

**BUDGET AND
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

6.00 P.M.

21ST JANUARY 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Keith Budden (Chair), Joanna Young (Vice-Chair), Tim Dant, Roger Dennison, Jason Firth, Mandy King, Jack O'Dwyer-Henry, David Whitworth and Jason Wood (substitute).

Apologies for Absence:
Councillor Kate Whearty

Cabinet Members in attendance and their portfolios:

Councillor Lewis	Leader
Councillor Brookes	Environmental Services
Councillor Hamilton-Cox	Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor Hanson	Resources
Councillor C Jackson	Housing
Councillor Parr	Arts, Culture, Leisure and Tourism
Councillor Reynolds	Planning Policy
Councillor Whitehead	Finance

Also in attendance:
Economic Stakeholders and members of the public

Officers in Attendance

Daniel Bates	Director of Corporate Services
Mark Davies	Director for Communities and the Environment
Jason Syers	Director for Economic Growth and Regeneration
Neil Kissock	Director of Finance, Lancashire County Council (part)
Paul Thompson	Chief Finance Officer (Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer)
Debbie Chambers	Democratic Services Manager

20 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2019 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

21 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

22 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chair noted that the Director of Finance for Lancashire County Council, Mr Neil Kissock, was in attendance to present the County's budget proposals. The Chair informed those present that he would therefore move item 6, Lancashire County Council's Consultation on Budget Proposals, up the agenda. He would move Item 5, the City Council's Budget and Policy Framework update, to the end of the agenda.

23 LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Chair invited Lancashire County Council's Director of Finance, Mr Neil Kissock, to present the report on the County's budget position.

It was noted that the County Council's Cabinet would produce its draft budget for 2020/2021 in February 2020 for referral to the full Council meeting later that same month.

Members asked questions regarding the LEP (Lancashire Enterprise Partnership) and funding for the Home Improvement Agencies, which Mr Kissock responded to.

The Chair thanked Mr Kissock for attending the meeting and providing the information to Members and stakeholders.

(Mr Kissock left the meeting at this point.)

24 LANCASHIRE COMBINED FIRE AUTHORITY BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Chair advised the Panel that the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority had sent apologies for the meeting and submitted a report for comments.

There were no comments on the report. The Chair asked if anyone present had any questions, as these could be submitted to the Fire Authority by Democratic Services on behalf of the Panel. No questions were raised.

Resolved:

(1) That the report be noted.

The Chair noted that the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) had been unable to submit proposals in time for the meeting as the police grant had not been issued yet. The Leader of the Council updated the Panel, saying the PCC hoped to have this information by the end of January.

25 BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK UPDATE 2020/21 TO 2023/24

Councillor Anne Whitehead, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Finance, presented the City Council's Budget and Policy Framework Update 2020/21 to 2023/2024.

Councillor Whitehead's presentation gave an update on the four strategic priorities which would be going to Council for consideration on 29 January 2020. These were:

- A sustainable district
- An inclusive and prosperous local economy

- Happy and healthy communities
- A co-operative, kind and responsible council

Councillor Whitehead outlined projects and activities undertaken from March 2019 which the Council had already achieved, relating to these priorities.

The challenges facing the City Council were presented and details were given about the proposals being brought forward in the budget for savings. Growth items to support the priorities were also being proposed in the budget and Councillor Whitehead provided information about each of those.

Councillor Whitehead and other cabinet members present then responded to questions from members of the Panel and those stakeholders in attendance. The City Council's Directors also assisted with responses to technical and operational queries.

Issues raised by the Panel were:

- The amounts the Council held in reserves, what was considered an appropriate level, and the use of reserves being proposed in the upcoming budget.
- Use of consultants for the Local Plan.
- Minimum wage: Members asked if a £10 minimum wage could be included in the Job Evaluation proposals.
- Red book on valuations; how that was used by Chartered Surveyors to value properties.
- Building Control and future plans for supply of this service (which was currently outsourced).
- Where funding would come from for replacement of the boiler at Salt Ayre Leisure Centre.

Economic Stakeholders and members of the public present raised the following issues:

- Whether the City Council would be putting forward a proposal for the government's new Town of the Year initiative.
- Clarification of the way Council Tax figures were presented in budget documentation using a Band D property example throughout.
- Whether trade refuse charges applied to small businesses.
- Information on development of the Arts and Culture Strategy.
- Littering in the stretch of canal in Lancaster between Bath Mill and the Waterwitch pub and how that could be tackled.

Councillors who had been elected in May 2019 advised officers that they would appreciate more information about the City Council's full overall budget, rather than just being presented with savings and growth information.

The Director of Corporate Services offered to hold a briefing session for Members around these budget issues and capital funding, in an informal environment.

Cabinet invited feedback on the budget proposals either by way of formal feedback by resolution of the Panel, or in an informal way by talking to the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Leader of the Council. It was agreed that further feedback would be via informal discussions.

The Chair thanked Councillor Whitehead for her thorough and comprehensive presentation and report.

Resolved:

- (1) That Cabinet be asked to include a minimum wage of £10 per hour in the Job Evaluation exercise.
- (2) That the report be noted.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these minutes, please contact
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