

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Kent County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 9 February 2017.

PRESENT:

Mr T Gates (Chairman)
Mr D L Brazier (Vice-Chairman)

Mrs A D Allen, MBE, Mr M J Angell, Mr M Baldock, Mr M A C Balfour, Mr R H Bird, Mr H Birkby, Mr N J Bond, Mr A H T Bowles, Mrs P Brivio, Mr L Burgess, Mr C W Caller, Miss S J Carey, Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mr N J D Chard, Mr B E Clark, Mrs P T Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr A D Crowther, Mrs V J Dagger, Mr D S Daley, Mr M C Dance, Mr J A Davies, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Dr M R Eddy, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Mr P M Harman, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr C P D Hoare, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P J Homewood, Mr E E C Hotson, Mr M J Horwood, Mr A J King, MBE, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Mr S J G Koowaree, Mr R A Latchford, OBE, Mr R L H Long, TD, Mr G Lymer, Mr B E MacDowall, Mr T A Maddison, Mr S C Manion, Mr R A Marsh, Ms D Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M J Northey, Mr P J Oakford, Mr J M Ozog, Mr R J Parry, Mr C R Pearman, Mr L B Ridings, MBE, Mrs E D Rowbotham, Mr J E Scholes, Mr T L Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J D Simmonds, MBE, Mr C P Smith, Mr D Smyth, Mrs P A V Stockell, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr A Terry, Mr N S Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M J Vye, Mr J N Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr M E Whybrow and Mrs Z Wiltshire

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director Strategic & Corporate Services), Mr J Lynch (Head of Democratic Services) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

56. Apologies for Absence

The General Counsel reported apologies from Mr Chittenden, Mr Harrison, Mrs Howes, Mr McKenna, Mrs Waters and Mr Wickham.

57. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda

None.

58. Budget 2017-18 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2017-20 (including Council Tax setting 2017-18)

(1) The Chairman reminded all Members that any Member of a Local Authority who was liable to pay Council Tax, and who had any unpaid Council Tax amount overdue for at least two months, even if there was an arrangement to pay off the arrears, must declare the fact that they are in arrears and must not cast their vote on anything related to KCC's Budget or Council Tax.

(2) The Chairman stated that all Members would have received a letter from the Head of Democratic Services, dated 1 February, setting out the process and order of the budget debate at today's meeting.

(3) The Chairman moved and the Vice-Chairman seconded that:

(a) Procedure Rule 1.12(2) be suspended in order that the meeting be extended to 5.00pm if necessary;

(b) Procedure Rule 1.28 be suspended in order that the Leader be allowed to speak for a maximum of 12 minutes, the seconder of the original motion to speak for up to 5 minutes, the Leaders of the UKIP, Labour, Liberal Democrat and Independent Groups to speak for 10, 7, 5 and 3 minutes respectively, with the Leader being given a 5 minute right of reply; and the Cabinet Members to speak for up to 6 minutes each when introducing each directorate debate; and;

(c) Procedure Rule 1.35 be suspended in order for the mover and seconder of the original motion to be permitted to speak on more than one occasion.

Agreed without a formal vote

(4) The Chairman then invited Mr Wood, Corporate Director Finance and Procurement, to give a presentation on various issues relevant to the budget. As part of this presentation Mr Wood as Section 151 officer confirmed that the budget estimates were robust and the level of reserves adequate, as required by the Local Government Act 2003.

(5) Mr Carter proposed and Mr Simmonds seconded the following motion:

“The County Council is asked to agree the following

(a) Net revenue budget requirement of £906.959m for 2017-18

(b) Capital investment proposals of £635.840m over three years from 2017-18 to 2019-20 together with the necessary funding and subject to approval to spend arrangements (summarised in appendix 2 to this report)

(c) The Treasury Management Strategy as per revised section 5 of the Medium Term Financial Plan (appendix 5 to this report)

(d) Prudential Indicators as set out in revised Appendix B to the Medium Term Financial Plan (appendix 7 to this report)

(e) The Revised Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement as set out in Appendix C to the Medium Term Financial Plan including the revised policy regarding debt repayment.

(f) The directorate revenue and capital budget proposals as set out in draft Budget Book published on 10th January as amended by the latest updates included in this report (summarised in appendix 3 to this report)

(g) Delegate responsibility to Cabinet Members and Corporate Directors to manage the budget within the parameters set out in the Constitution and Financial Regulations (delegations to managers as set out in appendix 4 to this report)

(h) To increase council tax band rates up to the maximum permitted without a referendum as set out in paragraph 2.7 table 2

(i) To levy the additional 2% social care precept (raising an additional £11,938,674 and taking the total social care precept to £23,403,591 out of precept set out in (j) below)

(j) The total council tax requirement of £620,526,793 to be raised through precepts on districts as set out in revisions to section 2 of the Budget Book (appendix 1 to this report)

In addition:

(k) To note that the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services will determine the TCP reward thresholds for staff assessed as achieving, achieving above, and outstanding, and to set the recalibration of the pay ranges and minimum reward/increase to the bottom of KR2, within the 2.3% funding approved

(l) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Finance & Procurement (in consultation with the Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Finance & Procurement and the political Group Leaders) to resolve any minor technical issues for the final budget publication which do not materially alter the approved budget or change the net budget requirement

(m) The changes made in (l) above to be reflected in the final version of the Budget Book and MTFP due to be published in March

(n) To note the financial outlook for 2018-19 and 2019-20 with further anticipated funding reductions and additional spending demands offset by provisional council tax increases and additional savings (the vast majority of which are yet to be identified).

Social Care, Health & Wellbeing

(6) The Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care & Public Health and Specialist Children's Services introduced the budget for this Directorate prior to a general debate.

(7) Mrs Brivio proposed and Miss Harrison seconded the following amendment:

"That £500k be used to support those, who are medically fit to leave acute hospital beds, by the purchasing of additional enablement services and any necessary ongoing domiciliary care; to be funded from reducing the contribution to the Modernisation of the Council reserve.

REDUCE: Modernisation of the Council (Supplementary budget information document p24, line 149) £500k

INCREASE: Older People (aged 65+) – Residential – Commissioned Service (Supplementary budget information document p5, line 18) £500k."

(8) Following the debate the Chairman put the amendment set out in paragraph (7) above to the vote and the voting was as follows:

For (27)

Mr M Baldock, Mr R Bird, Mr H Birkby, Mr N Bond, Mrs P Brivio, Mr C Caller, Mr B Clark, Mr G Cowan, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Dr M Eddy, Mrs M Elenor, Mr P Harman, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr C Hoare, Mr G Koowaree, Mr R Latchford,

Mr T Maddison, Mr B MacDowall, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr T Shonk, Mr D Smyth, Mr A Terry, Mr N Thandi, Mr M Vye, Mr M Whybrow.

Against (47)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mr J Elenor, Mr T Gates, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr M Hill, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr M Horwood, Mr J Kite, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mrs D Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr R Parry, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mr J Scholes, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mrs Z Wiltshire.

Abstain (1)

Mr A King.

Amendment lost

(9) Mr Vye proposed and Mr Bird seconded the following amendment

“Return the 2017-18 Kent Support & Assistance Service budget line to the level forecast to be spent in the 2016-17 December monitoring report, to be funded from increasing the MRP saving.

INCREASE: Support & Assistance Service (Social Fund) including refugee families (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p7, line 43) £500k

REDUCE: Net debt costs (incl. Investment income) (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p24, line 150) £500k.”

(10) Following the debate the Chairman put the amendment set out in paragraph (9) above to the vote and the voting was as follows:

For (76)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Baldock, Mr M Balfour, Mr R Bird, Mr H Birkby, Mr N Bond, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Mrs P Brivio, Mr L Burgess, Mr C Caller, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mr B Clark, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr D Daley, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mrs T Dean, Dr M Eddy, Mrs M Elenor, Mr T Gates, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr P Harman, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr M Hill, Mr C Hoare, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr M Horwood, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr G Koowaree, Mr R Latchford, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr B MacDowall, Mr T Maddison, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mrs D Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr R Parry, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr J Scholes, Mr T Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mr D Smyth, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr A Terry, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M Vye, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr M Whybrow, Mrs Z Wiltshire.

Against (1)

Mr J Elenor.

Amendment carried

Education and Young People Services

(11) The Cabinet Members for Education & Health Reform, Specialist Children's Services and Community Services introduced the budget for this Directorate prior to a general debate.

Strategic and Corporate Services

(12) The Cabinet Members for Corporate & Democratic Services, Finance & Procurement and Commercial Services introduced the budget for this Directorate prior to a general debate.

Growth, Environment and Transport

(13) The Cabinet Members for Community Services, Environment & Transport and Economic Development introduced the budget for this Directorate prior to a general debate.

(14) Mr Caller proposed and Dr Eddy seconded the following amendment:

“Reinvest £500k in the revenue budget to ensure that Kent Highways continue to focus on a proactive management approach; to be funded from reducing the Modernisation of the Council

REDUCE: Modernisation of the Council (Supplementary budget information document p24, line 149) £500k

INCREASE: General maintenance and emergency response (Supplementary budget information document p16, line 88) £500k”

(15) Following the debate the Chairman put the amendment set out in paragraph (14) above to the vote and the voting was as follows:

For (75)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Baldock, Mr M Balfour, Mr R Bird, Mr H Birkby, Mr N Bond, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Mrs P Brivio, Mr L Burgess, Mr C Caller, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mr B Clark, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M Crabtree, Mrs V Dagger, Mr D Daley, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mrs T Dean, Dr M Eddy, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr T Gates, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr P Harman, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr M Hill, Mr C Hoare, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr M Horwood, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr G Koowaree, Mr R Latchford, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr B MacDowall, Mr T Maddison, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mrs D Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr R Parry, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr J Scholes, Mr T Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mr D Smyth, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr A Terry, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M Vye, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr M Whybrow, Mrs Z Wiltshire.

Against (1)

Mr A Crowther.

Amendment carried

Cross cutting and general amendments

(16) Mr Birkby proposed and Mr Baldock seconded the following amendment;

“Reinvest money into local democracy by increasing the amount available to be spent in their local communities by elected county councillors by £2,000 per elected member to £22,000 per annum

Increase Local Member Grants (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p16, line 98) by £162k

Reduce Arts & Culture (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p11, line 74) by £162k.”

(17) At the suggestion of the Leader, Mr Birkby and Mr Baldock agreed to amend their amendment, as follows:

“Reinvest money into local democracy by increasing the amount available to be spent in their local communities by elected county councillors by £2,000 per elected member to £22,000 per annum

Increase Local Member Grants (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p16, line 98) by £162k

~~Reduce Arts & Culture (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p11, line 74) by £162k”~~

Reduce earmarked reserves by £162k on page 24, line 147 of the supplementary budget information document.”

(18) Following the debate the Chairman put the revised amendment set out in paragraph (17) above to the vote and the voting was as follows:

For (67)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Baldock, Mr M Balfour, Mr R Bird, Mr H Birkby, Mr N Bond, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Mr L Burgess, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mr B Clark, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr D Daley, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mrs T Dean, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr T Gates, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr P Harman, Mr M Heale, Mr M Hill, Mr C Hoare, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr M Horwood, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr G Koowaree, Mr R Latchford, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr B MacDowall, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mrs D Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr R Parry, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mr J Scholes, Mr T Shonk, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mrs P Stockell, Mr

B Sweetland, Mr A Terry, Mr M Vye, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mr M Whybrow, Mrs Z Wiltshire.

Against (9)

Mrs P Brivio, Mr C Caller, Mr G Cowan, Ms A Harrison, Mr T Maddison, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr D Smyth, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove.

Abstain (1)

Dr M Eddy.

Amendment carried

(19) Mrs Dean proposed and Mr Bird seconded the following amendment:

"That this Council agrees to set up a Members task and finish group to investigate the increasing and variable costs and waiting periods of the Coroners Service, and suggest ways in which KCC working with the service can drive costs down and better serve the needs of relatives. "

(20) Following a debate the amendment set out in paragraph (19) above was agreed without a formal vote.

(21) As all of the amendments had either been determined or withdrawn, the Chairman put to the vote the substantive Motion (as set out in paragraph (5) with the addition of the amendments set out in paragraphs (9), (14), (17) and (19)) and voting was as follows:

For (51)

Mrs A Allen, Mr M Angell, Mr M Balfour, Mr A Bowles, Mr D Brazier, Miss S Carey, Mr P Carter, Mr N Chard, Mrs P Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs M Crabtree, Mr A Crowther, Mrs V Dagger, Mr M Dance, Mr J Davies, Mr J Elenor, Mrs M Elenor, Mr T Gates, Mr G Gibbens, Mr R Gough, Mr P Harman, Mr M Heale, Mr M Hill, Mrs S Hohler, Mr S Holden, Mr P Homewood, Mr E Hotson, Mr M Horwood, Mr A King, Mr J Kite, Mr R Long, Mr G Lymer, Mr S Manion, Mr A Marsh, Mrs D Marsh, Mr B Neaves, Mr M Northey, Mr P Oakford, Mr J Ozog, Mr R Parry, Mr C Pearman, Mr L Ridings, Mr J Scholes, Mr C Simkins, Mr J Simmonds, Mr C Smith, Mrs P Stockell, Mr B Sweetland, Mr J Wedgbury, Mrs J Whittle, Mrs Z Wiltshire.

Against (23)

Mr R Bird, Mr N Bond, Mrs P Brivio, Mr L Burgess, Mr C Caller, Mr B Clark, Mr G Cowan, Mr D Daley, Mrs T Dean, Dr M Eddy, Ms A Harrison, Mr C Hoare, Mr G Koowaree, Mr T Maddison, Mr B MacDowall, Mr T Shonk, Mrs E Rowbotham, Mr D Smyth, Mr A Terry, Mr N Thandi, Mr R Truelove, Mr M Vye, Mr M Whybrow.

Abstain (2)

Mr H Birkby, Mr R Latchford.

(22) RESOLVED that

(i) the County Council approve the following:

- (a) Net revenue budget requirement of £906.959m for 2017-18
- (b) Capital investment proposals of £635.840m over three years from 2017-18 to 2019-20 together with the necessary funding and subject to approval to spend arrangements (summarised in appendix 2 to the report)
- (c) The Treasury Management Strategy as per revised section 5 of the Medium Term Financial Plan (appendix 5 to the report)
- (d) Prudential Indicators as set out in revised Appendix B to the Medium Term Financial Plan (appendix 7 to the report)
- (e) The Revised Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement as set out in Appendix C to the Medium Term Financial Plan including the revised policy regarding debt repayment.
- (f) The directorate revenue and capital budget proposals as set out in draft Budget Book published on 10th January as amended by the latest updates included in this report (summarised in appendix 3 to the report)
- (g) Delegate responsibility to Cabinet Members and Corporate Directors to manage the budget within the parameters set out in the Constitution and Financial Regulations (delegations to managers as set out in appendix 4 to the report)
- (h) To increase council tax band rates up to the maximum permitted without a referendum as set out in paragraph 2.7 table 2
- (i) To levy the additional 2% social care precept (raising an additional £11,938,674 and taking the total social care precept to £23,403,591 out of precept set out in (j) below)
- (j) The total council tax requirement of £620,526,793 to be raised through precepts on districts as set out in revisions to section 2 of the Budget Book (appendix 1 to the report)
- (k) return the 2017-18 Kent Support & Assistance Service budget line to the level forecast to be spent in the 2016-17 December monitoring report, to be funded from increasing the MRP saving by increasing Support & Assistance Service (Social Fund) including refugee families (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p7, line 43) £500k and reducing the net debt costs (incl. Investment income) (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p24, line 150) £500k.
- (l) reinvest £500k in the revenue budget to ensure that Kent Highways continue to focus on a proactive management approach; to be funded by reducing "Modernisation of the Council" (Supplementary budget information document p24, line 149) £500k
- (m) reinvest money into local democracy by increasing the amount available to be spent in their local communities by elected county councillors by £2,000 per elected member to £22,000 per annum by increasing Local Member Grants (Supplementary 2017-18 budget information document p16, line 98) by £162k and reduce earmarked reserves by £162k (page 24, line 147 of the supplementary budget information document).

(ii) it be noted that the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services will determine the TCP reward thresholds for staff assessed as achieving, achieving

above, and outstanding, and to set the recalibration of the pay ranges and minimum reward/increase to the bottom of KR2, within the 2.3% funding approved.

(iii) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Finance & Procurement (in consultation with the Deputy Leader/Cabinet Member for Finance & Procurement and the political Group Leaders) to resolve any minor technical issues for the final budget publication which do not materially alter the approved budget or change the net budget requirement.

(iv) the changes made in (iii) above be reflected in the final version of the Budget Book and MTFP due to be published in March.

(v) the financial outlook for 2018-19 and 2019-20 with further anticipated funding reductions and additional spending demands offset by provisional council tax increases and additional savings (the vast majority of which are yet to be identified) be noted.

(vi) a Members task and finish group be set up to investigate the increasing and variable costs and waiting periods of the Coroners Service, and suggest ways in which KCC working with the service can drive costs down and better serve the needs of relatives.