

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BUDGET COUNCIL MEETING
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT OFFICE TEAMS
ON 25th FEBRUARY, 2021**

PRESENT –

His Worship the Mayor (Councillor K. Hartley – in the Chair)

Councillors

<i>G. Adam</i>	<i>M. Hanif</i>
<i>N. Ahmed</i>	<i>M. Iqbal</i>
<i>Z. Ali</i>	<i>Y. Iqbal</i>
<i>M. Ammer</i>	<i>C. Lioni</i>
<i>E. Ansar</i>	<i>D. Lord</i>
<i>Mohammed Arshad</i>	<i>N. McCollum</i>
<i>N. Ashraf</i>	<i>N. McGowan</i>
<i>M. Aslam</i>	<i>A. Mann</i>
<i>N. Butterworth</i>	<i>J. Mills</i>
<i>R. Carroll</i>	<i>B. Newman</i>
<i>C. Carter</i>	<i>J. Purcell</i>
<i>D. Clegg</i>	<i>M. Sakib</i>
<i>S. Cockburn-Price</i>	<i>K. Shore</i>
<i>T. Cooney</i>	<i>Y. Tennant</i>
<i>L. Crossley</i>	<i>K. Turner</i>
<i>V. Fletcher</i>	<i>G. Waugh</i>
<i>M. Foxley</i>	<i>D. Whipp</i>
<i>P. Foxley</i>	<i>T. Whipp</i>
<i>M. Goulthorp</i>	<i>S. Wicks</i>
<i>T. Greaves</i>	

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Adams, Musawar Arshad, N. McEvoy A. Mahmood and J. Nixon).



27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the legal requirements concerning the declaration of interests.

28. RECORDED VOTES

Members were reminded that in accordance with Rule 17 of the Procedure at Full Council all votes on budget issues would be recorded. This included all motions and amendments.

29. STANDING ORDERS

In accordance with normal practice Council suspended Standing Order 14.3 to allow Group Leaders to speak on minute numbers 31 and 32 for longer than 5 minutes.

30. ROBUSTNESS OF BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021/22 AND ADEQUACY OF FINANCIAL RESERVES

The Chief Executive (as S151 Officer) submitted a report on the robustness of the Council's budget estimates for 2021/22 and the adequacy of financial reserves in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003.

Council (25.02.2021)

Members were advised to take this report into account when making decisions on the 2021/22 budget and associated level of Council Tax. This was to acknowledge the risks and uncertainties faced by the Council and determine that adequate provision had been made for these, both as part of the budget estimates and also in determining the adequacy of reserves.

Statements from the Chief Executive were set out in Appendix A attached to the report. The report stated that these statements were predicated on Management Team's proposed budget which was presented elsewhere on the agenda. It was noted that should there be material changes to the proposed budget that impacted on the robustness of the estimates or the adequacy of reserves, it may be necessary for the Chief Executive to amend these statement.

It was moved by Councillor M. Iqbal, seconded by Councillor D. Whipp and –

RESOLVED

That the Statements from the Chief Executive, as set out in Appendix A attached to the report, be taken into account when determining the budget and level of Council Tax for 2021/22.

31. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/2024

Council considered a report from Management Team on the proposed Capital Programme for 2021/22. The report also provided an overview of the Medium Term Capital Programme for the period 2021/2024 along with various prudential indicators for consideration.

MOTION

It was moved by Councillor M. Iqbal and seconded by Councillor D. Whipp –

- (1) That the forecast outturn position on the Council's Capital Programme for 2020/21, as shown in Appendix A and detailed in the report be noted.
- (2) That the draft Capital Strategy 2021/24, as shown in Appendix B attached to the report, be approved.
- (3) That the proposed Capital Programme for 2021/24, as shown in Appendix C attached to the report, be approved.
- (4) That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, as the Council's Chief Finance Officer, to determine the most appropriate method of financing the Capital programme for 2021/22 to ensure the use of resources was optimised by the Council.
- (5) That the indicative programmes for 2022/23 and 2023/24, as shown in Appendix C attached to the report, be noted and it be acknowledged that these would be subject to further review as part of the development of future years capital programmes.
- (6) That the Prudential Indicators, as shown in Appendix D attached to the report, be approved.

In accordance with minute 28 above a recorded vote was taken on this issue.

Those Members voting in favour of the motion were Councillors:

Council (25.02.2021)

G. Adam, Z. Ali, M. Ammer, E. Ansr, N. Ashraf, D. Clegg, T. Greaves, M. Hanif, K. Hartley, M. Iqbal, Y. Iqbal, D. Lord, A. Mann, J. Mills, B. Newman, M. Sakib, Y. Iqbal, D. Lord, A. Mann, J. Mills, B. Newman, M. Sakib, Y. Tennant, K. Turner, D. Whipp, T. Whipp and S. Wicks.

Those Members voting against the motion were Councillors:

N. Ahmed, M. Aslam, N. Butterworth, R. Carroll, C. Carter, S. Cockburn-Price, T. Cooney, V. Fletcher, M. Foxley, P. Foxley, M. Goulthorp, C. Lioni, N. McCollum, N. McGowan, J. Purcell and G. Waugh.

32. GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2021/2022

Management Team submitted a report which informed Council of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/2-22 and the implications on the Council. Members were asked to consider the proposed General Fund Revenue budget and other related matters for 2021/22; sought agreement on the level of council Tax to be set for the 2021/2022 financial year; and provided details of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan for the period 2021/2022 to 2023/2024 to highlight the significant budget deficit and the need to take further action to reduce expenditure to a sustainable level.

MOTION

It was moved by Councillor M. Iqbal and seconded by Councillor D. Whipp –

- (1) That the proposal to maintain the General Fund Minimum Working Balance at £1.0m be noted.
- (2) That the projected outturn position in the current financial year be noted.
- (3) That in relation to Pendle Leisure Trust, and subject to consideration of the residual saving proposals for 2021/22, a grant to the Trust of £1,445,140 in 2021/22 be agreed (noting the proposal to hold an additional contingent sum of £400k in the event it was necessary to further support the Trust due to the impact of Covid-19).
- (4) That the joint Labour/Liberal Democrat General Fund Budget for 2021/22 be approved, attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.
- (5) That a Band D Council Tax for 2021/22 of £276.01, being an increase of £5.39 (1.99%) on the current level of Council Tax be approved.
- (6) That each Service be requested to operate within its budget for 2021/22 once approved and that these budgets be cash limited and subject to regular monitoring and control.
- (7) That the uncertainty attached to the current assumptions and financial modelling to 2023/24 be acknowledged in view of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review, the Fair Funding Review and changes to the Business Rates Retention system.
- (8) That a further report be brought back to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee updating the Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022/23 to 2024/25.

AMENDMENT

It was moved by Councillor N. Ahmed and seconded by Councillor M. Goulthorp –

That the Conservative Group's General Fund Revenue Budget for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix 2 to these Minutes, be approved.

A copy of the amendment was circulated prior to the meeting.

In accordance with minute 28 above a recorded vote was taken on this issue.

Those Members voting in favour of the amendment were Councillors:

N. Ahmed, M. Aslam, N. Butterworth, R. Carroll, C. Carter, S. Cockburn-Price, T. Cooney, L. Crossley, M. Foxley, P. Foxley, M. Goulthorp, C. Lioni, N. McGowan, J. Purcell and G. Waugh.

Those Members voting against the amendment were Councillors:

G. Adam, Z. Ali, M. Ammer, E. Ansar, N. Ashraf, D. Clegg, V. Fletcher, T. Greaves, M. Hanif, K. Hartley, M. Iqbal, Y. Iqbal, D. Lord, N. McCollum, A. Mann, J. Mills, B. Newman, M. Sakib, Y. Tennant, K. Turner, D. Whipp, T. Whipp and S. Wicks.

Upon being put to the vote the amendment was **LOST**.

No further amendments were moved and the Mayor put forward the motion from the Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups.

The Motion was **CARRIED** and it was –

RESOLVED

- (1) That the proposal to maintain the General Fund Minimum Working Balance at £1.0m be noted.
- (2) That the projected outturn position in the current financial year be noted.
- (3) That in relation to Pendle Leisure Trust, and subject to consideration of the residual saving proposals for 2021/22, a grant to the Trust of £1,445,140 in 2021/22 be agreed (noting the proposal to hold an additional contingent sum of £400k in the event it was necessary to further support the Trust due to the impact of Covid-19).
- (4) That the joint Labour/Liberal Democrat General Fund Budget for 2021/22 be approved, attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.
- (5) That a Band D Council Tax for 2021/22 of £276.01, being an increase of £5.39 (1.99%) on the current level of Council Tax be approved.
- (6) That each Service be requested to operate within its budget for 2021/22 once approved and that these budgets be cash limited and subject to regular monitoring and control.

Council (25.02.2021)

- (7) That the uncertainty attached to the current assumptions and financial modelling to 2023/24 be acknowledged in view of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review, the Fair Funding Review and changes to the Business Rates Retention system.
- (8) That a further report be brought back to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee updating the Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022/23 to 2024/25.

In accordance with minute 28 above a recorded vote was taken on this issue.

Those Members voting in favour of the motion were Councillors:

G. Adam, Z. Ali, M. Ammer, E. Ansar, N. Ashraf, D. Clegg, T. Greaves, M. Hanif, K. Hartley, M. Iqbal, Y. Iqbal, D. Lord, A. Mann, J. Mills, B. Newman, M. Sakib, Y. Tennant, K. Turner, D. Whipp, T. Whipp and S. Wicks.

Those Members voting against the motion were Councillors:

N. Ahmad, M. Aslam, N. Butterworth, R. Carroll, C. Carter, S. Cockburn-Price, T. Cooney, V. Fletcher, M. Foxley, P. Foxley, M. Goulthorp, C. Lioni, N. McCollum, N. McGowan, J. Purcell and G. Waugh.

33. SETTING OF THE COUNCIL TAX 2021/22

MOTION

It was moved by Councillor M. Iqbal, seconded by Councillor D. Whipp and –

RESOLVED

That the Council Tax calculations 2021/22 and the Council Declaration set out in Appendix 3 to these Minutes be approved.

In accordance with minute 28 above a recorded vote was taken on this issue.

Those Members voting in favour of the motion were Councillors:

G. Adam, N. Ahmed, Z. Ali, M. Ammer, E. Ansar, N. Ashraf, M. Aslam, N. Butterworth, R. Carroll, C. Arter, D. Clegg, S. Cockburn-Price, T. Cooney, M. Foxley, P. Foxley, M. Goulthorp, T. Greaves, M. Hanif, K. Hartley, M. Iqbal, Y. Iqbal, C. Lioni, D. Lord, N. McCollum, N. McGowan, A. Mann, J. Mills, B. Newman, J. Purcell, M. Sakib, Y. Tennant, K. Turner, G. Waugh, D. Whipp, T. Whipp and S. Wicks.

Councillor V. Fletcher voted against the motion.

34. NOTICES OF MOTION

(a) Vaccinations

It was moved by Councillor D. Whipp and seconded by Councillor D. Lord –

Council (25.02.2021)

Council welcomes the vaccination of thousands of Pendle people in high priority groups in recent weeks and thanks all the doctors, nurses, health care workers and volunteers who have helped make vaccines available through the local Primary Care Network centres at Colne Health Centre and Yarnspinners Wharf in Nelson.

Council notes the successful programme is being delivered through local public sector systems and staff working effectively with other local public sector organisations. Council further notes that this success was in stark contrast to the inadequate response of the national Test and Trace system that uses remote private sector companies providing ineffective tracing and consequent ineffective isolation of Covid 19 cases.

Council believes effective tracing of positive cases was critical to reducing infections to zero and that implementing an efficient find, test, trace and isolation system, in combination with continued vaccinations, was curial in the coming months.

Accordingly, Council resolves to:

- (1) Formally place on record its thanks to all the staff and volunteers involved with the local Primary Care Network vaccination programme, together with other NHS, Public Health, Council staff and others involved with the fight against Covid 19.
- (2) Support the continued vaccination programme in whatever way it can in order that vulnerable people, including those who are homeless, receive vaccines at the earliest opportunity.
- (3) Reiterate this Council's request for locally based and properly resourced systems and staffing to allow full local case and contact tracing to be carried out using established public sector structures.
- (4) Request the Chief Executive to convey the Council's resolution to appropriate agencies, organisations and Government Ministers etc.

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(b) Broadband

It was moved by Councillor T. Whipp and seconded by Councillor B. Newman –

Council notes the poor broadband service available to Pendle residents in rural parts of Pendle, with over half the borough's population beyond the full fibre available within the urban core.

Council recognises that with increased reliance on home working and home schooling, adequate bandwidth was essential for many households and that good broadband was critical for businesses and jobs.

Council welcomes consideration of this issue at the Policy and Resources Committee and consequent meetings with Lancashire County Council and Openreach and particularly welcomes the installation of full fibre broadband (Fibre To The Property (FTTP)) to the Barnoldswick exchange through commercial Openreach activity.

Council notes that there are no plans to extend FTTP broadband to the Earby exchange and that the rural fringe of Pendle, including large communities, continue to be on the wrong side of the digital divide.

Council resolves to:

- (1) Request relevant Government Ministers to prioritise full fibre provision to exchanges such as Earby's and the rural communities of Pendle.
- (2) Request Pendle MP Andrew Stephenson to lobby Government colleagues for Fibre To The Premises to be available across the borough.
- (3) Request the Policy and Resources Committee to consider how Pendle Council could assist further with provision of broadband to rural communities in Pendle.

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(c) Road Repairs

It was moved by Councillor D. Clegg and seconded by Councillor J. Mills –

Council notes:

- (1) The promises four years ago by County Council candidates, who subsequently became part of the ruling group at County Hall, that there would be fair funding for road repairs in Pendle, an audit of conditions and pledges of millions extra for road repairs in the Borough.
- (2) That since then, the promised funding for road repairs hasn't materialised, our area has continued to suffer a shortfall in funding and roads continue to rot across Pendle.
- (3) That highway improvement funds have been moved from Pendle to Burnley.

Council therefore resolves that Lancashire County Council be requested to ensure fair funding for road repairs in Pendle and an end to rotten roads in the Borough.

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(d) A56 Colne Bypass

It was moved by Councillor D. Whipp and seconded by Councillor A. Mann –

Council notes the announcement in October 2019 of a £300,000 study by Highways England into addressing the problems of traffic from the end of the M65 which should have been reported in the first quarter of 2020.

Council (25.02.2021)

Council notes that this report appears not to have been published, but that there are reports that the Highway England study looked solely at extending the M65 through Colne and over The Moss into Yorkshire, rather than options to bypass Colne and provide relief from traffic to communities along the A56.

Council calls for the publication of this study and resolves that regional transport authorities, Government agencies, the Secretary of State for Transport and Pendle's MP are pressed to identify and implement solutions to the problem of traffic in Colne and communities along the A56 without further delay.

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

(e) Elections

To be moved by Councillor A. R. Greaves and seconded by Councillor M. Iqbal –

Pendle Council notes that the Government is requiring the Police Commissioner and Council elections to go ahead on 6th May and that the Electoral Commission was issuing requirements and advice to enable them to take place in a safe and effective manner.

Council further notes:

- (1) That the Lancashire Electoral Returning Officers wrote to the government requesting that the elections should either take place on the basis of all electors being sent a postal vote, or that the elections should be deferred until the autumn, but that the Government rejected this advice.
- (2) That the extra work involved in running Covid-secure elections on 6th May was putting a very great strain on the resources of the Council and diverting effort from the provision of its services and efforts to combat the Covid pandemic in Pendle.
- (3) Expresses its sincere gratitude to the Council staff who are undertaking this work in the current difficult circumstances and to Council staff and others who are able and willing to volunteer to participate in the operation of the elections, including on polling day and counting the votes.

Council calls on the Government:

- (1) To ensure that the Council was fully recompensed for the costs of running these elections, including all the extra costs due to measures to make them as Covid secure as possible.
- (2) To ensure that all candidates and local political parties were able to operate effective election campaigns on a full, fair and equitable basis in order to provide electors with full information and a proper choice and that the current restrictions on campaigning must be lifted as soon as it was possible to do so.

RESOLVED

Accordingly.

His Worship the Mayor _____

Appendix 1 – Labour/Liberal Democrat Budget 2021/22

Appendix 2 – Conservative Budget 2021/22

Appendix 3 – 2021/22 Council Tax Resolution

Appendix 4 – Leader’s Budget Speech