

MINUTES of the WAVERLEY
BOROUGH COUNCIL held in
the Caudle Hall, Wilfrid Noyce
Community Centre, Crown
Court Car Park, Godalming,
GU7 1DY on 22 February 2022
at 7.00 pm and in Godalming
United Church, Bridge Road
Godalming, GU7 3DT on 8
March 2022 at 7.00pm

- * Cllr John Robini (Mayor)
- * Cllr John Ward (Deputy Mayor)

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| * Cllr Christine Baker | Cllr Peter Isherwood |
| * Cllr David Beaman | * Cllr Jacquie Keen |
| * Cllr Roger Blishen | * Cllr Robert Knowles |
| * Cllr Peter Clark | * Cllr Anna James |
| * Cllr Carole Cockburn | * Cllr Andy MacLeod |
| * Cllr Steve Cosser | * Cllr Penny Marriott |
| * Cllr Martin D'Arcy | * Cllr Peter Marriott |
| * Cllr Jerome Davidson | * Cllr Michaela Martin |
| * Cllr Kevin Deanus | * Cllr Peter Martin |
| * Cllr Simon Dear | * Cllr Mark Merryweather |
| Cllr Sally Dickson | * Cllr Kika Mirylees |
| Cllr Brian Edmonds | * Cllr Stephen Mulliner |
| * Cllr Patricia Ellis | * Cllr John Neale |
| * Cllr David Else | * Cllr Peter Nicholson |
| * Cllr Jenny Else | * Cllr Nick Palmer |
| Cllr Jan Floyd-Douglass | * Cllr Julia Potts |
| * Cllr Paul Follows | * Cllr Ruth Reed |
| * Cllr Mary Forszewski | * Cllr Paul Rivers |
| * Cllr Maxine Gale | * Cllr Penny Rivers |
| * Cllr Michael Goodridge | Cllr Anne-Marie Rosoman |
| Cllr John Gray | Cllr Trevor Sadler |
| * Cllr Joan Heagin | * Cllr Richard Seaborne |
| * Cllr Val Henry | * Cllr Liz Townsend |
| * Cllr George Hesse | * Cllr Philip Townsend |
| * Cllr Chris Howard | * Cllr Michaela Wicks |
| * Cllr Daniel Hunt | * Cllr Steve Williams |
| * Cllr Jerry Hyman | * Cllr George Wilson |

*Present

Apologies

Tuesday 22 February 2022 - Councillors Jerome Davidson, Sally Dickson, Jan Floyd-Douglass, Brian Edmonds, David Else, John Gray, Peter Isherwood, Paul Rivers, Penny Rivers, Anne-Marie Rosoman and Trevor Sadler –

Tuesday 8 March 2022 - Councillors Kevin Deanus, Simon Dear, Jan Floyd-

Douglass, Maxine Gale, John Gray, Daniel Hunt, Peter Isherwood, Anna James, Jacqui Keen, Robert Knowles, Michaela Martin, Kika Mirylees, Julia Potts, Mr Mayor Cllr John Robini, Anne-Marie Rosoman, Trevor Sadler and George Wilson

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Council observed a minute silence in memory of Councillor Brian Adams, who had passed away on 14 February 2022.

CNL80/21 MINUTES (Agenda item 1.)

80.1 The Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 14 December 2021 were confirmed and signed.

CNL81/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda item 2.)

81.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jerome Davidson, Sally Dickson, Jan Floyd-Douglass, Brian Edmonds, David Else, John Gray, Peter Isherwood, Paul Rivers, Penny Rivers, Anne-Marie Rosoman and Trevor Sadler – Tuesday 22 February 2022.

81.2 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kevin Deanus, Simon Dear, Jan Floyd-Douglass, Maxine Gale, John Gray, Daniel Hunt, Peter Isherwood, Anna James, Jacqui Keen, Robert Knowles, Michaela Martin, Kika Mirylees, Julia Potts, Mr Mayor Cllr John Robini, Anne-Marie Rosoman, Trevor Sadler and George Wilson – Tuesday 8 March 2022.

CNL82/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda item 3.)

82.1 Councillor Hyman declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 9.2 as a Waverley Tenant. Councillor Hyman had been granted a dispensation by the Monitoring Officer under s33 of the Localism Act 2011 to participate in and vote on this item.

82.2 Councillor Williams declared a non-registrable interest in item 9.1 as the partner of a former volunteer at Godalming Citizens Advice. Councillor Williams did not consider that this would prevent him from speaking and voting on this item.

82.3 Councillor Follows declared a registrable interest in the exempt item 14.1

82.4 The Mayor, Councillor Robini and Councillor Jacqui Keen declared Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in item 9.2 due to their rental of a garage from the Council. The Mayor and Councillor Keen had been granted dispensations by the Monitoring Officer under s33 of the Localism Act 2011 to participate in and vote on this item.

82.5 Councillor Peter Marriott declared a registrable interest in item 9.1 as the organisation for which he is a Trustee had applied for funding from the Thriving Communities Fund. Councillor Penny Marriott also declared a non-registrable interest in item 9.1 as the partner of Councillor Peter Marriott.

- 82.6 In response to a question from Councillor Hyman, following advice from officers the Mayor advised that it was not necessary to declare an interest in respect of Members' Allowances as there was not a decision to be made on Members' Allowances on the agenda.

CNL83/21 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda item 4.)

- 83.1 The Mayor updated the Council on his activities since the last meeting. A number of events had unfortunately been cancelled in the run up to Christmas and only six events had been able to go ahead. The Mayor had enjoyed presenting the long service awards to staff and certificates to the swimming club at Broadwater in Godalming.
- 83.2 The Mayor had attended a service at Guildford cathedral to commemorate the Queen's 70th year of reign. The Mayor had also attended the Farnham Sports Awards at Farnham Rugby Club to present prizes. The Mayor had also attended a talk at the Haslemere Museum with historian Mary Beard and welcomed the work of the museum.
- 83.3 The Mayor welcomed the work of staff and residents in the recent storms. He advised the Council of his forthcoming fundraising events for his Mayoral charities and concluded by reminding everyone to continue to stay safe following the end of the Government's Covid restrictions and wished the Queen a speedy recovery from her Covid infection.

CNL84/21 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda item 5.)

- 84.1 The Leader opened his announcements by updating on the work of the joint Inter-Authority Agreement Working Group with Guildford Borough Council which had been meeting almost weekly and was working at pace on the drafting of the agreement between the two councils and thanked all those Councillors involved. The Leader advised that Councillor Rosoman had stepped down in her role on the Property Investment Advisory Board and he had appointed Councillor Clark in her place. He concluded by thanking all the officers involved in the storm response over the previous weekend.

The Leader then invited Executive Portfolio Holders to give brief updates on current issues:

- 84.2 Councillor Clark provided a brief update on the recent survey carried out with all councillors on their IT requirements for the receipt of electronic committee papers. Although the aim was to move towards a more paperless environment, this would not be at the expense of councillors being able to carry out their duties effectively. Councillor Clark thanked all those who had responded to the survey which had provided some useful information and as a result future IT provision would be tailored to individual councillors' needs. An action plan would be brought to a future meeting of the Executive for approval.
- 84.3 Councillor MacLeod updated on the Council-wide project to improve enforcement, making it more efficient and cost effective. Cllr MacLeod had welcomed the filming which had taken place in Farnham, which had brought

additional revenue to the Council. In respect of Brightwells, he advised that the scheme was due to open in November and the Council was giving all the support it could to Crest Nicholson and Surrey County Council.

- 84.4 Councillor Penny Marriott updated on the review of the Council's Corporate Equality Objectives which were due to come to Council in April for consideration.
- 84.5 Councillor Merryweather advised that he did not have any updates in addition to the items later in the agenda.
- 84.6 Councillor Mirylees updated the Council following the storms that around 50 trees in the borough had either been damaged or fallen and tree officers had been working over the weekend dealing with emergencies. The Museum of Farnham service and Wilmer House was still being reviewed and a workshop would be taking place at the end of March with key stakeholders following the conclusion of the options analysis. Councillor Mirylees also welcomed the forthcoming sporting and cultural events taking place in Waverley.
- 84.7 Councillor Palmer advised that he did not have any updates in addition to the items later in the agenda.
- 84.8 Councillor Liz Townsend updated the Council on the work on the planning portal and encouraged anyone still having issues with the portal to get in touch. The Council was providing support to the local Chambers of Commerce in their wish to set up Business Improvement Districts, which would ensure that the cost of business initiatives in the area would be spread evenly among all the businesses in the district. Training courses were being provided and grant funding continued to be provided to local businesses impacted by Covid. The Annual Business Meeting would be held on 2 March, which would include presentations and a Q&A session. Councillor Townsend welcomed the return of the Friday Night Project to Cranleigh and thanked volunteers involved for their work; and also thanked all those involved in the storm response. Councillor Townsend drew the Council's attention to the update sheet of corrections in respect of the item on the Dunsfold Park SPD.
- 84.9 Councillor Williams drew the Council's attention to the importance of the Council's response to climate change, in light of the severe weather experienced in the borough. Feasibility work had begun on the provision of solar energy in suitable sites in the borough and the walking and cycling infrastructure plan work was ongoing, working closely with town and parish councils. Decarbonisation work on the Memorial Hall in Farnham was also ongoing. He paid tribute to the work of officers on the climate emergency action plan.

CNL85/21 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 6.)

- 85.1 There were no questions received from members of the public in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.

CNL86/21 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (Agenda item 7.)

86.1 The following questions were received from Members of the Council in accordance with Procedure Rule 11:

86.2 Councillor Liz Townsend read out the question from Councillor Brian Edmonds, Farnham Wrecclesham and Rowledge Ward

“An objection raised with the Planning Inspectorate as to their power to impose a council tax burden through planning appeal costs yielded an unsatisfactory answer. To provide the public with transparency for their liability for Planning Inspector Appeal costs resulting from alleged “unreasonable” behaviour. Please could these costs for the past 12 months be advised at the next full Council meeting?”

86.3 Response from Councillor Liz Townsend, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development

“In the past 12-month period, there have been just three appeals where Planning Inspectors have adjudged the Council has behaved unreasonably and have awarded either full costs (in two cases) or partial costs (in one instance) against us. Two of the three cases related to Enforcement appeals. The total, combined, financial liability to the Council in respect of these three awards was around £16,500.

It should be noted that there were a number of significant appeals during this same 12-month period where costs awards were either not sought, or where costs claims against the Council were refused by the Inspector, notably those relating to Lower Weybourne Lane in Badshot Lea, The Woolmead in Farnham, The Heights in Haslemere, Loxwood Road in Alfold and Scotland Lane in Haslemere.”

86.4 From Councillor Steve Cosser, Godalming Charterhouse Ward

“Since the last Borough Council election, residents in Godalming have been in the dark about the intentions and proposals of this Council in respect of Broadwater Park Golf Club and have been given no opportunity to express any views about whatever the Council may have in mind for this site. Also, since I last raised this matter in full Council over six months ago, there has been no information supplied to Council on where things now stand.

Clearly this situation is unsatisfactory and I should therefore like to ask for an assurance that a full report on the current situation be brought to the next meeting of the Council for debate, ensuring that only matters which must by law be kept confidential are included in the exempt part of the report and that other material is available in the non-confidential part of the report.”

86.5 Response from Councillor Mark Merryweather, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Commercial and Assets

“The land referred to is still under full control of the tenant, Broadwater Park Golf Club. The Council is working with the club to resolve contractual issues between the club and third parties to enable the go ahead of capping of the former landfill, reestablishment of a golf facility and bring the land back into wider community use. The council’s intention is for the land not included within the new golf facility to be

brought back into public community use, and the public will be given an opportunity as soon as practicably possible to be involved in the planning for the future use of the land.

Since the Council resolution on 15th December, Members have been kept fully informed of progress through a number of all Member email briefings by the Strategic Director, on the following dates, 18 February 2021, 29 July 2021 and 11 November 2021 and a report is going to the 8th March Executive with an update.

While the pace of progress on the matter is subject to some factors outside of the Council's control, Officers are committed to a resolution that is satisfactory to the Council and our residents. A full report will be brought to Full Council at the earliest opportunity with as much information as possible in public."

86.6 From Councillor Steve Cosser, Godalming Charterhouse Ward

"Council officers and relevant Executive and local Godalming members received last month a letter from Godalming and Farncombe Bowling club expressing concern about the future of the club because of the parking charges members of the club and visiting players were having to pay to park in the only convenient car park for the club at Crown Court. They sought support and help from the Council in addressing this problem. To date they have received an officer response which contained no proposals to assist with the charges and suggested only that they might like to use other car parks in the town. The club have responded explaining why this suggestion is not practical.

I should like to ask the Leader of the Council (who I have already approached directly on this matter with no response to me to date) if he and other members of his administration share my view that:

1. It would be tragic if the contribution made by the presence of the Bowls Club to the character of the Phillips Memorial grounds and the surrounding area in central Godalming were to be lost; and
2. That some limited support with parking charges at Crown Court car park would not in any serious way undermine the need to maintain the significant revenue stream needing to be secured from this large car park which is so vital to the future vibrancy of the centre of Godalming.

If so, can I ask that steps be taken to agree some support for the club prior to the start of the new bowling season in April?"

86.7 Response from Councillor Andy MacLeod, Portfolio Holder for Enforcement, Operations and Brightwells

"The Council fully recognises the contribution made by the presence of the Bowls Club to the character of the Phillips Memorial grounds and the surrounding area and agrees it would be tragic if it were lost.

We also recognise that everyone is facing difficult times with the ongoing impact of Covid and rising inflation in all areas. The Council is of course not immune from this and the increases in parking charges were necessary to ensure that the council can continue to provide parking and a wide range of environmental services to the community. Whilst parking charges have increased in Waverley, similar increases

are being seen across Surrey and further afield. A wide range of other cost of living increases are also impacting on all of us and we do not feel that parking charges alone can be blamed for peoples' decisions on whether to continue with leisure and other activities.

Whilst we always try to be supportive and sympathetic to requests for assistance we do have to be consistent and if we agree to subsidise one group there will doubtless be numerous others who will also expect similar support and this would then have a significant impact on the revenue stream.

Officers were trying to be helpful in their response by identifying other car parks within a reasonable walking distance where parking is cheaper, and indeed The Wharf where public parking at weekends is free. Officers are happy to continue to engage with club officials to try to assist but we cannot guarantee a financial subsidy as part of the solution."

In addition to the formal response, Councillor MacLeod advised that he had discussed the issue with Councillor Cosser, and had sympathy with his situation as similar issues had been experienced by the Farnham Bowling Club. He had assured Councillor Cosser that he would do what he could to help the Godalming Bowls Club.

86.8 From Councillor Jenny Else, Elstead and Thursley Ward

"The residents of my ward and I are becoming increasingly concerned at the sorry state of our footways, kerbsides, and green spaces which fall within the responsibility of Waverley Borough Council.

This is a situation that has not been helped by the introduction of no mow May last year - a worthy initiative but which regrettably continued in some areas until October, resulting in a lack of civic pride and encouraging litter, dog fouling etc.

This is a situation about which I know other rural areas also have concerns as they do not appear to have had as much attention as the towns in our Borough.

I have repeatedly asked for an indication of when our village last had a visit from the street cleansing service which were always included in the contract but I have had no date supplied.

We are now being told to learn to live with covid which is so often the reason given for this apparent lack of civic pride. Given this advice what are Waverley Borough Council's plan's for this year?

I am tired of having to make excuses for this lack of service for which our residents receive no refund on their Council tax and I would really like to report that a better service will be provided.

With the potential for isolation rules for covid infections to be abandoned, which appears to be one of the reasons for Biffa's inability to provide this service, when will the street cleansing programme, exactly as described within the contract, be reinstated?

If this is not going to be possible this Council has a right to know - what are the terms of the penalty clause attached to the contract?"

86.9 Response from Councillor Steve Williams, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability

"Thank you for your question regarding street cleansing and grass cutting.

I will take the grass cutting element first, you are correct we supported No Mow May last year to boost biodiversity throughout the Borough. The success of this scheme is subjective; however we believe the benefits of this campaign have outweighed the issues that materialised, future campaigns will reflect the lessons of last year's adoption. However, I would like to correct your assertion that rural areas did not receive cuts in line with the contract until October favouring work within the towns, this is simply not true. The cutting regime returned to normal from July for all areas of the Borough, I can only assume the areas that you have referred to looking untidy in October is land not under Waverley's control.

On street cleansing, I would like to put things into context. The waste and cleansing contract with Biffa has been running for 27 months, of which 23 months have, like all other services, been affected by the covid pandemic. This has led directly to the following challenges:

- massive driver and crew absences due to direct covid impacts - personal illness, self-isolation, bereavement
- subsequent impact of HGV driver losses from early 2021, with up to 25% of driver posts being vacant at any time since then
- around 15% more household waste arisings due to more people at home, so roughly 1 days' worth more waste every week for Biffa to collect
- a 27% rise in flytipping cases, in the first year of the covid pandemic

In that time Biffa have, over and above the normal work

- completed the planned collection round optimisation, which has reduced the contract cost and reduced our carbon footprint due to reduced mileage and the use of more fuel efficient vehicles.
- taken on over 1800 new garden waste customers
- provided an additional street sweeping truck for our contract at no extra cost
- spent over an additional quarter of a million pounds in the current financial year, to keep the collection rounds operational in the face of the HGV driver crisis. This was to cover
 - the well-publicised, unanticipated driver salary costs
 - additional vehicles to allow lower qualified drivers maintain the collection rounds

During this time, Officers have met with Biffa almost daily and members have been kept well informed of any issues and changes to services as they arose.

Those contract discussions have always centred on maintaining the waste and recycling collection rounds as a priority over street cleansing and maintaining our statutory collections of refuse, food waste and dry recyclables over garden waste. Therefore we agreed that street cleansing operations could be reduced over the pandemic period and the normal schedules permitted to slip, with the suspension of any default penalties, as long as necessary responsive work was then carried out

where required. In turn, this has allowed street cleansing staff to cover the agreed priority, of refuse collection rounds, when crews have not been available.

However, in agreeing those priorities, Biffa have been responding to requests for one off, and additional street cleansing operations. These have typically been where there was significant littering in specific areas and high levels of leafing, or where safety has become an issue.

In relation to Elstead specifically, there are 26 roads in Elstead that are on Biffa's Mechanical Sweeper schedule which vary in frequency between 4 and 13 weeks. There is no doubt that these have been lower over the last year, since we moved to a much reduced proactive sweeping programme but a far more responsive work pattern as streets crews were utilised on waste collection duties.

I understand that officers met with you and the Parish Clerk at Elstead in late January, and following that meeting 8 roads were completed immediately and another 6 roads are in progress for this week. This is clear evidence that Biffa are continuing to observe and maintain the revised sweeper response service.

At the present time, and for the foreseeable future, we anticipate the service will continue with those priorities, as Biffa - like all HGV reliant businesses - still has driver vacancies amounting to around 20% of their requirements.

I would finally like to take this opportunity to thank both our officers and Biffa's staff, for their unstinting efforts in maintaining services for our residents during these very difficult and unprecedented times."

CNL87/21 MOTIONS (Agenda item 8.)

87.1 The Mayor advised that no motions had been received.

CNL88/21 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE (Agenda item 9.)

88.1 It was moved by the Leader, duly seconded and RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 18 January and 8 February 2022 be received and noted.

88.2 There were eight Part I matters, for Council consideration, from the meeting on 8 February 2022.

CNL89/21 EXE 83/21 GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2022/23 AND MTFP 2022/23 - 24/25
(Agenda item 9.1) (Pages 21 - 24)

89.1 The Leader of the Council introduced the General Fund Budget 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 – 2024/25, which was the third budget being presented in the light of Covid-19, the consequences of which would be felt for years to come. The budget was presented in the context of rising inflation, rising energy prices and a rise in National Insurance contributions. A £5 increase to a Band D property was proposed, which equated to 2.6% increase in Council Tax. This rise would allow the Council to balance the budget for the coming year, whilst maintaining services and support for the voluntary sector. Some fees would increase to reflect the actual cost to the

Council of providing the services. In recognition of the impact on residents, it was proposed that the Council Tax Hardship Fund be extended, and the Council Tax Support Scheme be maintained at the current level.

- 89.2 The Leader invited the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Merryweather, to present the detailed budget proposals. Councillor Merryweather's speech is annexed to these minutes.
- 89.3 Councillor Mulliner, Leader of the Principal Opposition Group, addressed the meeting, thanking the officers involved for the significant amount of work in a challenging national financial position. For the reasons already outlined, he felt that the 2022/23 budget was uncontroversial and made the following comments:
- The Budget Strategy Working Group had identified that car parking charges was one of the few areas which the Council had a degree of control; and that the Voluntary Sector grants were important and should not be reduced.
 - The Group was sceptical over the collaboration with Guildford Borough Council. It was felt that the timing of the collaboration was inappropriate in light of the paring back of local government finances; and there was concern over speed by which the collaboration was entered into and the lack of careful consideration and scrutiny. Guildford had taken a direct service approach, whereas Waverley had taken an outsourcing approach. If a joint approach was taken as contracts come up for renewal, this could incur additional costs. Finally, there were concerns over the small amount of savings predicted, which amounted to less than 2% of combined annual expenditure.
 - The detailed breakdown of voluntary sector grants had been sent to all Councillors and it was noted that some Councillors were not happy with some of the allocations. He sought clarification on the ability of the Council to amend the allocations.
 - In conclusion he thanked Councillor Merryweather and officers, and highlighted the need for close scrutiny of the collaboration project.
- 89.4 The Mayor opened up the debate, and the following Members spoke: Councillors Goodridge, Peter Martin, Nicholson, Ellis, Hyman, Gale, Liz Townsend, Cockburn, Baker, Mirylees and Michaela Martin.
- 89.5 As a point of personal explanation, Councillor Jenny Else clarified her role in the process for allocating the Thriving Communities Fund.
- 89.6 As a point of personal explanation, Councillor Mulliner felt that it was not clear which Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be looking at the Thriving Communities Fund and asked that this be clarified.
- 89.7 The Leader and Councillor Merryweather responded to some of the points raised in the debate. The Strategic Director (s151 Officer) clarified provided clarification on the Covid Outbreak Management Fund. In concluding the debate, the Leader thanked all those who had spoken for their contributions and formally moved the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor Clark.

89.8 In accordance with Procedure Rule 17.4, the Mayor called for a recorded vote on the recommendations.

89.9 The vote was carried, with votes in favour 34, 0 against and 11 abstentions.

RESOLVED that

1. a £5 increase in Waverley's Band D Council Tax Charge for 2022/23 with resultant increases to the other council tax bands be agreed;
2. the Council's existing Council Tax Support Scheme be continued at the current levels;
3. Waverley's council tax hardship fund be extended to help those council taxpayers most financially affected by the pandemic, as set out in this report, with the final scheme details and criteria delegated to the S151 Officer in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder;
4. no change be made to Fees and Charges for 2022/23 except for those proposed in Annexe 4, including the new approach for planning pre-application fees;
5. the General Fund Budget for 2022/23 as summarised in Annexe 2, incorporating the baseline net service cost variations included at Annexe 1 and Annexe 3 be approved;
6. the General Fund Capital Programme as detailed in Annexe 5 be approved; and
7. the specific use of reserves to mitigate the Covid-19 uncertainty and other emerging economic risks including inflation; the estimated expected reduction in Retained Business Rates and New Homes Bonus funding over the Medium-Term Finance Plan period, and the other reserve movements as set out in Annexe 6 be approved.

For (34)

Councillors Baker, Beaman, Blishen, Clark, D'Arcy, Follows, Foryszewski, Gale, Heagin, Henry, Hesse, Hunt, Hyman, James, Keen, MacLeod, Penny Marriott, Peter Marriott, Michaela Martin, Merryweather, Mirylees, Mulliner, Neale, Nicholson, Palmer, Reed, the Mayor Councillor Robini, Seaborne, Liz Townsend, Philip Townsend, the Deputy Mayor Councillor Ward, Wicks, Williams and Wilson.

Against (0)

Abstentions (11)

Councillors Cockburn, Cosser, Deanus, Dear, Ellis, Jenny Else, Goodridge, Howard, Knowles, Peter Martin and Potts

At 9.15pm the Mayor adjourned the meeting for a short comfort break.

At 9.23pm the Mayor resumed the meeting and in accordance with Procedure Rule 9 moved the motion to continue the meeting beyond 10pm.

RESOLVED that the meeting continue beyond the normal finish time of 10pm.

CNL90/21 EXE 84/21 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN - REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 (Agenda item 9.2)

- 90.1 The Leader of the Council introduced the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, including the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2022/23, and welcomed the input of the Landlord Services Advisory Board, which included tenants, into the process. The Leader advised that the proposed rent increase was below the rate of inflation and highlighted the proposals to implement green technology with the aim of reducing tenants energy bills and carrying out a wholesale review of the HRA. He invited the Finance Portfolio Holder, Councillor Merryweather, to present the detailed budget proposals and advised that there was provision of up to £100,000 in the Hardship Fund to mitigate the effects of the rent increase on the most vulnerable residents.
- 90.2 The Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Delivery) welcomed the additional provision in the Hardship Fund and asked Councillors to draw attention to any particular cases which could benefit.
- 90.3 The Mayor opened up the debate, and the following Members spoke: Councillors Keen, Cosser, Hyman and Goodridge.
- 90.4 As a point of personal explanation, Councillor Cockburn clarified that tenants had played a part of the former Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 90.5 As a point of personal explanation, the Leader clarified the role of tenants in the Landlord Services Advisory Board.
- 90.4 On a point of order, Councillor Hyman sought clarification on the figures quoted in the report.
- 90.5 The Head of Finance and Property and the Strategic Director (s151 Officer) provided clarification on the cost of delivery of Ockford Ridge.
- 90.6 In concluding the debate, the Leader responded to the points raised in the debate and formally moved the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor Clark.
- 90.7 In accordance with Procedure Rule 17.4, the Mayor called for a recorded vote on the recommendations.

The vote was carried, with votes in favour 40, 1 against; and 2 abstentions.

RESOLVED that

- 1.the rent level for Council dwellings be increased by a maximum of 4.10% from the 2021/22 level with effect from 1 April 2022 within the permitted guidelines contained within the Government's rent setting policy;
- 2.the average weekly charge for garages rented by both Council and non-Council tenants be increased by 50 pence per week excluding VAT from 1 April 2022;
- 3.the service charges in senior living accommodation be increased by 30 pence per week from 1 April 2022 to £20.10;
- 4.the recharge for energy costs in senior living accommodation be increased by 50 pence per week from 1 April 2022;
- 5.the revised HRA Business Plan for 2022/23 to 2025/26 as set out in Annexe 1 be approved;
- 6.the fees and charges as set out in Annexe 2 be approved;
- 7.the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes as shown in Annexe 3 and 4 be approved;
- 8.the financing of the capital programmes be approved in line with the resources shown in Annexe 5: and
- 9.a strategic review will be undertaken on the 30-year HRA Business Plan in line with the content of this report during 2022/23.

For (40)

Councillors Baker, Beaman, Blishen, Clark, Cosser*, D'Arcy, Deanus, Ellis, Jenny Else, Follows, Forszewski, Gale, Goodridge, Heagin, Henry, Hesse, Howard, James, Keen, Knowles, MacLeod, Penny Marriott, Peter Marriott, Michaela Martin, Peter Martin, Merryweather, Mirylees, Mulliner, Neale, Nicholson, Palmer, Potts, Reed, the Mayor Councillor Robini, Seaborne, Liz Townsend, Philip Townsend, the Deputy Mayor Councillor Ward, Williams and Wilson.

Against (1)

Councillor Hyman*

Abstentions (2)

Councillors Cockburn and Dear

*Councillor Cosser asked that it be noted that he objected to recommendation 7

**Councillor Hyman asked that it be noted that he was voting against recommendations 1 and 5 only.

CNL91/21 EXE 85/21 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/2023 - INCORPORATING TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ASSET INVESTMENT STRATEGY (Agenda item 9.3)

91.1 The Leader of the Council introduced the Capital Strategy, incorporating the Treasury Management Strategy and Asset Investment Strategy. He invited the Finance Portfolio Holder, Councillor Merryweather, to present the report and thanked Councillors for their input and highlighted the change in the recommendation relating to the delegation being reviewed annually, in response to comments made at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Merryweather clarified the process for internal borrowing and the figures for external borrowing.

91.2 The Mayor opened up the debate, and the following Members spoke: Councillors Mulliner, Peter Martin and Hyman.

91.3 Councillor Merryweather responded to the points raised in the debate.

91.3 In concluding the debate, the Leader formally moved the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor Merryweather.

RESOLVED that

1. **The 5-year Capital Strategy for 2022/2027, incorporating the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Asset Investment Strategy be approved.**
2. **Authority be delegated to the Executive for the financial year 2022/23, subject to a positive recommendation from the Asset Investment Advisory Board and agreement from the Chief Executive and Strategic Director:**
 - a. **to bid, negotiate and complete on property acquisitions and investments in land and buildings with a total individual cost of up to £10m, subject to the decision fully satisfying all criteria and process requirements set out in this Strategy; and**
 - b. **to determine a funding strategy for the acquisition or investment in line with the Treasury Management Strategy; and**
 - c. **to appoint advisors and undertake appropriate due diligence for each property acquisition and investment proposal as necessary; and**
 - d. **to complete the legal matters and signing of contracts to execute the transactions referred to above.**

Councillor Hyman asked that his vote against the recommendations be recorded.

At 10.13pm the Mayor adjourned the meeting.

The Mayor resumed the meeting at 10.22pm.

In view of the late hour, the Leader proposed that the Council consider items 9.4, 9.5, 9.6 and 10, after which the meeting would then stand adjourned.

Councillor Mulliner requested that the Council also consider item 13 before adjourning.

RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned following consideration of the above items.

CNL92/21 EXE 86/21 DUNSFOLD PARK GARDEN VILLAGE - SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT - ADOPTION (Agenda item 9.4)

92.1 The Leader of the Council introduced the Dunsfold Park Garden Village Supplementary Planning Document. He invited the Planning and Economic

Development Portfolio Holder, Councillor Liz Townsend, to present the report. Councillor Townsend drew the Council's attention to the update sheet and reminded the Council that there was an existing planning application for the site and the SPD did not affect the quantum of development, simply setting out the masterplan for the site.

92.2 The Mayor opened up the debate, and the following Members spoke: Councillors Dear, Hyman, Foryszewski, Cockburn, Merryweather, Deanus and Wilson.

92.3 Councillor Liz Townsend and the Leader responded to the comments raised in the debate. In concluding the debate, the Leader formally moved the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor Liz Townsend.

RESOLVED that the Dunsfold Park Garden Village Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be adopted by the Council, subject to corrections being made to the conservation designations set out on Pages 86 and 87 of the document to replace all instances of the text 'SSSI' on these two pages with the text 'SNCI'.

Councillor Hyman asked that his vote against the recommendation be recorded.

CNL93/21 EXE 87/21 WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL EMERGENCY PLAN (Agenda item 9.5)

93.1 The Leader of the Council introduced the Waverley Borough Council Emergency Plan, which was an operational document which codified the way the Council responded to emergencies.

93.2 The Mayor opened up the debate, and the following Members spoke: Councillor Jenny Else.

93.3 The Leader responded to the points raised by Councillor Else. In concluding the debate, the Leader formally moved the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor Clark

RESOLVED

1. **That the Emergency Plan attached to the Council report be approved and adopted.**
2. **That authority to make minor consequential grammatical and technical changes to the text, contact details etc. be delegated to the Head of Service in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.**

CNL94/21 EXE 88/21 ANNUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23 (Agenda item 9.6)

- 94.1 The Leader of the Council introduced the Annual Pay Policy Statement, which was a statutory requirement.
- 94.2 The Mayor opened up the debate, and the following Members spoke:
Councillor Hyman.
- 94.3 The Leader responded to the point raised by Councillor Hyman. In concluding the debate, the Leader formally moved the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor Clark.

RESOLVED

That the Executive recommend to Council that the Pay Policy Statement for the 2022/23 financial year, attached at Annexe 1, be approved.

Councillor Hyman asked that his vote against the recommendation be recorded.

CNL95/21 COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2022/2023 (Agenda item 10.)

- 95.1 The Mayor introduced the Council Tax Setting report. This was a technical report that summarised all of the appropriate budgetary decisions that had been taken to enable the level of Council Tax for 2022/23 to be determined, and specified all of the individual levels of Council Tax for approval by the Council.
- 95.2 The Mayor moved the recommendation and it was

RESOLVED that the Council Tax Setting resolutions as set out in the Council report, be approved.

CNL96/21 CONTINUING ABSENCE - COUNCILLOR JAN FLOYD-DOUGLASS (Agenda item 13.)

RESOLVED that approval be given to the extended absence of Councillor an Floyd-Douglass for a further six months due to her continuing ill-health.

At 10.59pm, in accordance with Procedure Rule 9, Council **RESOLVED** to adjourn the meeting.

The Deputy Mayor reconvened the meeting of Council at 7pm on Tuesday 8 March 2022.

Apologies were recorded from Councillors Kevin Deanus, Simon Dear, Jan Floyd-Douglass, Maxine Gale, John Gray, Daniel Hunt, Peter Isherwood, Anna James, Jacqui Keen, Robert Knowles, Michaela Martin, Kika Mirylees, Julia Potts, Mr Mayor Cllr John Robini, Anne-Marie Rosoman, Trevor Sadler and George Wilson.

CNL97/21 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE - PART II MATTERS OF REPORT (Agenda item)

- 97.1 The Mayor invited the following councillors who had registered to speak on Part II matters to make their statement:

- 97.2 In respect of EXE 75/21 (Waverley Borough Council Draft Tree & Woodland Policy), Councillor Cosser welcomed the policy and action plan which would contribute to the management of the Council's woodland stock. However he raised concern over the short consultation period.
- 97.3 In respect of EXE 75/21 (Waverley Borough Council Draft Tree & Woodland Policy), Councillor Seaborne welcomed the policy however felt that carbon offsetting was not given sufficient priority nor properly linked to the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan.
- 97.4 At the request of the Deputy Mayor, the Leader responded on the consultation process and advised that the Policy had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and those comments had been taken into account, and that comments received in the consultation would be incorporated into future versions. The Leader advised that the Council would be planting more trees, although noted the amount of time it took for a tree to reach maturity.
- 97.5 Councillor Liz Townsend advised that carbon offsetting would be dealt with as part of the Biodiversity Policy.
- 97.6 In respect of EXE 90/21 (Carbon Neutrality Action Plan), Councillor Seaborne welcomed the action plan, however asked when a trajectory based on data rather than theory would be available, which reflected the reduction in emissions from council housing stock and noting the cost of retrofitting 4,700 houses and the removal of emissions from leisure centres.
- 97.7 Councillor Williams advised the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan was a living document and the data was being continuously improved. A Housing Asset Management Strategy was in development and an audit of the housing stock was being undertaken, with a pilot being carried out to decarbonise the housing stock. The Plan had been ranked 5th in the UK and a new leisure centre would be built in Cranleigh to Passivehaus standard.
- 97.8 In respect of EXE 76/21 (Capital Projects), Councillor Hyman welcomed the proposals for the Bourne Pavilion, however sought clarification on how the projects were decided.
- 97.9 Councillor Merryweather advised that officers put recommendations through a prioritisation process and receive a score and are considered as part of the budget process. The Council had ringfenced a sum to allow flexibility throughout the year and as a consequence the Projects Coordinating Board had been set up to consider in year projects which reviewed bids and made recommendations on allocation of funds.
- 97.10 In respect of EXE 91/21 (Service Plans), Councillor Hyman expressed concern that the service plans did not reflect the statutory duty to have an Air Quality Action Plan and that it appeared that the Council had delegated its responsibility to Surrey County Council through the Farnham Board.
- 97.11 Councillor Williams advised that consultants had been appointed to draft a new Air Quality Action Plan.

CNL98/21 MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
(Agenda item 11.)

- 98.1 It was moved by the Deputy Mayor, duly seconded and **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Standards and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 6 December 2021 be received and noted.
- 98.2 There was one Part I matter, for Council consideration, from the meeting on 6 December 2021.

CNL99/21 STD 13/21 REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH STANDARDS ALLEGATIONS AGAINST COUNCILLORS AND CO-OPTED MEMBERS UNDER THE LOCALISM ACT 2011 (Agenda item 11.1)

- 99.1 The Deputy Mayor presented the report which proposed revisions to the arrangements for how the Monitoring Officer deals with complaints against councillors or co-opted Members, alleging a breach of their Code of Conduct. The arrangements apply to complaints against Waverley Borough councillors and co-opted Members, and to complaints against Town and Parish councillors within Waverley and the proposals reflected feedback received following consultation with Town and Parish Councils. The proposals set out timescales to progress investigations in a timely manner.
- 99.2 The Deputy Mayor opened up the debate, and the following Members spoke: Councillors Jenny Else, Cosser, Follows and Hyman.
- 99.3 In concluding the debate, the Deputy Mayor responded to the points raised in the debate and formally moved the recommendations in the report, which were seconded by Councillor Goodridge.

RESOLVED That the revised arrangements under which the Monitoring Officer will investigate a breach of the Code of Conduct be adopted.

Councillor Jenny Else asked that her vote against the recommendation be recorded.

CNL100/21 POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - NAME CHANGE (Agenda item 12.)

RESOLVED that the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee be renamed as the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

CNL101/21 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (Agenda item 14.)

- 101.1 At 9.15pm, the Mayor moved the recommendation and it was **RESOLVED** that, pursuant to Procedure Rule 20 and in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following Property matter on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be

transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information (as defined by Section 100I of the Act) of the description specified Paragraph 3 of the revised Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

CNL102/21 EXE 93/21 PROPERTY MATTERS - PROPERTY ACQUISITION (Agenda item 14.1)

102.1 At 7.45pm, the Council moved into Exempt session to consider the recommendations set out in the Exempt report.

102.2 The Mayor moved the recommendations set out in the Exempt report, which the Council **RESOLVED** to agree, by 28 votes in favour; 1 against and 6 abstentions.

For (28)

Councillors Baker, Beaman, Blishen, Clark, Cockburn, D'Arcy, Davidson, Follows, Forszewski, Heagin, Henry, Hesse, MacLeod, Penny Marriott, Peter Marriott, Peter Martin, Merryweather, Mulliner, Neale, Nicholson, Palmer, Reed, Paul Rivers, Penny

Rivers, Liz Townsend, Philip Townsend, Deputy Mayor Councillor Ward and Williams.

Against (1)

Councillor Hyman

Abstention (6)

Councillor Cosser, David Else, Jenny Else, Goodridge, Howard and Seaborne.

The reconvened meeting ended at 8.30pm on Tuesday 8 March 2022.

Mayor

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Councillor Merryweather, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Assets and Commercial

Budget speech to the Council meeting on 22 February 2022

“The General Fund is our core financial resource for everything we do except our social “council” housing, which is resourced in our HRA to be discussed next. Our proposed 2022/23 General Fund budget is shown at Annexe 2 to the report, and while this presents “net” values for our non-housing service costs, it’s important to recall that our “gross” General Fund cost base before income from fees and charges is around £35m annually.

The upward financial **pressures** we face remain daunting at, net, £1.7m extra in 2022/23 and £14.8m cumulatively for the four years ending March 2026. Just as the income we lost due to Covid starts to recover, we now find ourselves instead facing the malign threat of inflation which, including the Health & Social Care Levy, increases our General Fund cost base by £1.1m in 2022/23 and £9.2m cumulatively for the four years ending March 2026.

- There is profound uncertainty as to the severity and duration of the inflation risk we face, with actual rates accelerating faster than forecast and updated forecasts tracking both higher and for longer.
- If the effective overall inflation rate we experience were to exceed what we’ve assumed even by only 1% just for 2022/23 alone, we estimate the impact would be at least around £100k which would of course compound to £1m over the 4 years ending March 2026.
- For that reason and provided our current year 2021/22 out-turn is on or close to current forecasts, we will be proposing that half of the unused £2m Covid contingency reserve that we earmarked in 2020/21 be retained and repurposed as a broader inflation and economic risk reserve until such time as the economic uncertainty abates.

Next. While the decline in the share of Waverley’s Business’ Rates we’re actually allowed to keep will pause temporarily – at only 5% - in 2022/23, we’re still on notice that the downward trajectory will return from 2023 and that our share will fall to zero by 2026, a cumulative impact of £3.9m for the four years ending March 2026.

However, for 2022/23 only, the impact of the financial pressures I’ve described should be partly **mitigated** by an additional one-off, and unexpected, increase in New Homes Bonus of £0.6m, and by a smaller, one-off services grant intended, amongst other things, to offset at least some of our costs of the Health and Social Care Levy for this one year.

Turning next to the **measures** needed to offset these financial pressures. For us, these comprise both cost efficiencies and income generation, amounting to £0.4m and £1.27m respectively in 2022/23, and which are itemised in the table at §7.2 and Annexe 1 to the report: but to summarise:

- First - While the Business Transformation and Commercial strategies continue to deliver, our old Property Investment strategy had to be curtailed as a result of changes to Public Works Loan Board rules. So, while we’re replacing that with a new Asset Investment Strategy, we’ll also continue to look elsewhere to

replace the benefits of that specific measure, and beyond the ongoing collaboration with Guildford; and

- Second - We expect that the pricing and other strategic changes that we're already implementing across all our car parks will improve the utilisation of all available spaces and increase revenue yields, bearing in mind both that there is a maximum amount of income that we're actually allowed to generate from our car parks and that we need to fund a significant backlog in car park repairs, maintenance and improvements.

Nevertheless, we're still faced with the need to recommend an increase in Council Tax of £5 for our Band D equivalents. While this is the lowest increase of all those affecting our residents AND we're forecasting increases to be lower still in subsequent years, we still recognise that for 2022/23 the rise is a burden on all of our residents, and so in order to mitigate its impact on our most vulnerable we're recommending also:

- That the Council's existing Council Tax Support Scheme be continued at the current levels which, just for Waverley's share, is worth about £630k to our residents annually;
- That an additional £40k council tax hardship fund be extended to help those council taxpayers most financially affected by the pandemic;
- That there be no "blanket" increase in fees and charges and that price rises be limited only to those identified in Annexe 4. This means, for example, that our 1,600 subscribers to Careline at least will not have to cope with a price increase for that too in 2022/23, and
- The funding pot for the Thriving Communities Fund, which replaced our community organisation SLAs, is not only retained at £687k but has been supplemented with an additional £49k to help organisations that need to transition. I must emphasise that it is only the total size of this pot that is being approved here, and that the individual allocations from the fund are not within the scope of this budget as you will have seen from separate communications on this matter.

In addition to preserving our services, in Annexe 5 the budget also identifies the proposed funding for priority capital spending needed for major one-off repairs, upgrades and replacements of just our own General Fund assets (like our sports pavilions, and projects identified in our climate change action plan). While we seek to fund these wherever possible from other sources like developer infrastructure contributions and capital receipts, these funding sources are becoming increasingly fragmented and competitive, to the point where we need a full-time bid funding officer. Even before Covid we needed also to contribute funds from revenue to capital and this tracked at over £1m per year, even as the projects backlog increased. Covid funding pressures made the situation worse and the revenue contribution had to be cut, but the level of unavoidable demands are such that it is essential that we do some catching up in 2022/23, even if that's only for one the year before funding forces us back yet again.

So, while we're presenting a balanced budget for 2022/23, the MTFP through to 2025/26 the still shows financial pressures accelerating faster than compensating measures identified to date, and our budget strategy remains to identify further

sustainable measures to balance future budgets and protect our ability to deliver effectively and efficiently the services we're committed to for our residents.

I'm grateful to colleagues - either in the group briefings or in private - for your constructive comments and observations on the draft GF Budget and MTFP, and in proposing that the Executive makes the recommendations I'm mindful that for this Council at least Covid is not over, and other financial shocks may have only just begun, but throughout all this the commitment and professionalism of our officers across the Council remains steadfast and for that we're all grateful."

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