

Chairman - Councillor E G R Jones

Present (for all or part of the meeting):-

Councillors:

C A Baron	P W Jones
J A Barron	W J Kemp
R J Barron	R Kenney
F Beatty	P A Leason
A R G Brown	A M Loughran
R P Cooke	A Nixon
A G Cooper	J A Nixon
B M Cross	L Nixon
A P Edgeller	G P K Pardesi
P M M Farrington	A N Pearce
I D Fordham	J M Pert
A T A Godfrey	M Phillips
M Green	J K Price
A S Harp	P Roycroft
D Holbrook-Summers	R M Smith
M V Holmes	R M Sutherland
J Hood	C V Trowbridge
R A James	M J Winnington

Also present:-

Officers in attendance:-

Mr B Kean	-	Head of Finance
Mr I Curran	-	Head of Law and Administration
Mr R Wolfe	-	Local Taxation and Benefits Manager
Mr W Conaghan	-	Press and Communications Manager
Mr J Dean	-	Democratic Services Officer

C46 Minutes

Minutes of the previous meetings held on 19 November 2019 were submitted and signed.

C47 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M G Dodson, A D Hobbs and B McKeown.

C48 **Announcements**

The Mayor thanked those who supported the Quiz Night in aid of the Mayor's Charity Appeal on Thursday 23 January 2020. The event raised just under £600.

The Mayor looked forward to seeing those who were attending the Charity Ball on Friday 7 February 2020.

It was reported that invitations would be sent out shortly for a Race Night in aid of the Mayor's Charity Appeal which would take place at the Stafford Polish Club on Friday 6 March 2020.

C49 **General Fund Revenue Budget 2020-21 to 2022-23 and Capital Programme 2019-2020 to 2022-23**

Considered the report of the Head of Finance.

The Deputy Leader introduced the report and reported on the decision of the Cabinet at its meeting on 16 January 2020 (Minute No CAB79/20 refers). After detailing the budget setting process and making specific reference to the need to increase Council Tax, Councillor Smith proposed that the Council approve the recommendations of the Cabinet as follows:

- (a) the Budget Requirement for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2020-21 be set at £17.133 million (with indicative requirements for 2021-22 and 2022-23 of £14.223 million and £14.417 million respectively);
- (b) that the detailed portfolio budgets as set out in appendix 2 be approved;
- (c) the detailed capital programme as set out in appendix 3; be approved;
- (d) that the Council Tax for 2020-21 be increased by 1.9% to £159.27;
- (e) the Council's Tax Base be set at 48,260.69 (as determined by the Head of Finance).

The motion was seconded by Councillor R A James.

After discussing reductions in central government funding Members voted on the proposals as set out, which were declared to be carried.

RESOLVED that:- (a) the Budget Requirement for the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2020-21 be set at £17.133 million (with indicative requirements for 2021-22 and 2022-23 of £14.223 million and £14.417 million respectively);

- (b) that the detailed portfolio budgets as set out in appendix 2 of the report be approved;
- (c) the detailed capital programme as set out in appendix 3 of the report be approved;
- (d) that the Council Tax for 2020-21 be increased by 1.9% to £159.27;
- (e) the Council's Tax Base be set at 48,260.69 (as determined by the Head of Finance).

Members paid tribute to the Head of Finance and his colleagues in the Finance Department for their efforts in preparing the budget reports.

C49 **Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, Annual Investment Strategy 2020/21**

Considered the report of the Head of Finance.

The Deputy Leader moved and Councillor R A James seconded that the recommendations as set out in paragraph 2 of the report be approved.

Members then voted on the proposals as set out, which were declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that the following be approved:-

- (a) The Prudential and Treasury indicators;
- (b) The MRP Policy Statement;
- (c) The Treasury Management Policy;
- (d) The Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21

C51 **Empty Property Strategy – Council Tax**

Considered the report of the Head of Finance.

The Deputy Leader introduced the report and concluded his comments by moving that the recommendations as set out in paragraph 2 be approved.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor J M Pert.

Following discussions regarding the route of the Stafford Western Access Road Members voted on the proposals as set out, which were declared to be carried.

- RESOLVED that:-
- (a) with effect from 1 April 2020 the schedule of charges and discounts as set out in appendix 1 of the report be adopted;
 - (b) with effect from 1 April 2021 the schedule of charges and discounts as set out in appendix 2 of the report be adopted.

C52 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Considered the report of the Head of Finance.

The Deputy Leader introduced the report and concluded his comments by moving that the recommendation as set out in paragraph 2 be approved.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor B M Cross.

Members then voted on the proposal as set out, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that the 'Banded Reduction Scheme as summarised in the report be approved.

C53 Review of Members' Allowances

The Leader of the Council moved that consideration of the report be deferred to the meeting of the Council to be held on 25 February 2020.

The proposal was seconded by Councillor A T A Godfrey.

Members then voted on the proposal as set out, which was declared to be carried.

RESOLVED:- that the report be deferred for consideration at the Council meeting to be held on 25 February 2020.

MAYOR