant to the report, and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, the amount calculated as the council tax base for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council for 2023/24 be 144,839.**

Voting: For - 68; Against - 0; Abstentions - 2

7. Cabinet 11 January 2023 - Minute No 106 - Bournemouth Towns Fund update

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Philip Broadhead, presented the report and recommendations as set out on the agenda.

In doing so, points raised included:

- The community led regeneration of Boscombe Town Centre;

- The final business cases for each of the projects were submitted in January 2023;
- Agreement the new money would result in new homes, a community centre, business park, and medical care facility.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor J Kelly.

Councillor L Lewis left the meeting at 11.17pm.

Councillor A Hadley spoke in debate of the proposal. Points raised included:

- Concerns over the costs of the required work to refurbish the Royal Arcade;
- Concerns over the proposed location of the new business park and the industrialisation of the beachfront.

In response, Councillor Broadhead advised:

- The Beach park had been suggested by the community and were contained in the original proposals go Government;
- The Royal Arcade was re-provisioning as a central skills hub to promote its use;
- Changes to the seafront would give further opportunities to small businesses.

Council moved to a vote where the motion as follows was carried.

RESOLVED that Council: -

- (g) accepts and approves the remaining allocation of £18.229m Towns Fund grant as outlined in Table 1 for the delivery of the following projects; the Town Centre Masterplan Phase 1, the Royal Arcade, Digital Connectivity and Local Transport projects, subject to the approval of the business cases by DLUHC;**
- (h) approves borrowing of £11.784m towards the Phase 1 Masterplan and Royal Arcade project and adjusts the MTFP to reflect the £420k pressure between 2024/25-2028/29;**
- (i) acknowledges the allocation of £2.25m of grant from the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme. This funding is profiled to be utilised over the 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years.**

Voting: Unanimous.

Note – resolutions (a) to (f) were resolved matters by the Cabinet.

(Councillor J Beesley declared an interest in this item and left the room during the consideration and voting of this item.)

8. Cabinet 8 February 2023 - Minute No 116 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Setting 2022/23

Councillor Rampton presented the report and recommendations as set out on the agenda.

In doing so, points raised included:

- The budget as proposed was mindful of the impact of the cost-of-living pressures on residents, and the increased responsibilities and regulation forthcoming to officers;
- Increases had been minimised, and adjustments to address discrepancies across the area would be forthcoming following public consultation;
- The budget included investment in preventative measures to address damp and mould;
- Residents were to be involved through new engagement structures, including the Housing Advisory Board, scrutiny panels and the Residents' Committee;
- New tenant satisfaction measures would come into force in April 2023.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor P Broadhead.

A number of Councillors spoke in debate of the proposal. Points raised included:

- Concerns over the impact of what was felt to be a significant increase to charges to Council tenants;
- Concerns over new tenants being subject to a higher rental increase, resulting in a potential two-tier rental system and a subsequent divide amongst residents using the same service;
- The report's suggestion that engagement with tenants was deemed as low priority;
- Whether Councillors would be able to discuss the matter in more detail, if necessary.

In response, Councillor Rampton advised:

- Not applying the proposed increase would reduce income to the HRA by £10m in future years. This £10m was to be used to reinvest in services for residents;
- National policy dictated that the 7% cap for increases did not apply to those residents moving house or new tenants;
- Measures were in place to support those residents who would struggle with the increase.

Council moved to a vote where the motion as follows was carried.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) Revenue budgets for 2023/24 and provisionally for 2024/25 to 2027/28 are set using the following principles:**
 - (i) That rents for general needs, sheltered and shared ownership accommodation are increased by 7 per cent from 3 April 2023, in line with the national rent cap announced by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.**

- (ii) That rents for all accommodation on re-lets continue to be set at the formula rent, increased by 11.1 per cent, from 3 April 2023, in line with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Policy statement on rents for social housing.
 - (iii) That rents for garages, garage bases and parking plots are increased by 10 per cent from the 3 April 2023.
 - (iv) That leasehold services are charged to leaseholders in line with estimated costs from 3 April 2023.
 - (v) That the changes to service charges are agreed as set out in appendix 2 from 3 April 2023, and that the service charge cap for new service charges in Bournemouth continues to be set at £5.00 for a further year.
 - (vi) That the annual bad debt charge is maintained at £0.4 million.
 - (vii) That the depreciation budget is set at £11.79 million.
 - (viii) That HRA reserve should be maintained at a minimum level of 5 per cent of total expenditure at £1.98 million in line with good practice.
- (b) Capital budgets for 2023/24 and provisionally for 2024/25 to 2027/28 are set using the following principles:
- (i) That the planned maintenance programme as set out in Appendix 5 is agreed.
 - (ii) That the major project capital programme as set out in Appendix 6 is noted.
 - (iii) That 2023/24 budgets of £0.4 million for feasibility works and £3 million for the acquisition of individual properties (“Acquire and Repair”) are approved.
- (c) The Delivery Plan for BCP Homes to support the key principles for the HRA and the Council’s Corporate Strategy are agreed as set out in Appendix 7.

Voting: For – 54; Against – 6; Abstentions - 10

(Councillor T Trent declared an interest in respect of his renting of a garage from the Council.)

9. Cabinet 8 February 2023 - Minute No 117 - Mainstream Schools and Early Years Funding Formulae 2023/24

Councillor N Green presented the report and recommendations as set out on the agenda.

In doing so, points raised included:

- The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding for schools in 2023/24 had increased by 6.4%, to a total of circa £340m;

- Pressures included general organisational costs, together with specific areas such as High Needs;
- Work was ongoing with the Department for Education (DfE) through the 'Delivering Better Value' programme.

Councillor M White seconded the proposal.

Council moved to a vote where the motion as follows was carried.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the early years funding formula, as set out in table 2 in paragraph 44 of this report, is approved;**
- (b) the local mainstream formula is to adopt the national funding formula (NFF) unit values as set out in the appendix to this report;**
- (c) surplus school block funding estimated at £0.185m is transferred to support the early years high needs budget in addition to the formula set out in this report.**

Voting: Unanimous.

10. Cabinet 8 February 2023 - Minute No 118 - Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023/24

The Chief Executive reminded Council of the earlier circulation of a final paper on behalf of the Director of Finance, which included alterations to recommendations (d) and (j) and a new recommendation (y) as set out in the published supplementary papers and appended to these minutes in the Minute Book.

A transposed typographical error on the Unity Alliance's saving item no. 98 was corrected to read £109,000, not £49,000 as set out within the paper. This error did not affect the savings figure of £441,000, which was confirmed as accurate.

The Chair set out the times allowed for those Councillors speaking on the item.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Philip Broadhead, presented an alteration to the motion arising from Cabinet which had been informed following collaboration between all political groups. A copy of the alteration to the motion had been circulated to all Members of the Council and was set out in the published supplementary paper referred to above. The proposal was seconded by Councillor N Greene.

The Chair sought Council's consent to the alteration under procedure rule 14.12 of Part 4(D) of the Constitution. Council unanimously agreed to the proposal.

The Chair reminded Council that in respect of the recommendations (subject to all amendments), including the Council Tax Resolution and Council Tax levels for 2023/24, all votes on the item would be the subject of a recorded vote for each Councillor present, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Councillor P Broadhead then introduced the substantive motion and the recommendations as set out in the report and supplementary papers. In doing so, points raised included:

- The proposed balanced budget protected vulnerable residents, improved BCP's long-term finances, and despite inflationary pressures, avoided widespread cuts to services;
- Savings identified were pragmatic and deliverable;
- Newly identified income schemes had resulted in a £2m surplus for the year ahead;
- The budget provided an additional £14.6m in funding for Children's Services, together with provision for the elderly, investment in regeneration, new Council homes, and the 'Cleaner, Greener, Safer' programme;
- The budget included the sale of non-strategic assets;
- Concerns raised recently by the Council's external auditor had been reviewed through the Audit and Governance Committee. The concerns outlined were linked to perceived unidentified income streams. However, the budget had always been based on a sound financial basis;
- Cross-party discussions had been held, and had resulted in the substantive budget as presented, which incorporated changes as suggested through those discussions;
- The substantive budget was supported by Chief Financial Officer;
- The budget did not present a removal or reduction in funding for the Bournemouth Air Festival, which contributed circa £30m income to the BCP area.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor N Greene. In doing so, points raised included:

- The budget included amendments in response to the late decision by Central Government to allocate additional funding;
- The budget set out changes to parking charges and funding for investment in community safety, High Streets, and libraries.

Councillor Mellor arrived at 8.21pm.

Councillor M Cox presented an amendment to the budget on behalf of Unity Alliance, which had been circulated to all Members of the Council and was set out in the published supplementary paper referred to above. In doing so, points raised included:

- BCP finances were in a dire state. The Chief financial Officer's s25 report detailed a need to identify £35m of savings for 2023/24. This was a significant risk and a failure of the BCP's Conservative administration, who had inherited a balanced budget when assuming leadership of the Council;

- The administration had attempted to reduce Council Tax, which had resulted in intervention from the Council's external auditors and subsequent resignation from the now former Leader of the Council;
- The agreed amendments in the substantive budget had been included to appease opposition;
- The proposed amendment aimed to identify additional resources, and stop cuts to critical services;
- The proposed amendment included cuts totalling £1.1m of savings, by a reduction in funding to Public Relations and Marketing, together with advice to businesses;
- The proposed amendment, if approved, would align with the priorities of residents and would maintain highways, protect arts and sports, and protect libraries.

Councillor Hilliard seconded the proposed amendment. Points raised included:

- The Conservative administration had not properly managed BCP finances. As a result, officers were being expected to cut back and look for future savings;
- There was a need to identify issues immediately to avoid escalation of costs and further impact to service delivery;
- The proposed amendment retained vital services for residents.

Council debated the proposed amendment, during which points were raised both in favour and against the proposal. These included:

- Concerns over the amendment's proposed reduction in funding to the Air Festival, which was the largest deliverer of economic value to the area;
- Concerns over the environmental impact of the Air Festival;
- Suggestions that local businesses should pay for the Air Festival;
- The Conservative administration's reduction of unearmarked reserves and increase of debt in order to balance books;
- Risks identified within the Chief Financial Officer's s25 report;
- Perceived 'mistruths' in relation to previous assertions regarding deficit values under the previous administration;
- A lack of scrutiny of the Transformation programme;
- Concerns over the administration's plan to sell non-strategic assets;
- Concerns over the impact of increases to car parking charges, including impact on local, family and disabled residents, and the risk of increased rogue parking;
- Concerns over the increase to Council Tax, especially in relation to neighbouring authorities, e.g., Dorset Council;
- Concerns over cuts to highways maintenance;

- Suggestions of exaggeration of the level of cross-party working undertaken;
- Concerns over the proposed reduction in spending to support Christmas lights.

It was noted that some points raised referred to the substantive budget proposed, rather than the amendment.

Councillor Cox, as proposer, made a number of points, including:

- Regarding increases to car parking charges, a reduction in income was not expected. Residents would receive a 'resident card' to receive a discount;
- Residents should not be expected to pay for the Air Festival; instead, businesses or sponsors could cover this cost;
- The reduction in funding had been part of the Conservative administration's original budget;
- The substantive budget's increased funding for social care was simply keeping up with demand-led pressures.

As mover of the substantive motion, Councillor Broadhead's response included:

- Unearmarked reserves were deliberately unallocated for use based on need;
- The administration had not borrowed to balance books, as this was not allowed under current legislation;
- In reference to 'mistruths', previous statements had referred to the medium term plan;
- The administration had held Budget cafés to promote cross-party working, where previous such events had not existed;
- Regarding charges for car parking, the administration had accepted the opposition's suggestions, but had incorporated an additional 20% contingency for elasticity;
- Dorset Council was applying a smaller percentage increase, but the overall Council Tax value was substantially higher;
- The amendment proposed cutting the budget for economic development.

Council moved to a recorded vote:

For: 35

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| M Andrews | S Baron | S Bartlett |
| M Brooke | D Brown | S Bull |
| R Burton | D Butler | D Butt |
| J Butt | M Cox | L Dedman |
| M Earl | J Edwards | L-J Evans |
| G Farquhar | D Flagg | A Hadley |
| P Hilliard | M Howell | M Iyengar |

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| A Jones | M Le Poidevin | L Lewis |
| A Martin | C Matthews | P Miles |
| S Moore | L Northover | F Rice |
| C Rigby | M Robson | V Slade |
| T Trent | K Wilson | |

Against: 35

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|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| H Allen | L Allison | M Anderson |
| S Anderson | J Beesley | D Borthwick |
| P Broadhead | N Brooks | E Coope |
| M Davies | B Dion | B Dove |
| B Dunlop | D Farr | L Fear |
| A Filer | S Gabriel | M Greene |
| N Greene | M Haines | P Hall |
| C Johnson | T Johnson | J Kelly |
| D Kelsey | B Lawton | D Mellor |
| S Phillips | K Rampton | R Rocca |
| A Stribley | M White | L Williams |
| T O'Neill (VC) | N Hedges (C) | |

Abstention: 1

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| S McCormack | | |
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Following an equality of votes the Chair's casting vote was Against the amendment.

The proposed amendment was lost.

The meeting adjourned at 9.26pm and reconvened at 9.46pm.

Councillor Iyengar proposed an amendment to the substantive motion on behalf of Poole Engage. In doing so, points raised included:

- The proposed amendments made provision for support of residents seeking advice, including £200k to address the 25% increase in calls to the contact centre and restoration of £400k for community officers;
- The proposed amendment included £80k for libraries, which were strategically important community centres;
- The proposed budget included funding for beautification of the conurbation through the planting of flowers;
- £2k for sport clubs and activities, to promote exercise and wellbeing;
- The proposals resulted in a balanced budget as approved by the s151 officer;
- The above increases were proposed to be offset by a reduction in funding to the Air Festival, with a one-year suspension of the festival allowing for a further review of its future alongside residents and local businesses;

- Additional funds would come through a reduction in funding to marketing, together with the use of funds earmarked for the re-opening of Poole Crematorium (which was to otherwise remain unspent in the financial year due to the slow progress of the project);
- Alternative funding could also be identified through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- The substantive budget's proposed one-off £50k High Street Renewal Fund was not sustainable and was to be removed.

Councillor J Butt seconded the proposed amendment and in doing so, confirmed that the amendment included additional resources to address antisocial behaviour and community development.

Council debated the proposed amendment, during which points were raised both in favour and against the proposal. These included:

- Concerns over the amendment's proposed removal of the Air Festival, and its impact on economic generation for the area;
- Concerns over the impact on military recruitment following removal of the Air Festival;
- Concerns over the environmental impact of the Air Festival;
- Suggestions that local businesses should pay for the Air Festival;
- Concerns over suggestions that the amendment was to restore £400k to community groups and £200k for customer service centre, when these were already part of the substantive budget;
- Support for retention of the High Street Renewal fund, as it was felt to help struggling High Streets;
- Concerns regarding the amendment's proposed removal of funding for CCTV, the Arts, free travel for carers, and funding for Sedcat;
- Concerns over the lack of provision for the Arts;
- Concerns over cut to Highways maintenance;
- Reference to Bournemouth Development Company, and its impact as a profit maker;
- Reference to Bournemouth Development Company's sale of land for below market value;
- Concerns over the removal of funding to Poole Crematorium;
- Suggestions that seafront staff could deal with camping issues, while parking staff could address issues with bonfires.

In response to a query, the Chief Financial Officer confirmed the proposed amendment included a forecast £400k total savings by removal of the Air Festival. This included all direct income from the Air Festival, but not car parking income. The proposed amendment assumed that car parking revenue would remain the same with or without the Festival.

In response to a query, the Chief financial Officer confirmed that reductions in funding to the Arts by the Sea festival were not included in either

amendment. Regarding concessionary fares, the substantive budget proposed to defer a decision until the next financial year, this was not included in the Poole Engage amendment. Additionally, the Poole Engagement amendment did not support the proposed deferment of the savings associated with community transport.

Councillor Iyengar, as proposer, made a number of points, including:

- The amendment focussed on community development and community safety;
- Poole Engage supported the reopening of Poole Crematorium, and were only proposing to reallocate funding from the Crematorium for this financial year, as it would otherwise remain unspent.

As mover of the substantive motion, Councillor Broadhead's response included:

- CIL was not available for funding High Street renewal;
- The proposed one-year break for the Air Festival was not workable and would have a detrimental impact on the economy of the area;
- The amendment sought to remove the funding for the concessionary fare scheme and travel scheme;
- The amendment's proposed cut to funding for the Arts By The Sea festival would result in risks to its ability to be held.

Council moved to a recorded vote:

For: 8

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| S Baron | R Burton | D Butt |
| J Butt | M Cox | M Iyengar |
| F Rice | C Rigby | |

Against: 44

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| H Allen | L Allison | M Anderson |
| S Anderson | S Bartlett | J Beesley |
| D Borthwick | P Broadhead | N Brooks |
| D Butler | E Coope | M Davies |
| L Dedman | B Dion | B Dove |
| B Dunlop | J Edwards | D Farr |
| L Fear | A Filer | S Gabriel |
| M Greene | N Greene | M Haines |
| P Hall | P Hilliard | M Howell |
| C Johnson | T Johnson | A Jones |
| K Kelly | D Kelsey | B Lawton |
| A Martin | D Mellor | S Phillips |
| K Rampton | R Rocca | A Stribley |
| M White | L Williams | K Wilson |
| T O'Neill (VC) | N Hedges (C) | |

Abstention: 19

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| M Andrews | M Brooke | D Brown |
| S Bull | M Earl | L-J Evans |
| G Farquhar | D Flagg | A Hadley |
| M Le Poidevin | L Lewis | C Matthews |
| S McCormack | P Miles | S Moore |
| L Northover | M Robson | V Slade |
| T Trent | | |

The proposed amendment was lost.

Discussion then moved to the substantive motion. As mover of the substantive motion, Councillor Broadhead's points included:

- Recognition of the high standard of debate and common ground found;
- The proposed budget was focussed on priorities and efficiencies to keep delivering services and protect the most vulnerable residents.

Council moved to a recorded vote, and were reminded that the recommendations included the Council Tax Resolution and amended recommendation (d), (j) and additional recommendation (y) as published.

Council moved to a recorded vote where the motion as follows was carried.

For: 34

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| H Allen | M Anderson | S Anderson |
| J Beesley | D Borthwick | P Broadhead |
| N Brooks | E Coope | M Davies |
| B Dion | B Dove | B Dunlop |
| D Farr | L Fear | A Filer |
| S Gabriel | M Greene | N Greene |
| M Haines | P Hall | C Johnson |
| T Johnson | K Kelly | D Kelsey |
| B Lawton | D Mellor | S Phillips |
| K Rampton | R Rocca | A Stribley |
| M White | L Williams | T O'Neill (VC) |
| N Hedges (C) | | |

Against: 17

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| L Allison | M Brooke | D Brown |
| S Bull | L Dedman | M Earl |
| L-J Evans | G Farquhar | D Flagg |
| A Hadley | P Hilliard | M Howell |
| L Lewis | L Northover | F Rice |
| C Rigby | V Slade | |

Abstention: 20

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| M Andrews | S Baron | S Bartlett |
| R Burton | D Butler | D Butt |
| J Butt | M Cox | J Edwards |

| | | |
|-----------|------------|---------------|
| M Iyengar | A Jones | M Le Poidevin |
| A Martin | C Matthews | S McCormack |
| P Miles | S Moore | M Robson |
| T Trent | K Wilson | |

RESOLVED that Council:-

- (1) undertakes a recorded vote in relation to the following items as required by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2014.**
 - (a) agrees that a net budget of £308.831m, resulting in a total council tax requirement of £243.797m, is set for 2023/24 based on the draft local government settlement figures published by government in December 2022;**
 - (b) agrees an increase in council tax of 2.99% for 2023/24 in respect of the basic annual threshold and the collection of the additional social care precept of 2%;**
 - (c) confirms the key assumptions and provisions made in the budget as proposed and set out in paragraphs 48 to 65;**
 - (d) approves the 2022/23 capital budget virement to accept the £19.9m Levelling Up Fund (Round 2) capital grant;**
 - (e) agrees the allocations to service areas in the budget as set out in Appendix 6;**
 - (f) agrees the implementation of £32.9m of List 1 savings as set out at Appendix 6a from 1 April 2023;**
 - (g) agrees the implementation of £2.2m in annualised List 2 savings as set out at Appendix 6a from 1 July 2023;**
 - (h) approves the continuation of the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) into 2023/24 as set out in sections 64;**
 - (i) continues the discretionary local scheme for war pensioners in which the Council disregards all prescribed War Disablement Pension or prescribed War Widow's/War Widower's Pensions income over and above the statutory limits for both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support;**
 - (j) recognises that via the governments Council Tax Support Fund, and for 2023/24 only, LCTSS claimants' bills will be reduced by up to £40;**
 - (k) implements a control to strengthen commissioning, procurement, and contract management arrangements in support of the delivery third party spend transformation savings;**
 - (l) approves the flexible use of capital receipts efficiency strategy as set out in paragraphs 75 to 83;**
 - (m) approves the capital investment programme (CIP) as set out in paragraphs 116 to 142 and Appendix 7;**

- (n) approves the capitalisation of £0.9m of highway neighbourhood expenditure each year for the period of the MTFP, funded from prudential borrowing;**
- (o) agrees capital investment of £5m in seafront infrastructure assets funded by borrowing supported by revisions to beach hut fees;**
- (p) agrees capital investment of £0.3m in the council's IT & IS capital infrastructure investment plan as set out in Appendix 7c and as funded from borrowing;**
- (q) confirms the previously approved budget of £12.5 million for Roeshot Hill and Crescent Road to be repurposed and used under the CNHAS Programme;**
- (r) agrees the capitalisation of the council's waste bin replacement strategy at £0.4 million per annum funded by borrowing;**
- (s) approves Cabinet's recommendation 7 September 2022 to increase the acquisition programme 4a (street acquisitions) budget originally approved by Council in February 2022 from £47.9 million to £68.8 million;**
- (t) approves the asset management plan as set out as Appendix 8;**
- (u) agrees the treasury management strategy (TMS) and prudential indicators as set out in paragraphs 164 to 176 and Appendix 9;**
- (v) accepts and supports the formal advice of the chief finance officer on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of the reserves as set out in paragraphs 177 to 182 and Appendix 10;**
- (w) approves the chief officers' pay policy statement for consideration and approval by the council in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 as set out in paragraphs 184 to 186 and Appendix 10;**
- (x) that the chief finance officer provides Council with a schedule setting out the rate of council tax for each category of dwelling further to councillor's consideration of the decision required in respect of (1)(a)-(w) above and after taking account of the precepts to be levied by the local police and fire authorities, neighbourhood, town and parish councils, and charter trustees once these have been determined prior to the Council meeting on the 21 February 2023;**
- (y) that Council delegates to the Chief Finance Officer any minor and consequential changes to the recommendations from the budget amendments including the gross expenditure and income on the council tax resolution report.**

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

RESOLVED that in accordance with resolution (x) above, Council approved the council tax resolution as set out below:-

- 1. It be noted that the council calculated the council tax base 2023/24**
 - a. For BCP Council to be 144,839 and that this calculation was carried out in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act)**
 - b. For dwellings in those parts of its area to which a charter trustee, parish and town precept relates as set out in Appendix C to the submitted report.**
- 2. That the council tax requirement for the council's own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding charter trustee, parish and town precepts) as £243,797,520.45.**
- 3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2023/24 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:**
 - a. £890,729,266.57 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by parish councils.**
 - b. £645,903,567.49 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.**
 - c. £244,825,699.08 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).**
 - d. £1,690.33 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by the Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of council tax for the year (including parish precepts). Appendix B to the submitted report details basic council tax by council area.**
 - e. £7.10 being the aggregate amount of all special items (charter trustee, parish, and town council precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (£1,028,178.63 as set out in Appendix C to the submitted report) divided by the tax base 144,839 calculated as Item T in the formula in section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**

- f. **£1,683.23** being the amount at 3(d) above less the amount at 3(e) above, calculated by the council, in accordance with Section 34(s) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no parish precept relates.
4. To note that the Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner and the Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority have issued precepts to the council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the council's area as indicated in the table below. The BCP Council charge includes a precept specifically for Adult Social Care also shown in the table below:

Precepts issued by major precepting authorities:

| | Band A £ | Band B £ | Band C £ | Band D £ | Band E £ | Band F £ | Band G £ | Band H £ |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Dorset Police and Crime Commissioner | 187.05 | 218.23 | 249.40 | 280.58 | 342.93 | 405.28 | 467.63 | 561.16 |
| Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority | 56.29 | 65.67 | 75.05 | 84.43 | 103.19 | 121.95 | 140.72 | 168.86 |
| BCP Council | 971.39 | 1,133.29 | 1,295.19 | 1,457.09 | 1,780.89 | 2,104.69 | 2,428.48 | 2,914.18 |
| Adult Social Care Precept | 150.76 | 175.89 | 201.01 | 226.14 | 276.39 | 326.65 | 376.90 | 452.28 |
| Total BCP Council Charge | 1,122.15 | 1,309.18 | 1,496.20 | 1,683.23 | 2,057.28 | 2,431.34 | 2,805.38 | 3,366.46 |

5. That it be noted for the year 2023/24 parish and town councils have stated the amount of precept for Band D properties as set out in Appendix C to the submitted report, issued to the Council in accordance with Section 41 of the Act (as amended by the Charter Trustees Regulations 1996 and the Localism Act 2011).
6. That the council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables below as the amounts of council tax for 2023/24 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

Aggregate amounts of council tax:

| | Band A £ | Band B £ | Band C £ | Band D £ | Band E £ | Band F £ | Band G £ | Band H £ |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Bournemouth | 1,367.00 | 1,594.84 | 1,822.67 | 2,050.51 | 2,506.17 | 2,961.85 | 3,417.51 | 4,101.02 |
| Bournemouth – Throop and Holdenhurst | 1,392.22 | 1,624.27 | 1,856.29 | 2,088.34 | 2,552.41 | 3,016.49 | 3,480.56 | 4,176.68 |
| Christchurch Town | 1,395.94 | 1,628.61 | 1,861.25 | 2,093.92 | 2,559.23 | 3,024.55 | 3,489.86 | 4,187.84 |
| Burton Parish | 1,375.98 | 1,605.32 | 1,834.64 | 2,063.98 | 2,522.64 | 2,981.31 | 3,439.96 | 4,127.96 |
| Hurn Parish | 1,387.10 | 1,618.30 | 1,849.47 | 2,080.66 | 2,543.02 | 3,005.40 | 3,467.76 | 4,161.32 |
| Highcliffe and Walkford | 1,380.70 | 1,610.83 | 1,840.93 | 2,071.06 | 2,531.29 | 2,991.53 | 3,451.76 | 4,142.12 |
| Unparished | 1,365.49 | 1,593.08 | 1,820.65 | 2,048.24 | 2,503.40 | 2,958.57 | 3,413.73 | 4,096.48 |
| Poole | 1,366.92 | 1,594.74 | 1,822.55 | 2,050.38 | 2,506.02 | 2,961.66 | 3,417.30 | 4,100.76 |

7. The Council's basic amount of council tax for 2023/24 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under 52ZB of the Act.

(Councillor D Butler declared an interest in respect of Bournemouth Development Company, as she was a member.)

(Councillor S Bull declared an interest in respect of Poole Crematorium, as he occasionally conducted ceremonies there.)

11. Cabinet 8 February 2023 - Minute No 123 - UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

Councillor T Johnson presented the report and recommendations as set out on the agenda.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor P Broadhead, who highlighted the efforts of officers to carry out the required consultation in a short timeframe. Councillor Broadhead also placed on record his thanks to Central Government for the additional funding.

Council moved to a vote where the motion as follows was carried.

RESOLVED that Council:-

- (a) accepts the £4.2m UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) grant allocation from Government;**
- (b) delegates authority to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Director of Finance and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration to utilise the grant in line with the Council's UKSPF Investment Plan and the associated Government guidance, ensuring oversight, governance and monitoring of the programme by 31 March 2025.**

Voting: Unanimous.

12. Corporate Leadership Structure

Councillor Philip Broadhead, presented the report and recommendations as set out on the agenda.

Councillor C Johnson left the meeting at 11.25pm.

Councillor N Greene seconded the proposal.

Council debated the motion, wherein points raised included:

- Concerns that the amalgamation of two posts would result in a significant amount of work for one person;
- Concerns over the loss of a senior staff member;
- The welcoming of a new Corporate Director of Wellbeing.

In response, the Chief Executive advised that the appointment of a new Corporate Director of Wellbeing would ensure resource capacity. Additional proposed changes to the staffing structure would ensure resources were redirected to areas where it was most needed.

Council moved to a vote where the motion as follows was carried.

Councillor Mellor left the meeting at 11.28pm.

RESOLVED that Council approve the relevant exit payments to facilitate the implementation of the final corporate structure, as set out in the report.

Voting: Unanimous

Councillors H Allen and A Filer left the meeting at 11.29pm.

13. Questions from Councillors

Councillor Stribley moved that due to the lateness of the hour, all questioners receive written answers. Some Councillors supported the proposal, but by consensus it was agreed that the meeting continue with the questions verbally asked and answered.

Councillors S Baron, D Butt and J Butt left the meeting at 11.31pm.

Councillors N Brooks, E Coope, R Rocca and A Stribley left the meeting at 11.35pm.

Councillors M Davies, R Lawton and P Hall left the meeting at 11.36pm.

Question from Councillor D Kelsey

Recent reports in the press have disclosed that Bayside, one of our seafront offerings, made a loss this year. Could the Cabinet Member outline how our seafront operations have performed this year, especially compared to other years and what are our expectations of future years?"

Councillor M Earl left the meeting at 11.39pm.

Councillors D Borthwick and P Miles left the meeting at 11.40pm.

Response by Councillor Beverly Dunlop

A bit of history, if I may.

I can recall, as a Bournemouth councillor, when the seafront didn't wash its face and it was supported by council tax. The game changer was to take a bold approach to seafront development and festivals. For example projects like Boscombe Spa seafront, the new pier, the overstand building designed by Wayne Hemmingway, cemented that mindset. Audacious is how we were described by one local business.

It is this bold, innovative and at times audacious mindset that has slowly animated the seafront, site by site, bringing new restaurants, events and activities and income to support other services. Activities, events and festivals all contribute to income, the more we develop destination and culture, the more it benefits our residents, businesses and visitors.

Seafront catering, for example. In the years between 19/20 and 22/23, the turnover from internally managed seafront catering outlets has risen from nearly £2.5m to over £4m/yr. Income generated from new pop-up

restaurants and additional car park income allows us to try those new ideas.

Where we are currently, is that Destination and Culture is projecting a year end surplus of £6m, not just income, a surplus over and above the service costs.

And we expect this growth to continue as we bring more old sites back into use, through partnerships, exciting developments and investment. The £20m levelling up fund is estimated to trigger over £100m in further investment.

We should be really proud of what has been achieved and if I may and to finish of this story, I'd like to pay tribute to someone who has recently left the authority, but this council didn't have an opportunity to thank him.

So, I would like to this council, to place on record, the enormous contribution made by Chris Saunders to the former Bournemouth Council and BCP Council.

To many of us he will always be remembered as Mr Seafront.

Question from Councillor A Martin

Councillor Martin did not ask his question on Bayside following Councillor Dunlop's previous answer, but requested that a written response be made available after the meeting.

Question from Councillor G Farquhar

Could Councillor Mellor explain why he chose to ignore the sanction imposed by the BCP Standards Committee, chaired by Councillor Borthwick?

This being contrary to 8.4 of the Code of Conduct requiring every Councillor to: 'comply with any sanction imposed on me following that I have breached the Code of Conduct'

The reason laid out in the Code of Conduct is 'It is extremely important for you as a Councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance.'

The meeting of the Standards Committee reviewing Code of Complaint 110 against Councillor Mellor found:

On the complaint of:

1. Bringing the office of Councillor of the Council into disrepute while acting in an official capacity.

It was found Councillor Mellor was in breach of the Code of Conduct in that:

Councillor Mellor was not as transparent as he should have been in relation to the Beach Hut Scheme.

Councillor Mellor did not pass information from Ministers of Central Government that the guidance on the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts was

subject to imminent change, and he did not pass this information in a timely manner to Council Members or BCP residents.

Failure to attend the Overview & Scrutiny meeting on 20 July 2022, as this was discourteous.

The ‘sanction imposed’ by the Standards Committee was for Councillor Mellor to ‘make an apology to the Overview & Scrutiny meeting for failing to attend on the 20 July 2022. And a further apology should be made to Full Council for any misleading statements made in relation to the Beach Hut Scheme.

Since it is stated that the complaint against Councillor Mellor would not be closed until those apologies have been made, could Councillor Mellor explain in what way he believes he is upholding the Nolan Principles of Public Life? In particular Principle number 7: Leadership

“Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour whenever it occurs.”

Councillor K Rampton left the meeting at 11.43pm.

Response by Councillor P Broadhead

The Council’s Constitution sets out who may be asked question at meetings of the Council, namely ‘the Chair, the Leader, a Portfolio Holder or the Chair of a Committee’. Councillor Mellor was no longer one of the above. However, Councillor Farquhar’s comments would be passed to Councillor Mellor.

Additionally, this is not the first time that the Standards procedure has not been followed (e.g., Councillor Dedman.)

Supplementary Question from Councillor G Farquhar

A procedural question: Will it be noted in the minutes when Councillor Mellor left the meeting? When is next Standards Committee meeting?

Response from the Monitoring Officer, Susan Zeiss

The next meeting of the Standards Committee is 28 February 2023, and there is currently no other meeting of the Committee planned beyond that. However, the Committee can arrange meetings on an ad-hoc basis, based on need. Council is advised that Councillor Mellor left the meeting at 11.28pm.

Councillors M Anderson and S Anderson left the meeting at 11.49pm.

Question from Councillor A Jones

On 2 February I wrote to the Cabinet Member for Sustainability & Transport asking him to meet myself and Councillor Farquhar on site to discuss the ongoing abuse of the cycle lane in Christchurch Road and agree an urgent resolution. Will he commit to such a meeting, and if so, when?

Response by Councillor M Greene

I did read in the Echo about Councillor Jones' request for a meeting with me and, on my return from vacation on 15 February I saw the email itself. I would be happy to meet the ward councillors on site over the next few weeks.

Supplementary Question from Councillor A Jones

When exactly?

Response by Councillor M Greene

We will review our diaries.

Question from Councillor D Brown

Residents are increasingly reporting faults with street lights. These have historically been resolved relatively swiftly in most cases, unless there was a significant problem such as a fault with an underground cable. The BCP Council website advises that "Once reported it normally takes up to 10 working days to fix an issue." However, it has been noticeable over the Winter that more and more of our LED street lights are out or flickering for months on end, and in some cases for over a year, even when reported numerous times.

During the dark Winter nights this has left sections of roads, pathways and cycleways poorly lit and dangerous, and is also affecting public areas which can be subject to anti-social behaviour where the maintenance of good lighting is essential.

Can the Portfolio Holder advise how many outstanding cases of faulty street light reports are currently awaiting repair?

What is he doing to resolve the lengthy delays being experienced at the moment?

When will the street light maintenance and repair service be brought back to normal service levels?

Response by Councillor M Greene

There have been ongoing issues with the supply chain for electronic components for streetlights since the pandemic as most of these originate from China. These issues are out of the Council's control, and we have been awaiting for some time the arrival of electronic drivers, which are currently in very high demand and in equally short supply. Like other councils, we have been receiving these items in small quantities.

We ordered around 1,000 lanterns, which were eventually delivered at the end of January, and this has enabled some faults to be rectified more quickly. The team has been liaising with our contractor to get extra resources in to catch up now that the lanterns are available.

At the end of January, the team reported that there were a total of 1,437 faults across the conurbation, 774 of which were awaiting parts. The remainder were faults that had yet to be looked at, but the contractor was working through these. I am pleased to report that the latest figures, as of 17 February, show that we are now down to only 1,139 outstanding faults,

made up of 374 repaired over the last week alone, and 76 new reports. This hopefully demonstrates that, as and when the parts come in, the contractor is making good progress.

With regards to information provided to customers, the message on our website does indeed state 'Once reported it normally takes up to 10 working days to fix an issue'.

But for some time now the website's message has continued with: 'However, there is currently a shortage of certain components worldwide. This affects our supply chain and whilst we always try to make repairs in a timely manner, it does mean that some are taking considerably longer than usual'.

It is likely that these supply chain issues are going to continue for some time, so the team continues to liaise with the contractor and will be ordering additional stock of lanterns and components, as much as can be sourced, over the next few months.

Supplementary Question from Councillor D Brown

The lack of lighting undermines the 'Cleaner, Greener, Safer' programme when pathways are in darkness. Can Councillor Greene prioritise fixing areas of most importance?

Response by the Councillor M Greene

I would be happy to recommend this to the relevant portfolio holder and officers.

Question from Councillor R Burton

Over the course of this winter my ward has suffered an increased number of incidents of road and pavement flooding. I imagine it has been similar in other wards across BCP. I know that our officer team work hard to clear the roads and pavements when this occurs, and I would like to thank them for their work in often difficult uncomfortable, and sometime dangerous conditions. I also note that there has been some investment the gully clearing service since BCP was formed and that this winter has seen complications due to abnormal leaf fall patters among other things.

The average annual rainfall across BCP is increasing, evidenced by the mean rainfall data collected at Hurn. With the amount of traffic and parked cars on the roads making gully cleaning more difficult, in addition to abnormal natural and climatic events becoming more common, what plans are in place to mitigate the effect of climatic change on the increased likelihood of flooding caused by surface water runoff and sometime lack of capacity across the councils approximately 60,000 gullies?

Response by Councillor M Greene

Firstly, may I thank Councillor Burton for acknowledging the work our teams have put in over recent months dealing with flooding issues across BCP, and also for his awareness of the challenging working conditions. A copy of these comments will be shared with the teams concerned.

Councillor Burton is right to acknowledge the extended leaf fall season which commenced early in 2022 due to the drought, and continued well into

the Christmas period. This, accompanied by several weeks of persistent high rainfall has made this winter particularly challenging.

BCP has three crewed gully tankers and brings in additional contracted resource to assist where practical. The work is, as Councillor Burton indicates, increasingly challenging due to growing numbers of parked vehicles, and I would like to look into potential solutions to that. In other locations, works can only be completed at night or under road closures.

Through the Council's transformation programme; better mapping of assets; and utilising flood risk data, the intention is to make improvements in the scheduling of works, which we hope will, to some extent, mitigate the risks due to climate change.

Supplementary Question from Councillor R Burton

Can you keep me updated as more info comes in?

Response by Councillor M Greene

I will refer the request to the relevant portfolio holder.

Question from Councillor T Trent

On the 14 December I requested the opportunity to speak to Cabinet, and it was granted accordingly.

I was particularly concerned that whilst BCP Council was participating in the Governments "Levelling Up" ambitions, they seemed not to be engaged in existing activities that actually DO level up our most challenged communities – citing Youth Services and Community Support, the former having been subject to threatened cuts and withdrawal of services for some time. I was given a clear assurance by Cabinet Members and the Lead Member for Levelling Up that this was not going to be the case (which I have on an audio recording).

Fast forward to late January/February and we see both youth facilities and community support on the list of partially achieved (Amber), and being explored (Blue), cuts to the BCP Budget for 2023/24.

In January those of us in the community started to hear rumours that the open access youth services were to be removed from the new Bourne Community Hub from late March. Out of the blue, and with barely any notice themselves, the staff were given the task of telling the young people attending these open access services – in a building that was designed in partnership with Youth Services to allow for such activities, that the service will be withdrawn from the 4 March.

The Bourne Valley Youth Club Management Committee, that support these services, were officially told at their meeting on the 9 February – well after the young people heard about it, that the club was closing. The budget, still two weeks from being approved, was cited as one of the reasons for the closure.

The only line in the budget paper, still confidential at the time, that covered savings in Youth Services was £47K to be saved in property costs. The amount saved by removing this service from this hub is less than £3,000 a

year – or around a quarter of the SRA for a Lead Member for Levelling Up. Meanwhile a sum of £18.2M has been awarded by Government in the name of “levelling up” to do such socially essential work as painting Bournemouth Pier.

Could it be explained why this has been done, at this time, to an area well near the top of the list (Nationally) of those that require help with levelling up, and that to keep something going after March 4th that funding granted from the Lottery Big Local Fund to extend youth provision for those under the normal age range catered for by Youth Services, will now have to be re-purposed to keep basic services going.

Could someone explain how such a cut to a service for young people, many whom are also vulnerable, can be regarded as “levelling up”? And whether, even at this late stage, the decision referred to above can be reversed, and that any future proposals go through a long consultation period – say a minimum of six months, for any reduction in provision so the management committees and communities can make alternative plans?

Response by Councillor M White

This Council has just this evening approved a £14.6M or 20% increase in the Children's Services budget. Within this the Youth Services budget remains unchanged.

In relation to the Bourne Valley Youth Centre the club is not closing. Poole Community Trust are offering a range of opportunities on site for young people and families. There is also a pre-school on site. Overall, there is no reduction in services offered to our young people in this area.

Supplementary Question from Councillor T Trent

Is it not regrettable that monies previously given to Poole Communities Trust has been withdrawn to fund a youth club which has been taken away by youth services?

Response by Councillor M White

My understanding is that we offer same services in the Bourne Valley area that we have always done but we may not be offering them all from that particular centre.

14. Urgent Decisions taken by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Constitution

The Chief Executive advised of an urgent decision taken in respect of the appointment of Non-Executive Directors of BCP FuturePlaces.

The meeting ended at 0.05 am

CHAIRMAN

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