

CABINET

Meeting - 17 December 2015

Present: Mr Bagge, Mr Naylor, Mr Anthony and Mrs Sullivan

Apologies for absence: Mr Egleton

37. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 October 2015 were confirmed and signed by the Leader.

38. BUDGET 2016/17

It is the responsibility of the Cabinet to prepare a revenue budget for approval by the Council, which will form the basis of setting council tax. Accordingly, the Cabinet considered a report that started to build up an expenditure budget based on:

1. The financial outturn for 2014/15 and information from the current year's budget monitoring, as set out in paragraph 4 and Appendix A
2. The draft base budget, built up using a number of assumptions described in paragraph 5 and which have been subject to discussion in PAGs.

The report set out:

- potential savings options which had been the subject of review, and divided into three categories by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - as set out in detail in private Appendix B
- a proposal to top up the LDD reserve in the light of the assessment of producing the Local Plan, even allowing for the cost benefits of undertaking this piece of work jointly with Chiltern District Council. The additional money would come from transferring funds from the Government Grant Funding Changes as this financial risk would now be managed through the budget process and the General Fund reserve.

The information provided in paragraph 6 summarising the main points of the Autumn Statement and Spending Review 2015 (further details of which were given in Appendix C) was updated as follows by the Director of Resources in the light of the announcement made today - 17 December 2015 - by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government regarding the provisional local government settlement for 2016/17 and future years:

- New Homes Grant - no changes for 2016/17 but a consultation document issued with a view to making changes to the way the Grant is determined and the period over which it is paid;
- Business Rates Retention Scheme - consultation to take place in 2016. Unlikely that changes will be made until 2018/19 at the earliest and 2019/20 is a more realistic implementation date;
- Public Health Expenditure and Administration of Housing Benefits – government grants likely to cease at the same time as 100% Business Rates retention is introduced;
- Council Tax Limits – whilst the core referendum threshold of 2% was being maintained, the threshold for the lowest quartile district councils (of which SBDC was one) will be £5 - equivalent to an increase of 3.5% for SBDC; and

- Revenue Support Grant - accelerated reduction in central government grant over the next 4 years from £440k in 2016/17 to zero in 2018/19.

The Director of Resources explained that a paper setting out in more detail the implications of the settlement for SBDC would be circulated as soon as possible, and that all the information would be incorporated in the Budget report due to be submitted to the Cabinet on 9 February 2016.

Councillor Bagge, in thanking the Director of Resources for his immediate response to the settlement, said that the announcement had contained no real surprises mindful that several of the changes had been anticipated and assumed in the report, which demonstrated the quality of the Council's budget monitoring process for which he congratulated the finance team. As a result, the Council would be able to produce a balanced budget and continue to deliver quality and cost-effective services to residents of the District.

In connection with the savings options, the Cabinet supported a proposal from the Leader that the options for 2016/17 totalling £181,000 as set out in the table in paragraph 5.4 (which exclude those related to service reviews or mobile working) should be implemented and that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be invited to continue to have an ownership role by reviewing progress on those options for the medium term.

RESOLVED that:

1. the draft revenue budget for 2016/17 and the Government plans for local authorities to 2020 be noted.
2. approval be given to close the Government Grant Funding Changes reserve and transfer the earmarked funding of £400,000 to the earmarked Local Plan Reserve.
3. the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be invited to continue to perform the review role referred to above.

39. CHILTERN AND SOUTH BUCKS LOCAL PLAN 2014-2036 - REGULATION 18 AND ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

Following the agreement from both Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils to prepare a Joint Local Plan and approval of a Local Development Scheme, the Cabinet considered a report seeking authority to carry out the first stage of the Joint Local Plan process; namely consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and Issues and Options consultation. The report also sought agreement to delegate decisions on the Joint Local Plan to the Joint Committee.

A similar report was being considered at CDC.

The consultation document was attached as an Annex to the report and whilst considering the proposed timetable for the consultation as set out in paragraph 2, the Cabinet agreed that, subject to CDC's agreement, the consultation should commence on 19 January 2016, with the deadline for receipt of comments being amended to 5pm 14 March.

In connection with paragraphs 2 i) and j) the Cabinet noted that consultation meetings for the audiences indicated as follows had been organised:

- 14 January at 6.30pm at King's Church, Amersham – Councillors and Parish members from both CDC and SBDC plus County Council members and MPs
- 18 January at 6pm at Capswood, Denham – Councillors and Districts from both CDC and SBDC plus County Council members and MPs

- 19 January at 6pm at Capswood, Denham – Stake holders
- 20 January at 6.30pm at King George V House, Amersham – Stake holders

The Cabinet also noted that a video was being prepared which would be made available to Parish and Town Councils.

In connection with paragraph 2.5 the Cabinet was advised that the proposed amendment to the Inter Authority Agreement would need to be agreed by Council.

RESOLVED that:

1. The document attached as Annex 1 to the report be approved for public consultation.
2. Public consultation be carried out so as to comprise:
 - a) Commencement on 19th January 2015 and to run until 5 pm on 14th March 2015
 - b) Details to be included on the Council website
 - c) Invitations to Duty to Co-operate organisations to comment and to meet prior to the close of consultation
 - d) Invitations to comment to be sent to all town and parish councils
 - e) Details to be sent to all individuals and organisations on the Council consultation database
 - f) Documents to be available in all libraries serving communities within the plan area
 - g) A pre-consultation press briefing/conference and a number of press releases during the consultation period
 - h) Information and updates on Council social media
 - i) A pre-consultation briefing presentation invited to all council members, town and parish councils, Chiltern and South Bucks County Council members and MPs
 - j) Two evening meetings early in the consultation period, one at Chiltern Council Offices and one at South Bucks Offices, with invitations to town and parish councils and key known stakeholder local groups/organisations.
3. Authority be delegated to the Head of Sustainable Development for the preparation of associated public consultation and, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, to agree any necessary changes to the document in Annex 1 prior to its publication and any alterations to public consultation arrangements approved under Recommendation 2.
4. Cabinet decisions and recommendations in relation to the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan be delegated to the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee and that the terms of reference of the Joint Committee be amended accordingly.

AND RECOMMENDED that:

- 5 Subject to recommendation 4 being approved by Cabinet at CDC, the Inter Authority Agreement between Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils dated 19 January 2012 be amended to incorporate the new terms of reference for the Joint Committee.

40. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

"that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1974 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 paragraphs 1,2,3, and 4 of Schedule 12A to the Act "

41. BUDGET 2016/17

The savings options set out in Private Appendix B were considered by the Cabinet under minute 38 above.

The meeting terminated at 5.47 pm