

Minutes of Council

Meeting date **Wednesday, 24 February 2021**

Members present: Councillors Jane Bell (Mayor), David Howarth (Deputy Mayor), John Rainsbury, Carol Chisholm, Will Adams, Jacky Alty, Renee Blow, Damian Bretherton, Anielia Bylinski Gelder, Matt Campbell, Colin Clark, Colin Coulton, Malcolm Donoghue, Bill Evans, James Flannery, Derek Forrest, Paul Foster, Mary Green, Michael Green, Harry Hancock, Jon Hesketh, Mick Higgins, Cliff Hughes, Susan Jones, Chris Lomax, Jim Marsh, Keith Martin, Christine Melia, Caroline Moon, Jacqui Mort, Peter Mullineaux, Alan Ogilvie, Colin Sharples, David Shaw, Margaret Smith, Phil Smith, David Suthers, Stephen Thurlbourn, Michael Titherington, Caleb Tomlinson, Matthew Tomlinson, Matthew Trafford, Angela Turner, Karen Walton, Ian Watkinson, Gareth Watson, Paul Wharton-Hardman, Carol Wooldridge and Barrie Yates

Officers: Gary Hall (Chief Executive), Chris Moister (Director of Governance), Chris Sinnott (Deputy Chief Executive), James Thomson (Deputy Director of Finance) and Ruth Rimmington (Democratic Services Team Leader)

Other members: 0

Public: 0

88 Apologies for absence

None.

89 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 27 January 2021 of Council

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on Wednesday, 27 January 2021 be approved as a correct record.

90 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

91 Mayors Announcements

The Mayor gave an update on recent interviews she had undertaken and also on 'Story Time with the Mayor'.

92 Cabinet

Members received a general report of the Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday, 10 February 2021.

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, seconded by the Executive Member (Finance, Property and Assets), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, and subsequently

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the report be noted.

93 Scrutiny Committee

Members received a general report of the Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Monday, 8 February 2021.

It was proposed by the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, Councillor David Howarth, seconded by the Vice-Chair Councillor Michael Green, and subsequently

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the report be noted.

94 Changes to Committee Membership

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, seconded by the Executive Member (Finance, Property and Assets), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, and subsequently

Resolved: (Unanimously) that

1. Councillor Carol Chisholm be appointed to the Conservative Group vacancy on the Appeals Committee
2. Councillor James Flannery to be the council's representative on the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership Joint Scrutiny Committee.

95 General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget and Council Tax 2021/22

The Mayor advised that one vote will cover the Budget, Council Tax setting and all other issues covered within the report and appendices.

The Executive Member (Finance, Property and Assets), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, presented the Cabinet's General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget and Council Tax 2021/22.

Councillor Tomlinson thanked the Labour and Liberal Democratic Groups and officers for their hard work and input into the proposed budget. He thanked all the staff working for the council for their contributions in delivering services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Councillor Tomlinson referred to the achievements of the council since the administration took control and the plans within the Corporate Strategy which will be delivered by the proposed budget, including a freeze on council tax in 2021/22.

There continues to be uncertainty regarding the council's funding streams with the government announcing a one-year financial settlement for 2021/22 rather than the expected multi-year settlement. There are also anticipated changes to the Business Rate Retention system and reforms to the New Homes Bonus.

Funding to the council is forecast to fall from over £14m in 2016/17 to £12m by 2023/24. However, the council is ambitious in its approach to meeting the budget deficit through generating efficiency savings, such as those already realised through shared services and additional income generated through investments within the borough.

14 priority projects are being proposed for delivery over the next 12-18 months that will directly support delivery of long-term outcomes. The proposed budget also includes additional investments including planned improvements to community facilities, support to businesses and young people during the recovery from Covid-19. The outcome of the Leyland Town Deal is awaited

The Corporate Strategy identifies key priorities as a council which are: -

Thriving communities

- £117,000 to create a network of community hubs, providing services & support that meet the needs of local neighbourhoods
- £60,000 to support vulnerable families and children by providing access to food during the school holidays over the next four years
- £50,000 to support access to advice services and information by working in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau

Looking ahead:

- £500,000 over the next two years to deliver a programme of improvements to community facilities to provide quality amenities for residents, encouraging positive mental and physical health as part of an active community
- £50,000 to support positive mental health for young people through officer resource to deliver a programme of early intervention activity

A fair local economy that works for everyone

- £150,000 to deliver an extended programme of support for businesses beyond government grants to ensure that the council is doing as much as possible to help businesses get back on their feet
- £150,000 to implement a plan to retain wealth and grow the local economy through a progressive procurement framework and social value policies

An exemplary council

- £20,000 to provide a fund for technology and equipment to support children to access remote learning where there is a need
- £150,000 to develop a Credit Union that will enable access to safe and ethical banking options for all residents
- £50,000 to support access to advice services and information by working in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau

Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

- £250,000 to support action on the green agenda including tree planting (in addition to A Tree for Every Resident), becoming a green employer by 2022 and car charging points as part of infrastructure improvements
- £50,000 to undertake work to plan for an Extra Care scheme that will
- provide high quality accommodation to meet the future needs our residents

Looking ahead:

£2m to deliver affordable housing units

£500,000 to deliver neighbourhood improvement projects including:

- Development of a nature reserve at Pickerings Farm
- Tidy up of community areas in Pope Lane area
- Improvements to Kingsfold Community Centre and playing fields
- More dog bins and relevant signage

Despite the budget savings identified there remain large forecast budget deficits of £1.229m in 2022/23 and £2.614m in 2023/24. To achieve the required reduction in net expenditure the council's strategy will be:

1. To make investments within the borough that provide benefits to residents and businesses whilst also generating income for the council.
2. To realise savings through the procurement of its contracts including joint contractual arrangements with Chorley Council.
3. To identify efficiencies through investment in infrastructure, ICT and through exploring alternative delivery models that will enable the council to balance the budget whilst seeking to minimise the impact on front line service users.

Councillor David Howarth, the Leader of the Liberal Democrats Group, commended the budget proposals and stated the Group's support.

Councillor Damian Bretherton advised that although the opposition supported some of the budget proposals, they did not support the investment strategy and made a number of alternative proposals, including a scheme to support 18 to 25-year old local entrepreneurs set up businesses in the borough.

An alternative housing scheme, to purchase and renovate homes, was outlined, and an alternative home-schooling initiative. A freeze car parking charges for three months after lockdown restrictions are relaxed was also proposed, additional schemes to promote the green agenda and a capital scheme relating to drainage work at Longton playing fields.

Councillor David Howarth noted that the proposals from the Conservative Group had not been presented for consideration at Scrutiny.

Several members spoke in favour of the proposed amendments, including Councillors Karen Walton, Barrie Yates, Michael Green and Paul Wharton-Hardman,

Members raised queries regarding the proposed amendments and noted that living walls are already being planted within the Borough.

Councillor Paul Foster responded to the amendments proposed and noted that the proposals within the substantive motion support all entrepreneurs and clarified points in relation to the building of new energy efficient homes within the Borough, the green agenda, the digital inclusion scheme and the proposals relating to car parking

charges. It was suggested that the scheme at new Longton be proposed as a project through the community hubs.

Councillor Margaret Smith, Leader of the Opposition, spoke in support of the proposed amendment, referencing affordable homes, digital inclusion and the green agenda. She also thanked council officers and all those who have contributed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The amendment to the Motion was moved by Councillor Damian Bretherton, seconded by Councillor Margaret Smith to accept the proposed amendments as set out in the report at item 80 on the agenda

‘Revenue Expenditure

The Conservative Group propose that the £150k reserve set aside to support Community Wealth Building should be repurposed to create a reserve that will support 18 to 25-year old local entrepreneurs set up businesses in the borough. The Conservative Group propose that the additional £2m in the capital programme that is set aside to develop affordable homes be removed. In its place it is proposed that the £2m is used to purchase houses within the borough that are in disrepair and that are empty so that they can be renovated by the council and rented to tenants at a affordable rent. This will realise the ambition of the opposition to deliver better quality homes within the borough as well as an income stream to the council.

The Conservative Group supports the council’s £250k fund toward the green agenda and proposes this is spent on developing green initiatives within the borough such as

- living walls
- biodiversity projects
- air purifying plants

The Conservative Group proposes to increase the funding for the home-schooling initiative from £20k to £50k with the increase being funded through Covid-19 unringfenced grants.

The Conservative Group proposes to freeze car parking charges for 3 months after lockdown restrictions are relaxed. This is essential to supporting local businesses recover from, what has been for most, the most difficult trading environment they have ever experienced. Free parking would be subject to a 3 hour limit to stop all day parking. This is estimated to cost the council approximately £40k and can be funded through unringfenced Covid-19 funding.

Capital Expenditure

The Conservative Group proposes £100k of drainage work at Longton playing fields. It is proposed that where possible this is funded through external funding including s106 contributions. There is already currently £37k of s106 agreements that can be ringfenced towards this project.

The Conservative Group believes that the £75k funding for the local improvement scheme at New Longton should come first from council resources. Any further funding required for additional work should come from s106 funds’.

In accordance with Rule 16.5 in Part 4 of the Constitution, the voting on the Amended Motion was recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time, voted as follows:

For: Damian Bretherton, Matt Campbell, Carol Chisholm, Colin Clark, Colin Coulton, Mary Green, Michael Green, Jon Hesketh, Cliff Hughes, Jim Marsh, Caroline Moon, Jacqui Mort, Peter Mullineaux, Alan Ogilvie, John Rainsbury, Margaret Smith, Phil

Smith, David Suthers, Stephen Thurlbourn, Karen Walton, Gareth Watson, Barrie Yates.

Against: Will Adams, Jacky Alty, Jane Bell (Mayor), Renee Blow, Aniela Bylinski Gelder, Malcolm Donoghue, Bill Evans, James Flannery, Derek Forrest, Paul Foster, Harry Hancock, Mick Higgins, David Howarth (Deputy Mayor), Susan Jones, Chris Lomax, Keith Martin, Christine Melia, Colin Sharples, David Shaw, Michael Titherington, Caleb Tomlinson, Matthew Tomlinson, Matthew Trafford, Angela Turner, Ian Watkinson, Carol Wooldridge.

Abstain: Paul Wharton-Hardman.

The Mayor declared that the Amended Motion was lost by 18 votes for, 26 against and 1 abstention.

Councillor David Howarth referenced progress on the Penwortham plan, greater public participation and plans regarding leisure achieved with a spirit of co-operation.

Councillors Mick Titherington, Matthew Trafford, Aniela Bylinski Gelder, Bill Evans and Keith Martin spoke in support of the substantive motion highlighting support for families and businesses following the Covid-19 pandemic, the green agenda, community wealth building and the plans for the regeneration of Leyland with the Town Deal bid. Plans are also in place for regeneration at Penwortham.

Councillors Mary and Michael Green thanked Councillor Sue Jones for her work on the Moss Side play area scheme.

Councillor Alan Ogilvie queried the cumulative budget deficit and the risk appetite. James Thomson, Deputy Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer gave some technical advice that the 200k figure is per year and that the risk appetite information is a policy requirement.

Several members supported the substantive motion, specifically relating to the freezing of council tax.

Councillor Paul Foster highlighted the need to support communities and businesses affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and referenced the council tax freeze, investment proposals and the shared services agenda with Chorley Council. The ongoing development of communities are the focus. The support of the Liberal Democrat group in moving forwards in a positive way was highlighted.

The substantive motion proposed by the Executive Member (Finance, Property and Assets), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, and seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, was then put to the vote.

Following debate, in accordance with Rule 16.5 in Part 4 of the Constitution, the voting on the Substantive Motion was recorded and the Members of the Council present at the time voted as follows:

For: Will Adams, Jacky Alty, Jane Bell (Mayor), Renee Blow, Aniela Bylinski Gelder, Malcolm Donoghue, Bill Evans, James Flannery, Derek Forrest, Paul Foster, Harry Hancock, Mick Higgins, David Howarth (Deputy Mayor), Susan Jones, Chris Lomax, Keith Martin, Christine Melia, Colin Sharples, David Shaw, Michael Titherington,

Caleb Tomlinson, Matthew Tomlinson, Matthew Trafford, Angela Turner, Ian Watkinson, Paul Wharton-Hardman, Carol Wooldridge

Against: None.

Abstain: Damian Bretherton, Matt Campbell, Carol Chisholm, Colin Clark, Colin Coulton, Mary Green, Michael Green, Jon Hesketh, Cliff Hughes, Jim Marsh, Caroline Moon, Jacqui Mort, Peter Mullineaux, Alan Ogilvie, John Rainsbury, Margaret Smith, Phil Smith, David Suthers, Stephen Thurlbourn, Karen Walton, Gareth Watson, Barrie Yates.

The vote was carried by majority, and it was therefore

Resolved (27:0:22)

That the budget and proposals as set out in the report in item 8 General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget and Council Tax 2021/22 and supporting appendices be approved to include:

a) Approve the budget and proposals set out in this report including:

- Council Tax set out in the resolutions (at Appendix A)

b) Note the Parish Precepts (Appendix B)

c) Approve the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (Appendix C)

d) Note the council's forecast cumulative budget deficit & budget strategy 2021-22 to 2023-24 (Appendix D)

e) Note significant budget movements from the 2020/21 Budget (at Appendix E)

f) Note the general fund forecast assumptions (at Appendix F)

g) Approve the capital programme for 2020/21 to 2023/24 (Appendices G1, G2 & G3)

h) Approve the Capital Strategy (Appendix H)

i) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix I) and note the advice of the treasury management consultants (Appendix I1)

j) Approve the council's Pay Policy (at Appendix J) and publication on the council's website from April 2021

k) Note the advice of the Statutory Finance Officer in relation to the robustness of the budget and the risks contained within it as set out in the Statutory Report (Appendix K).

l) Note the Budget Consultation 2021/22 Report (at Appendix L)

m) Note the Assessing the Impact of Budget Proposals 2021/22 Report (at Appendix M)

n) Approve the recommendations in the Fees and Charge report (at Appendix N)

FORMAL COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

Draft resolution on setting of the 2021/22 Council Tax for the Borough to be passed in approving the Cabiner's recommendations for the Council's Budget.

1. It be noted that on 31 January 2021 the Statutory Finance Officer calculated the Council Tax Base 2021/22
 - a) for the whole Council area as 36,219.4 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates (as in the attached Appendix B).
2. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2021/22 (excluding Parish precepts) is £8,085,619
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a) £51,516,000 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) £42,952,503 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - c) £8,563,497 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) £236.43 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
 - e) £477,878 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as in the attached Table 1).
 - f) £223.24 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) 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 County Council, the Police Authority and the Fire 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.

5. 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 2021/22 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

VALUATION BANDS

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
148.83	173.63	198.44	223.24	272.85	322.46	372.07	446.48

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
970.79	1,132.59	1,294.39	1,456.19	1,779.79	2,103.39	2,426.98	2,912.38

POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LANCASHIRE

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
150.97	176.13	201.29	226.45	276.77	327.09	377.42	452.90

LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
48.18	56.21	64.24	72.27	88.33	104.39	120.45	144.54

AGGREGATE OF COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENTS

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,318.77	1,538.56	1,758.36	1,978.15	2,417.74	2,857.33	3,296.92	3,956.30

6. That the Statutory Finance Officer and his officers be authorised to take any action necessary to ensure collection and recovery of the Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates.
7. South Ribble Borough Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2021/22 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 522B Local Government Finance Act 1992.

EXPLANATION OF COUNCIL TAX SETTING RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION 1

(a) Before we can calculate the Council Tax to be charged, we first have to calculate the Council Tax base. The Council Tax base is the amount which a Band D Council Tax of £1.00 would raise. For 2021/22 we estimate that a £1.00 Council Tax at Band D would raise £38,219.40 in the borough.

(b) This shows the "base" figure for each Parish in the area. For example, a £1.00 Band D Council Tax in Farington would raise £2,487.90.

RESOLUTION 2

This shows the Council's net spending for 2021/22 excluding the cost of Parish precepts.

RESOLUTION 3

(a) This is the grand total of money which the Council estimates it will spend on all services in 2021/22. It also includes the amount the Parish Councils need to run their services.

(b) This is the grand total of money which the Council estimates it will receive from various sources in the year. This includes Central Government and business rates, car park charges, investment income, government grants in respect of benefits, etc.

(c) This is the difference between 2(a) and 2(b) and is in effect the Council's and Parishes net spending on services.

(d) The difference between 2(a) and 2(b) is the amount we need to charge Council Taxpayers. This is divided by the base in 1(a) to give the average Band D Council Tax for all Borough and Parish services.

(e) The total of all the amounts needed from Council Taxpayers by the Parish Councils in the area.

(f) This is the Band D Council Tax for South Ribble Borough Council's own services, i.e. excluding Parish Council spending.

RESOLUTION 4

Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Fire Authority and the Police & Crime Commissioner for Lancashire are separate bodies who have worked out their own estimates of spending and income for 2021/22 and have set taxes in a similar way to South Ribble Borough Council. This resolution notes their final decision.

RESOLUTION 5

This pulls together the Council Taxes for South Ribble Borough Council, Lancashire County Council, the Police & Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and Lancashire Fire Authority. For example, the aggregate amount for Band D is £1,987.15 made up as follows:

	£
South Ribble Borough Council	223.24
Lancashire County Council	1,456.19
Lancashire Police Authority	226.45
Lancashire Fire Authority	72.27

The rate for each property Band is calculated by reference to the Band D charge. The following ratios apply:

Band A	6/9 ths of Band D
Band B	7/9 ths of Band D
Band C	8/9 ths of Band D
Band D	9/9 ths of Band D
Band E	11/9 ths of Band D
Band F	13/9 ths of Band D
Band G	15/9 ths of Band D
Band H	18/9 ths of Band D

The aggregate charge for Band A, for example, is $£1,978.15 \times 6 \div 9 = £1,318.77$

RESOLUTION 6

Formally authorise the necessary staff to take legal action to collect arrears as and when this is necessary. For the vast majority of taxpayers, this is not needed

96 Questions to the Leader of the Council

No questions were received.

97 Questions to Members of the Cabinet

Questions for the Cabinet Member (Health and Wellbeing) - Councillor Mick Titherington

No questions were received.

Questions for the Cabinet Member (Communities, Social Justice and Wealth Building) - Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder

No questions were received.

Questions for the Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets) - Councillor Matthew Tomlinson

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, asked if the Cabinet Member was aware of the reason why the Conservative group had abstained on the substantive motion for the Council Tax item. In response, the Cabinet Member acknowledged the Conservative Group had not supported the proposals from the administration.

Councillor Alan Ogilvie asked if the signage within Worden Park could be reviewed in light of groups congregating. The Cabinet Member agreed to this request and noted that the Council are working with the Police on this issue.

Councillor Michael Green requested clarification regarding digital exclusion and whether Moss Side was included within the scheme. The Cabinet Member advised that there had been no criticism of Moss Side and that schools in the most deprived areas had been the focus of the scheme, but noted that schools are not ward specific.

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Margaret Smith noted that she was unable to support the budget proposals made by the administration.

Questions for the Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Regeneration) - Councillor Bill Evans

No questions were received.

Chair

Date