

COUNCIL - 25 February 2021

MINUTES

Present: Councillors: A Adeyemo, M Allen, K Allsopp, S Ashraf MBE, K Blunt, M Brain, J Burn, J Butler, C Buxton-Sait, S Caudwell, D Cole, I Courts, S Davis, T Diccico, J Fairburn, M Gough, K Grinsell, R Grinsell, B Groom, J Hamilton, K Hawkins, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, P Hogarth MBE, Mrs D Holl-Allen MBE, R Holt, D Howell, A Mackenzie, A Mackiewicz, K Macnaughton, L McCarthy, M McLoughlin, K Meeson, F Nash, M Parker, J Potts, W Qais, A Rebeiro, T Richards OBE, A Rolf, J Ryan, R Sexton, G Slater, R Sleigh OBE, K Thomas, P Thomas, J Tildesley, Mrs K Wild, C Williams and M Wilson

1. APOLOGIES.

No apologies were received.

2. COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2021 were presented for approval.

RESOLVED

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2021 were approved.

3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR CONFLICTING INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

Councillor Mackiewicz made a declaration of interest as a Director of AMPA Associates Ltd who provided contracts procured by Solihull Council.

Councillor Adeyemo made a declaration of interest as he was employed by a company who provided insurance to HS2 Ltd.

Councillor Richards made a declaration of interest as a non-Executive Director at Birmingham Airport

4. PETITIONS

Councillor Tim Hodgson submitted a petition on behalf of Shirley residents in opposition to planning application PL/2021/00086/PPFL.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council provided Members with an update on the roadmap to the abolition of COVID-19 restrictions.

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The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health gave Members more information on the local health situation in relation to COVID-19.

6. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 9 AND 12

Ms Manu made a deputation in support of Councillor T Hodgson's motion. Councillor Allen introduced Ms Manu. Councillor Mackiewicz responded and outlined the Council's support for action on climate change.

7. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8 (30 MINUTES)

Councillor Rebeiro to Councillor Karen Grinsell Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health

"The CCG is currently reviewing their Estates Strategy and will be taking the projected growth and site allocations of the Draft Submission Plan October 2020 into account as stated in the Solihull Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan October 2020. This Plan sets out the estimated healthcare requirements for the Borough between the period 2020 to 2036 based on current levels of healthcare utilisation for the projected age cohorts and as detailed in pages 82-84 of the Delivery Plan.

Will the Cabinet Member please update Council on how much progress the CCG has made as we approach the end of Quarter 1 of 2021 or some 6 months since these projections for the Borough were first published."

The Cabinet Member noted that the question was directed towards Birmingham and Solihull CCG. The Estates Programme Lead had been appointed to facilitate the work around integrated care delivery. The first draft of the strategy was in development and would be subject to consultation with key stakeholders. Due to COVID-19, this had taken longer than planned.

Councillor Rebeiro queried whether the pace of engagement would increase as the Local Plan had been approved and could lead to a number of new developments.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that health colleagues recognised that they needed to be involved in the early planning process throughout the Borough. The Integrated Care System had a focus on place, such as to ensure that Primary Care Networks were involved with localities. There were conversations with Birmingham and Solihull CCG to identify the requirements of medical developments in the Kingshurst development.

8. COUNCIL TOPIC OF DEBATE

There was no topic of debate.

9. NOTICE OF MOTION

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There were two notices of motion.

Councillor Tim Hodgson introduced a motion, Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, which was seconded by Councillor McLoughlin.

“That Council notes that:

1. This Council has declared a climate and ecological emergency;
2. Many local authorities have established Citizens’ Assemblies that are playing an important role in assisting them in their plans to achieve Net Zero by 2030 or before; and that
3. There is a Bill before Parliament—the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill (published as the “Climate and Ecology Bill”)—according to which the Government must develop an emergency strategy that:
 - a. requires that the UK plays its fair and proper role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions consistent with limiting global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees C above pre-industrial temperatures;
 - b. ensures that all the UK’s consumption emissions are accounted for;
 - c. includes emissions from aviation and shipping;
 - d. protects and restores biodiverse habitats along overseas supply chains;
 - e. restores and regenerates the UK’s depleted soils, wildlife habitats and species populations to healthy and robust states, maximising their capacity to absorb CO₂ and their resistance to climate heating;
 - f. sets up an independent Citizens’ Assembly, representative of the UK’s population, to engage with Parliament and Government and help develop the emergency strategy.

Council therefore RESOLVES to:

1. Write to the MPs for Solihull and Meriden, asking them to support the Bill; and
2. Write to the CEE Bill Alliance, the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, expressing its support (campaign@ceebill.uk).

Following a debate, the motion was put and lost.

Councillor Sexton introduced a motion, Financial Support to the Self Employed, which was seconded by Councillor Caudwell.

“Full Council notes that:

1. Three million people across the UK have missed out on the Government’s financial support schemes (‘the excluded’), due to technicalities such as: recently changing job, being a director of a limited company, being self-employed less than a year, earning less than half their income through self-employment, and many other reasons.
2. The lack of financial support has had a devastating effect on people’s livelihoods and their mental wellbeing.

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3. Financially supporting these individuals and businesses is largely outside of the Council's control and needs to be financed by central Government.
4. The end of the Brexit transition period has led to increased uncertainty for already-struggling small businesses, including small limited companies and the self-employed who have largely been excluded from the Government's financial support schemes.
5. Full Council believes that Government should close the gaps in its financial support schemes, and explore options to retroactively compensate people and businesses that were ineligible for the Government's financial support.

Full Council therefore RESOLVES to:

1. Lend its support to ExcludedUK, its efforts to support 'the excluded' and its campaign for fair treatment of 'the excluded'.
2. Call on the Government to address the disparities in support, to ensure that all individuals and businesses currently excluded, entirely or largely, from Covid-19 grants are given the support they need and rightfully deserve.
3. Call on all councillors to sign ExcludedUK's open letter to the Chancellor of The Exchequer that calls for this.
4. Call on Group Leaders to consider writing a separate letter to the Chancellor to urge him to look at ways to provide support to businesses that have missed out on the Covid-19 financial support schemes, using Silhilian people and businesses as case studies, and give councillors the opportunity to contribute to, and co-sign this letter.
5. Ask the Mayor to write to the Borough's MPs to arrange a roundtable discussion with them and their constituency's ward councillors, to hear more of their excluded constituents' stories and work alongside MPs to continue to offer support and advise their constituents wherever possible."

Following a debate, the motion was put and lost.

10. BUDGET FRAMEWORK, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND THE CORPORATE CAPITAL STRATEGY 2021/22- 2030/31

The Leader presented the Council budget for 2021/22, the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Corporate Capital Strategy 2020/21-2022/23.

The Leader moved the recommendation under 10(a), which was seconded by Councillor Sleigh.

That Full Council be recommended to:

- i. Approve a budget for 2021/22 of £151.372 million, including the forecast balances on the budget strategy reserve;
- ii. Approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 – 2023/24, and the Corporate Capital Strategy, incorporating the Council's strategy on the flexible use of capital receipts;

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- iii. Approve the fees and charges proposed within each portfolio (Appendix D of the report of the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive);
- iv. Approve the proposed carbon budget, as outlined at paragraph 3.30 and detailed in the report to the Budget Strategy Group attached at Appendix E of the report of the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive;
- v. Approve an increase in the level of the general council tax in 2021/22 of 1.99%;
- vi. Approve an increase in the adult social care precept in 2021/22 of 1.50%; and
- vii. Approve a budget for the Council of £151.372 million for 2021/22, funded by Band D council tax of £1,460.24 (£1,313.60 for general council tax and £146.64 for adult social care).

There then followed a sequence of amendments which were proposed as follows:

Amendment One: £10 million borrowing to support Community Led Development

Councillor Allen proposed the amendment which was seconded by Councillor McLoughlin.

“Ring-fence up to £10 million for PWLB borrowing for the purposes of lending to Community-Led Development schemes within the borough. The finance arrangements will be net neutral to the Council across the life of the scheme, as borrowing, interest and administration costs will be repaid by the developer/scheme.”

The following Members voted for the Amendment:

Councillors Adeyemo, Allen, Ashraf, Brain, Burn, Buxton-Sait, Caudwell, Fairburn, Groom, Hamilton, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, Macnaughton, McCarthy, McLoughlin, Sexton, Slater, K Thomas, Williams, Wilson

The following Members voted against the Amendment:

Councillors Allsopp, Blunt, Butler, Courts, Davis, Diccico, Gough, K Grinsell, R Grinsell, Hawkins, Hogarth, Mrs Holl-Allen, Holt, Howell, Mackenzie, Mackiewicz, Meeson, Parker, Potts, Qais, Richards Rolf, Ryan, Sleigh, P Thomas, Tildesley, Mrs Wild

The following Members abstained on the Amendment:

Councillors Cole, Nash, Rebeiro

Amendment One was lost.

Amendment Two: Fairness Commission

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Councillor Ashraf proposed the Amendment which was seconded by Councillor Sexton.

We recognise the hard work of our public health team in drafting a preliminary inequality strategy, and we propose that a more detailed strategy be co-produced together with all the communities and organisations that we serve.

Solihull Council will set up a Fairness Commission to run for one year to explore the very high and entrenched levels of inequality (and health inequality) seen in our borough and make recommendations as to how we can begin to reduce these gaps.

This will be initially funded from the budget strategy reserve (one half time FTE for a year, plus £10k running costs for a year = £41,000 p.a.) to set up and run the Commission for twelve months, with the expectation that the identified savings in service provision over the following two years will return a net-neutral position for the Council at the end of the MTFs period.

The impact on the figures shown in the budget reports to Full Council is attached for information.

	2021/22 £'000 One-off	2022/23 £'000 One-off	2023/24 £'000 One-off	2023/24 £'000 Ongoing
Costs	41	0	0	0
Additional savings	0	(41)	0	(41)
Additional contribution to/(use of) budget strategy reserve	(41)	41	0	41
Impact on proposed net budget	0	0	0	0

The following Members voted in favour of the Amendment:

Councillors Adeyemo, Allen, Ashraf, Brain, Burn, Buxton-Sait, Caudwell, Cole, Fairburn, Groom, Hamilton, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, Macnaughton, McCarthy, McLoughlin, Nash, Sexton, Slater, K Thomas, Williams, Wilson

The following Members voted against the Amendment:

Councillors Allsopp, Blunt, Butler, Courts, Davis, Diccio, Gough, K Grinsell, R Grinsell, Hawkins, Hogarth, Mrs Holl-Allen, Holt, Howell, Mackenzie, Mackiewicz, Meeson, Parker, Potts, Qais, Rebeiro, Richards, Rolf, Ryan, Sleigh, P Thomas, Tildesley, Mrs Wild

Amendment Two was lost.

Amendment Three: Property Energy Efficiency

Councillor Macnaughton proposed this Amendment which was seconded by Councillor Caudwell.

Cost

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Solihull Council will set up a Property Energy Improvement Scheme for the purpose of supporting energy-efficient domestic and small commercial property retrofitting projects across the borough in the next three financial years

The anticipated cost of the scheme would be £775,000 (£700,000 + operating costs at 0.4x Band G FTE = £75,000), which will provide up to 100% funding for energy-efficient property retrofitting projects across the borough in the next three financial years (subject to eligibility criteria).

Funding

This will be funded from the budget strategy reserve. If Solihull Council receives a return on investment of any financial support extended to Birmingham Airport Holdings Limited, this income will be used to replenish the budget strategy reserve, with the intention of achieving a balanced position for the budget strategy reserve across the three-year period that the scheme is in operation.

The impact on the figures shown in the budget reports to Full Council is attached for information.

	2021/22 £'000 One-off	2022/23 £'000 One-off	2023/24 £'000 One-off	2023/24 £'000 Ongoing
Costs	725	25	25	0
Additional use of budget strategy reserve	(725)	(25)	(25)	0
Impact on proposed net budget	0	0	0	0

The following Members voted in favour of the Amendment:

Councillors Adeyemo, Allen, Ashraf, Brain, Burn, Buxton-Sait, Caudwell, Cole, Fairburn, Groom, Hamilton, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, Macnaughton, McCarthy, McLoughlin, Nash, Sexton, Slater, K Thomas, Williams, Wilson

The following Members voted against the Amendment:

Councillors Allsopp, Blunt, Butler, Courts, Davis, Diccico, Gough, K Grinsell, R Grinsell, Hawkins, Hogarth, Mrs Holl-Allen, Holt, Howell, Mackenzie, Mackiewicz, Meeson, Parker, Potts, Qais, Rebeiro, Richards, Rolf, Ryan, Sleigh, P Thomas, Tildesley, Mrs Wild.

Amendment Three was lost

Council was then asked to vote on the substantive motion as moved by Leader of the Council and Council **RESOLVED** to:

- Approve a budget for 2021/22 of £151.372 million, including the forecast balances on the budget strategy reserve;
- Approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 – 2023/24, and the Corporate Capital Strategy, incorporating the Council's strategy on the flexible use of capital receipts;

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- iii. Approve the fees and charges proposed within each portfolio (Appendix D of the report of the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive);
- iv. Approve the proposed carbon budget, as outlined at paragraph 3.30 and detailed in the report to the Budget Strategy Group attached at Appendix E of the report of the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive;
- v. Approve an increase in the level of the general council tax in 2021/22 of 1.99%;
- vi. Approve an increase in the adult social care precept in 2021/22 of 1.50%; and
- vii. Approve a budget for the Council of £151.372 million for 2021/22, funded by Band D council tax of £1,460.24 (£1,313.60 for general council tax and £146.64 for adult social care).

The following Members voted in favour of the recommendations:

Councillors Allsopp, Blunt, Butler, Courts, Davis, Diccico, Gough, K Grinsell, R Grinsell, Hawkins, Hogarth, Mrs Holl-Allen, Holt, Howell, Mackenzie, Mackiewicz, Meeson, Parker, Potts, Qais, Rebeiro, Richards, Rolf, Ryan, Sleigh, P Thomas, Tildesley, Mrs Wild

The following Members voted against the recommendations:

Councillors Adeyemo, Allen, Ashraf, Brain, Burn, Buxton-Sait, Caudwell, Cole, Fairburn, Groom, Hamilton, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, Macnaughton, McCarthy, McLoughlin, Nash, Sexton, Slater, K Thomas, Williams, Wilson

The Leader then presented the recommendation under item **10(b) - The calculations and amounts of Council Tax for the year 2021/22:**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approved the sums required for the purposes of sections 31A, 31B and 34-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to set the Council Tax for 2020/21 in accordance with section 30 of the same Act.

The following Members voted in favour of the recommendation:

Councillors Allsopp, Blunt, Butler, Courts, Davis, Diccico, Gough, K Grinsell, R Grinsell, Hawkins, Hogarth, Mrs Holl-Allen, Holt, Howell, Mackenzie, Mackiewicz, Meeson, Parker, Potts, Qais, Rebeiro, Richards, Rolf, Ryan, Sleigh, P Thomas, Tildesley, Mrs Wild

The follow Members voted against the recommendation:

Councillors Adeyemo, Allen, Ashraf, Brain, Burn, Buxton-Sait, Caudwell, Cole, Fairburn, Groom, Hamilton, A Hodgson, T Hodgson, Macnaughton, McCarthy, Mcloughlin, Nash, Sexton, Slater, K Thomas, Williams, Wilson

The recommendation was carried.

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11. RECOMMENDATION FOR AUDIT COMMITTEE - TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2030/31

The Vice Chairman of Audit Committee introduced a recommendation from Audit Committee which Full Council was required to approve:

RESOLVED

Council approved:

- i. The Treasury Management Strategy 2021/22 to 2030/31 (Appendix A) including the Debt and Investment Strategy and Treasury and Prudential indicators contained within and specifically;
- ii. The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator detailed within paragraph 3.2.2 of Appendix A;
- iii. The further Prudential Indicators for 2021/22 to 2030/31 contained within the extract from the Corporate Capital Strategy 2021/22 to 2030/31 (Appendix B); and
- iv. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement contained within the extract from the Corporate Capital Strategy 2021/22 to 2030/31 (Appendix B).

12. QUESTIONS BY LEADERS OF POLITICAL GROUPS UNDER SO5 (2) (T)

Councillor Caudwell the Leader of the Green Group to Councillor Rolf Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Stronger and Safer Communities:

“There are reports from some Parish councils that fly-tipping in the north of the Borough is rising, and that some of the fly-tipping is coming from Birmingham City council areas where enforcement is considered more robust. Can the cabinet Member commit to enforcing the law against fly-tipping and litter in the North of the borough as we see in Solihull Town Centre?”

The Cabinet Member responded that all fly tipping cases which had lines of enquiry to follow would be investigated, regardless of where it occurred in to the Borough. Where appropriate, enforcement action would be taken. In 2020/21, six fixed penalty notice had been issued. There had been directed action to target litter hotspots within the Borough, which included parks and in Smiths Wood. Members were asked to report incidents of littering to officers to assist with this.

13. CHIEF EXECUTIVE URGENT MATTERS

There were no urgent matters.

14. QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8

No questions remained.

15. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET - BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT

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Full Council was asked to approve the recommendation from the 11th February 2021 Cabinet meeting, that the Council approves a loan facility to BAHL on commercial market terms up to the value of £3.7 million, under Section 8.9 of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

RESOLVED

That the Council approves a loan facility to BAHL on commercial market terms up to the value of £3.7 million, under Section 8.9 of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

That, pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting for the remainder of the business to be transacted, on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information in terms of paragraph 3 of Part 9 of Schedule 12A to the said Act.

17. RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET- BIRMINGHAM AIRPORT

Council considered the private report which contained the financial details of the proposal before they approved the recommendation in public session.

The meeting finished at 11.30 pm