



Buckinghamshire Council

High Wycombe Town Committee

Minutes

MEETING OF THE HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 17 JANUARY 2023 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM AND CONCLUDING AT 7.35 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

A Alam, M Ayub, K Bates, A Baughan, L Clarke OBE, T Green, S Guy, D Hayday, O Hayday, A Hussain, I Hussain, M Hussain, M Hussain, M Hussain JP, M Knight, S Raja, N Rana, M Smith, N Thomas, P Turner, J Wassell and K Wood

OFFICERS PRESENT

Fiorella Mugari, Martin Dickman, Linda Francis, Michaela Pottle, Nick Graham, John Callaghan and Iram Malik.

1 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Mr Callaghan was in attendance at the meeting to clarify 2 points relating to item 4 of the minutes of 22 November 2022 entitled Local Allocation of CIL.

Members` confirmation was sought in relation to the £147,000 requested for play areas. Furthermore, Members attention was also drawn to a £125,000 budget commitment to district centre public realm improvements that had not been included in the previous report. In this context members were asked to clarify whether the proposed allocation of £50,000 towards a feasibility study for improvements to Arnison Avenue shopping parade, as previously agreed, should be funded from the budgeted £125,000 or whether it should be recommended as additional funding .

Following further consideration it was,

RESOLVED: That subject to the following, the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November making recommendations to Cabinet be confirmed as a correct record:

- (i) A sum of £147,000 towards replacement and refurbishment of those play areas funded from special expenses be allocated
- (ii) The sum of £50,000 funding towards a feasibility study for improvements to Arnison Avenue shopping parade be met from the budgeted £125,000 that is allocated to Local centres public realm improvements

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor A R Green declared an interest in item 5 (Special Expenses Budget) in his capacity of Director of HWBidco and also as a member of the High Wycombe Town Twinning Association.

3 EVENTS IN THE TOWN CENTRE

Melanie Williams from HWBidco was in attendance at the meeting. An overview of the previously held successful events that had taken place was provided to Members, and it was stated that the work undertaken by Bidco had been extended for a further 5 year period.

The presenting officer expressed the desire to continue with the types of events and activities that had been so well received within the town, and the need for the funding to enable her to do so.

A Member asked if Councillors could be informed regarding forthcoming events in advance in order to avoid potential clashes. It was stated that events were widely publicised but that clashes were sometimes inevitable.

Another Member stated that whilst he recognised and was appreciative of the value of social media, he felt that posters on notice boards in certain parking sites would prove to be beneficial in further advertising/publicising upcoming events and activities. The presenting officer concurred with this view point and welcomed the opportunity to make use of notice boards for the purpose.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report be noted and Melanie Williams be thanked for her attendance.

4 SPECIAL EXPENSES BUDGET 2022/23

Members considered the draft budget for recommendation to Cabinet which would subsequently be endorsed and approved by Full Council at its meeting in February.

It was reported that the Budget Sub Group had been established to review the budget for the 2023/24 financial year for the High Wycombe Town Committee's Special Expenses. The draft budget was summarised in Table 1 and detailed at (Appendix A) to the report. A list of the fees and charges were outlined in (Appendix B) to the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) the draft budget for 2023/24 (Appendix A) be noted and that these figures took account of the impact of indexation on the grounds maintenance contract, proposed fees and charges (which had been reviewed and considered with respect to competitiveness) and the council tax base.
- (ii) A 9% increase in Fees & Charges where no fee review was carried out be agreed in line with September 2022 RPI. For cemetery fees, a full fee review was

undertaken.

- (iii) the Council Tax base and the precept as set out in the paper be noted. The Council Tax Base was set at Band D equivalent for 2023/24 with respect to Special Expenses for the unparished area of High Wycombe Town.
- (iv) the increase in Council Tax Base for Band D equivalent for 2023/24 by 507.26 to 24,033.51 properties for HWTC be noted
- (v) Option 5 be recommended to Cabinet for setting the 2023/24 precept for the unparished area of High Wycombe Town at £17.66 (Band D equivalent). This option covered up to 84% of the net budgeted expenditure for 2023/24 and required a drawdown on reserve of £59,046 to cover expenditure. Despite use of reserves, this option would still give HWTC continued financial sustainability over the medium-term.

5 WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the work programme be noted.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 14 March 2023 at 7pm in the Council Chamber, Queen Victoria Road.