

MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP MEETING

HELD 25 JANUARY 2017

Present: Cllrs: Hirst (Chair), Bibby, Elms, T Hill, Knox, and Thompson, Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Head of Financial Services.

1 Apologies

Cllrs: Rogerson

2 Minutes of meeting held on 11 January 2017

2.1 Members approved the minutes of the last meeting of the Budget Working Group.

3 Revenue Budget 2016/17 and 2017/18 – latest position

3.1 The Director of Resources took members through a report which gave the very latest position for the Revenue Budget 2016/17 and 2017/18.

3.2 The report addressed the 4 areas that had been considered by Budget Working Group at the previous meeting on 11 January 2017:

1. **How much of general fund balances should we use to finance the revenue budget shortfall?**

BWG considered this and recommended that a maximum of £250k should be budgeted to be used, recognising that we have an excellent record of achieving budgetary savings throughout the year.

2. **Examination of how much business rates growth we can realistically expect to rely on – At the time of the meeting on 11 January we were unclear how much income from Business Rates we would receive next year. This was due to the fact we were not in a position to complete our NNDR1 return for 2017/18. This was due to the fact we were not in a position to complete our NNDR1 return for 2017/18. This was particularly due to the rating revaluation on April 2017.**

BWG agreed that we consider this when we have produced our draft NNDR1 for 2017/18.

3. **How much New Homes Bonus we can use to support the revenue budget – our allocation for next year is expected to be £1.571m. We have already committed to using £787k each year to support revenue. We need to consider how much of the balance should be used for revenue or capital.**

BWG agreed to consider this at their meeting on 25 January but recognised the uncertainty of relying on NHB funding for future years given the changes announced to the scheme.

4. **Whether our council tax should be increased for 2017/18 – A discussion took place regarding the level of council Tax for next year.**

BWG agreed to consider this further

- 3.3 Based on the responses previously received, and with the provision of further budget updates, a number of proposals were put before Budget Working Group for consideration. These consisted of a council tax freeze; an increase in council tax of 1.99%; and an increase in council tax of £5 at Band D equivalent.
- 3.4 A proposal was made by BWG to freeze the council tax for 2017/18 and this was recommended for submission to the special meeting of Policy and Finance Committee on 7 February 2017.

4 Five Year Capital Programme 2017/18 – 2021/22

- 4.1 Members were taken through a report on the capital programme which showed a proposed five year capital programme which was fully funded.
- 4.2 An amendment that was discussed and agreed at the previous night's meeting of Policy and Finance Committee was referred to, which related to the bringing forward of two schemes for the Council Chamber from 2018/19 to 2017/18, together with the associated financing.
- 4.3 Members were in agreement with the proposed five year capital programme, with the amendments of the previous night's Policy and Finance Committee and recommended it for submission to the special meeting of Policy and Finance Committee on 7 February 2017.

5 Any Other Business

- 5.1 There were no other items of business

6 Date and Time of Next Meeting

This would be the Business Rate Payers' Meeting. Members would be contacted to organise the date and time.