

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 February 2021 at 10.00 am

Present:-

Cllr D Mellor – Chairman

Cllr P Broadhead – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr M Anderson, Cllr M Greene, Cllr N Greene, Cllr M Haines,
Cllr M Iyengar, Cllr R Lawton, Cllr K Rampton and Cllr M White

Lead Members: Cllr H Allen, Cllr S Baron, Cllr N Brooks, Cllr B Dove,
Cllr B Dunlop and Cllr J Kelly

Also in attendance: Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr G Farquhar, Cllr A Hadley, Cllr F Rice and Cllr L
Williams

292. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

293. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 January 2021 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

294. Public Issues

The Leader advised that two questions had been received from the following members of the public in relation to Agenda Items 8 (Council Vision, Corporate Strategy and Revised Delivery Plans 2021/22) 9 (High Streets Strategy) and 10 (Wessex Fields – Proposed Land Disposal);

- Zoe Tees
- Susan Chapman

The Leader advised that copies of the public questions and responses had been circulated to the Cabinet and had been published on the Council's website.

Further to this the Leader advised that there had been no public statements or petitions submitted on this occasion.

295. Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Cabinet was advised that there were no additional recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Board on items not otherwise included on the Cabinet Agenda on this occasion.

296. Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring 2020-21

The Leader presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the report included 2020/21 budget monitoring information for the end of December 2020.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the projection for the 2020/21 revenue account was of a balanced position after Covid-19 pressures, mitigation action and other budget variances are reflected.

Cabinet was further informed that the forecast service pressures due to the pandemic have grown since the December report particularly from further loss of income due to the third national lockdown, and that the overall position has improved, however, as the government has mandated that collection fund deficits arising from reduced levels of council tax and business rates collection are spread over the next three years. These previously reported pressures for the current year budget instead impact on the budget for 2021/22 and future years of the medium-term financial plan (MTFP).

Cabinet was advised that it is proposed in this report that as a result of the improved position, surplus resources of £13.3 million are carried forward into earmarked financial resilience reserves for transformation, Covid-19, and MTFP mitigation in future years, and that the updated 2020/21 annual projections for reserve movements, the capital programme and housing revenue account (HRA) are also included in the report.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:-

- (a) Note the current budget position for 2020/21; and**
- (b) Approve capital virements as set out in paragraph 109.**

RECOMMENDED that Council:-

- (a) Approve the transfer of £13.3 million to earmarked financial resilience reserves for transformation, Covid-19, and MTFP mitigation as set out in paragraph 11; and**
- (b) Approve the capital virement as set out in paragraph 110.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Leader of the Council

297. 2021/22 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

The Leader presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was requested to consider the proposed 2021/22 budget and council tax for recommendation to Council and in relation to this was informed that the council is required to set an annual balanced budget presenting how its financial resources, both income and expenditure are to

be allocated and utilised. Further to this Cabinet Cabinet was advised that in setting the budget for 2021/22 it is critical that councillors recognise their duty is to balance this budget in a manner which reflects not only their obligations to current taxpayers but also reflects their obligations to future tax payers.

Further to this Cabinet was advised that the budget as presented;

- a) has been drafted on a base 1.55% increase in council tax for 2021/22 applied to the average BCP council tax for 2020/21 as permitted by Government under the Dorset local government review process.
- b) harmonises council tax at £1,541.57 from 1 April 2021 which is the amount assumed in the 2020/21 budget report.
- c) Invests £7.5 million into the Children's Services improvement plan.

Thanks were expressed to the finance team and all those who had been involved in the work surrounding the report.

A number of Members spoke in support of the budget stressing the importance of providing an increased budget in the areas of Adults and Childrens services.

Councillor Farquhar addressed the Cabinet with regards to what progress had been made in terms of the proposed works at Pokesdown Station and welcoming the match funding allocation.

In relation to this the Leader advised that work was ongoing, and that there had been meetings between himself and the Chief Executive regarding this project, and that discussions had been had with the Local Enterprise Partnership. In addition the Leader advised that there had been multiple contacts with South Western Railway regarding this matter.

RECOMMENDED that Council;

- 1) undertake a recorded vote in relation to the following items as required by the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2014 which came into force on the 25 February 2014;**
 - (a) A net budget of £241.1 million, resulting in a total council tax requirement of £214.5 million, is set for 2021/22 based on the settlement figures published by government in December 2020. This is based upon:**
 - i. an increase in council tax in 2021/22 which means that the total BCP unitary charge will increase by 1.55% when applied to the average charge for 2020/21. Individual resident charges can be summarised as;**
 - 1. Bournemouth's council tax charge being an increase of 0.76% over that levied in 2020/21.**
 - 2. Christchurch's council tax charge being frozen compared to that levied in 2020/21.**
 - 3. Poole's council tax charge being an increase of 2.99% over that levied in 2020/21.**

4. These increases can be compared to the 4.99% maximum permitted increase for 2021/22 and recognises that the government continue to promote council tax increases via the social care precept as a funding mechanism for social care.
 - ii. the key assumptions and provisions made in the budget as proposed, set out in paragraph 35 to 56;
 - iii. the allocations to service areas in the budget as proposed and as set out in Appendix 2a;
 - iv. the capital investment programme (CIP) as set out in paragraphs 93 to 154 and Appendix 4;
 - v. the use and level of all reserves to be held by the council further to the advice of the chief finance officer as set out in paragraphs 155 to 173 and Appendix 3 to this report;
 - vi. treasury management strategy (TMS) and prudential indicators as set out in paragraphs 174 to 183 and Appendix 5;
 - vii. 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 185 to 186 and Appendix 7;
- (b) approve a £7.2 million gross investment in the council's corporate priorities (£6.2 million net) in 2021/22 which is an increase of £4.8 million compared to the 2020/21 budget;
 - (c) approve the flexible use of capital receipts strategy to deliver significant resources towards the BCP Council transformation programme as set out in paragraphs 57 to 67;
 - (d) approve the fundamental refinancing of the capital programme and the move to borrowing as a means of financing previously approved programmes of the council as discussed in paragraphs 150 to 154;
 - (e) approve the establishment of a £50 million futures fund to support key infrastructure developments as set out in paragraph 97;
 - (f) approve the investment of £10 million in special educational needs and disability (SEND) capital expenditure to support the Council in addressing the year on year deficits in the high needs block of the dedicated schools grant as set out in paragraph 110;
 - (g) note that it has been agreed, due to unforeseen circumstances, that neither the Council nor Homes England will be taking forward the provision of the grant award relating to the Turlin Moor housing site at this time. This will result in the loss of £3.838m grant funding for the scheme as set out in paragraph 139;

- (h) approve the revised funding strategy for the Council's current approved Capital budget of £420,000 to support delivery of the Turlin Moor project as set out in Appendix 4a, as follows:**

 - a. £138,000 which was originally to be funded from the Homes England Grant monies for professional work required to inform the land remediation requirements will now be met from Section 106 monies collected to deliver affordable housing**
 - b. £168,000 from further Section 106 monies collected to deliver affordable housing**
 - c. £114,000 as an allocation from 2018/2019 in-year capital underspend**
- (i) that the chief finance officer provides council with a schedule setting out the rate of council tax for each category of dwelling further to councillors consideration of the decision required in respect of (a) above and after taking account of the precepts to be levied by the local police and fire authorities, neighbourhood, town and parish councils, and chartered trustees once these have been determined prior to the Council meeting on the 23 February 2021.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Leader of the Council

298. Council Vision, Corporate Strategy and Revised Delivery Plans 2021/22

The Leader presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was reminded that BCP Council's Corporate Strategy was adopted by Full Council in November 2019, and that it sets out the Council's priorities and values which underpin the way the council will work as it develops and delivers services.

In relation to this Cabinet was advised that refreshed vision and ambition statements have been prepared to provide a wider context to underpin and drive the Corporate Strategy. Council corporate priorities remain the same and continue to be supported by delivery plans which set out high-level actions from 2020 onwards.

Further to this Cabinet was advised that the delivery plans have been reviewed in consultation with Cabinet Members, Directors and council officers to reflect current budget and economic pressures and the progress made so far, and that they continue to show how the council will work to achieve the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy and will continue to be reviewed as part of the Council's annual budget process.

In closing Cabinet was informed that the delivery plans were high-level plans that set out the current and future planned activity and how success will be monitored and measured.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board addressed the Cabinet advising that whilst there were no formal recommendations from the Board that there had been discussion at the Board in regards to difficulties which had been experienced in tracking what had changed, and that it would be useful if this was more easily visible.

In relation to this the Leader advised that these comments would be taken forwards and explored as to how these can be better shown.

A number of Members spoke in support of the report stressing the importance of investing in our communities.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the draft new aspirational vision for the wider Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole city region be adopted;**
- (b) the identification and delivery of the five big projects to deliver the wider vision be supported;**
- (c) support for the Corporate Strategy be confirmed; and**
- (d) the revised delivery plans appended to this report be approved.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Leader of the Council

299. High Streets Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'D' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that high streets in town, city and district centres in the UK are changing.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that even before COVID 19, high streets were continually in the news and public eye as a result of significant departures of many renowned retail brands, the rise in the number of empty shops and the change in experience reported by visitors. The reasons behind these changes are many and complex. Nationally, many reports have been written, and many experts have commented on the changes happening to high streets and town centres and offered potential solutions. Locally, the preceding Councils worked over many years, with key partners such as the Business Improvement Districts, Chambers of Commerce and industry groups, to proactively support and invest in their town centres in various ways. Further to this Cabinet was informed that whilst this has not stopped, COVID 19 has arguably sped up a process that was already underway and created a new reality that now needs to be considered alongside the previous best practice.

However, further to this Cabinet was advised that COVID 19 has also provided an opportunity to bounce back better, together, to embrace the change, and to consider how best a Council and its partners can intervene positively and create, or curate, high streets that are fit for now and for the future, and that this report expands on the above, and asks for authority to

be delegated to the Director of Development and the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning, to work with partners develop a strategy and deliver swift interventions that will support our high streets to bounce back quickly and strongly.

In closing the Portfolio Holder expressed thanks to those involved in this work and further to this advised that there had been a recent all member seminar on this area.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board addressed the Cabinet, expressing thanks that the recommendation from the recent meeting of the Board as set out below had been accepted by the Portfolio Holder.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommend to Cabinet that the recommendation in the report be amended as follows:

'Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Strategic Planning, to work with partners and ward Councillors, to swiftly develop a strategy and action plan, enabling the delivery interventions that will support our high streets.

RESOLVED that Cabinet delegates authority to the Director of Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy and Strategic Planning to work with partners and ward councillors to swiftly develop a strategy and action plan, enabling the delivery interventions that will support our high streets.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning

300. Wessex Fields - Proposed Land Disposal

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'E' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet were reminded that on 16 December 2020 Cabinet agreed in principle to dispose of part of the Wessex Fields site to the adjoining landowner University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust in partnership with Bournemouth University, to deliver their proposal for a strategically relevant development with a focus on Medical technology, medical research and education, and that Cabinet had authorised officers to negotiate the heads of terms for the disposal.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that it is proposed that circa 5.65 acres of the site is sold to University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust, leaving the Council with circa 8.95 acres of remaining land.

Cabinet were advised that the purchase price has taken into consideration an obligation on BCP Council to design, fund and build a new junction into the site from Deansleigh Road and a new access road from the A338, and that the terms of the disposal have been agreed between the parties and are outlined in the confidential appendix to this report.

Further to this Cabinet were informed that progressing with this disposal will still enable BCP Council to develop the remainder of the Wessex Fields site

in line with the preferred use themes, and in the most strategically beneficial way to the conurbation and local community and supports the Council's desire to work with the NHS Trusts.

Councillor Lawrence Williams addressed the Cabinet expressing his support for the proposal as Ward Member.

RECOMMENDED that Council:-

- (a) **agree to dispose of approximately 5.65 acres of land at Wessex Fields, as outlined in blue on the attached plan in Appendix 1, to University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust for the purchase price detailed in the confidential appendix to this report;**
- (b) **agrees to construct the new access road (including junctions) into the site shown on the attached plans in Appendix 3 and 4;**
- (c) **delegates authority to the Corporate Property Officer in consultation with the Portfolio holder, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer to finalise the detailed terms of the disposal;**
- (d) **amend the 2021/22 Capital programme to include an allocation as detailed in the confidential appendix to fund the road/junction works to enable the development of this land;**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning

301. Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools and Early Years Formulae 2021/22

The Portfolio Holder for Covid Resilience, Public Health and Education presented a report and additional erratum notice, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'F' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was informed that the council is required to set funding formulae for:

- Early education and childcare for eligible 2 year olds and all 3&4 year olds; and
- Mainstream schools for pupils in reception to year 11

In relation to this Cabinet was advised that the early years sector is largely comprised of private, voluntary and independent settings, and that the mainstream formula allocates funding only to public sector schools with the full details shown in School's Forum papers.

Further to this Cabinet was informed that consultation has taken place with all relevant providers, schools and the School's Forum, and that this report includes the recommendations of the Schools Forum for approval.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- (a) **The early years funding formula as set out in Table 2 of paragraph 31 be approved;**

- (b) The mainstream school's funding formula set out in Table 6 of Appendix 2 allowing for a £1.1 million (0.5%) transfer of Schools Block funding to support High Needs be approved;**
- (c) The local formula to adopt the National Funding Formula (NFF) funding values and mechanisms as set out in the report be agreed;**
- (d) Delegation of the final decision on the mainstream school's formula, when all DfE decisions are known, to the Corporate Director, Children's Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Covid Resilience, Schools and Skills, taking into account the methodology recommended by the School's Forum in Table 8 of Appendix 3; and**
- (e) The Minimum Funding Guarantee for specialist providers is set at 0 per cent to allow maximum budget flexibility.**

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Covid Resilience, Public Health and Education

302. Establishment of Winchelsea Satellite at Somerford Primary School Site

The Portfolio Holder for Covid Resilience, Public Health and Education presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'G' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that the number of children and young people assessed as requiring a place at a specialist education provision in the BCP area has increased in recent years, and that local provision to meet these needs is of high quality, but capacity has not been expanded sufficiently to meet this additional demand. In relation to this Cabinet was informed that as a result, increased use has had to be made of local Independent and Non-Maintained special schools which are comparatively expensive and often located outside of the BCP area. The result of this has been significant pressure on the school Transport budgets.

Further to this Cabinet was advised that in partnership with the BCP community of schools, a range of proposals has been developed to increase capacity and create new provision to meet the needs of these pupils and these were reported to Cabinet in the paper 'Capital Investment to Increase Special Educational Needs Capacity' on 22 April 2020.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the process for making changes to maintained schools is prescribed by the Department for Education, and that this report provides details of the process undertaken in relation to adding places at Winchelsea School through establishment of a new satellite at Somerford Primary School, and that the request to implement the proposal is being made with the support of Winchelsea School and Somerford Primary School.

RESOLVED that the proposal to establish a new satellite of Winchelsea School at the Somerford Primary School site is agreed.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Covid Resilience, Public Health and Education

303. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget Setting 2021 to 2022

The Portfolio Holder for Homes presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'H' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that HRA rents and other changes along with the HRA Capital Programme are subject to review and require Cabinet and Council approval in order for rents and charges to be levied.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a separate account within the Council that ring-fences the income and expenditure associated with BCP Council's housing stock, including housing in both the Bournemouth and Poole neighbourhoods, and that this report sought approval for the proposed budget for the HRA for 2021/22 and the key principles on which it is based.

In addition to this Cabinet was advised that the report also sets out the proposals regarding the rents, service charges and other charges to tenants as well as the expenditure plans for the 2021/22 rent year, and that these proposals and the actions within the attached delivery plans for each neighbourhood all support the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- (a) That revenue budgets for 2021/22 and provisionally for 2022/23 and 2023/24 are set using the following principles:**
 - (i) That dwelling rents are increased by 1.5% (CPI for September 2020 + 1%) from 5 April 2021 in line with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Policy statement on rents for social housing published in February 2019.**
 - (ii) That dwelling rents are moved to formula rent when a property is re-let following a vacancy.**
 - (iii) That garage rental charges are increased by 2% from the 5 April 2021 across both neighbourhoods. That rental charges for garage bases and parking plots in the Bournemouth neighbourhood also increase by 2% from 5 April 2021.**
 - (iv) That the garages owned by the HRA at Anchor Close, Bearwood are transferred to the General Fund.**
 - (v) That leasehold services are charged to leaseholders in line with actual costs incurred.**
 - (vi) That the changes to service charges are agreed as set out in appendix 2.**

- (vii) That the budgeted bad debt charge is maintained at £188,000 in the Bournemouth neighbourhood and £197,000 in the Poole neighbourhood.
 - (viii) That the depreciation budget is set at £6.878m for the Bournemouth neighbourhood and £4.665m for the Poole neighbourhood.
 - (ix) That HRA reserves should be maintained at a minimum level of 5% of total expenditure in line with good practice. This equates to £976,250 for the Bournemouth neighbourhood and £769,900 for the Poole neighbourhood for 2021/22, totalling £1.746m
- (b) That capital budgets for 2021/22 and provisionally for 2022/23 and 2023/24 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 agreed.
 - (iii) That funding totalling £6.824 million is carried forward from the 2020/21 Bournemouth neighbourhood capital programme and that funding totalling £4.955 million is carried forward from the 2020/21 Poole neighbourhood capital programme to reflect where expenditure on major projects has commenced but these projects have not yet been completed.
- (c) That the Delivery Plans for each neighbourhood to support the key principles for the HRA and the Council's Corporate Strategy are agreed as set out in appendices 7 and 8.

Voting: Unanimous

Portfolio Holder: Homes

304. Playing Pitch Strategy 2020 - 2033

The Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Leisure and Culture presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'I' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

Cabinet was advised that this Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP Council) Playing Pitch Strategy replaces the previous Playing Pitch Strategies for the former Bournemouth Borough Council, Christchurch Borough Council and Borough of Poole areas and covers the period between 2020 and 2033 in alignment with the emerging new Local Plan.

In relation to this Cabinet was informed that the strategy, which is compliant with Sport England guidance, focuses on current provision and future need for football, rugby union, cricket and hockey pitches (both grass and artificial surfaces).

Councillor Felicity Rice addressed the Cabinet highlighting that the sports provision often assumed that people used a car to access these areas, and that more emphasis should be made to access in more sustainable ways.

RESOLVED that the Playing Pitch Strategy (2020 – 2033) is formally adopted by BCP Council.

Voting: Unanimous

305. Cabinet Forward Plan

The Leader advised that the latest Cabinet Forward Plan had been published on the Council's website, a copy of which had also been circulated to each Member and appears as Appendix 'J' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The Chief Executive address the Cabinet advising that an additional paper was to be presented to the March Cabinet meeting, this would be a non-key decision paper updating on regeneration.

In relation to this the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning advised that the Poole Regeneration Update report scheduled for the April Cabinet meeting would no longer be taken but that aspects of the report would be included within the March report.

The meeting ended at 11.40 am

CHAIRMAN