

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Thursday, 9th February, 2017

Present: Cllr N J Heslop (Chairman), Cllr M A Coffin, Cllr Mrs M F Heslop, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr H S Rogers and Cllr Miss S O Shrubsole

Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, O C Baldock, M A C Balfour, Mrs S M Barker, T Bishop, D J Cure, D Markham, Mrs A S Oakley, Ms S V Spence and A K Sullivan were also present pursuant to Access to Information Rule No 22.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

CB 17/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor N Heslop declared an Other Significant Interest in the item on Review of Fees and Charges in respect of charges for concessionary users of Tonbridge Castle Chamber on the grounds of membership of the Board of the Bridge Trust. He withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this matter and the chair was taken by Councillor Coffin.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

CB 17/19 SETTING THE BUDGET 2017/18

Further to the reports to the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee earlier in the cycle, the joint report of the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Transformation, the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property updated the Cabinet on issues relating to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and gave details of the necessary procedure to be followed in order to set the budget for 2017/18. It also highlighted adjustments made to the Revenue Estimates presented to the Advisory Board and Committee.

The Director of Finance and Transformation explained that the final local government settlement would not be received until after being debated by Parliament on 22 February but was not expected to be significantly different from the provisional settlement. However, this meant that the recommended budget was based on provisional figures and the council tax would also need to be set on that basis. Reference was made to the Council's decision to accept the four year funding settlement offered by the Government and to the referendum threshold for 2017/18 which had been set at the higher of 2% or £5 (subject to ratification of the final settlement). Illustrative allocations up to 2019/20 were presented and a comparison of the Council's Settlement Funding Assessment for the

period 2017/18 to 2019/20 with those of the other Kent district councils demonstrated that Tonbridge and Malling continued to receive one of the lowest, if not the lowest, Assessment both in total and per head.

Attention was drawn to recommendations from Advisory Boards and the decision of the Licensing and Appeals Committee regarding the levels of fees and charges to be implemented from 1 April 2017 which had been incorporated in the draft estimates. Members were reminded of the approach to preparation of the Capital Plan, an updated summary of which was set out at Annex 7 to the report.

The report then described the remaining procedure to be followed in setting the budget for 2017/18 and calculating the council tax. Consideration was given to the updated MTFs based on a council tax increase of £5 (the upper limit for referendum purposes) for the remainder of the four year settlement period. The Cabinet also deliberated on the most appropriate guidance to offer the Council as to the way forward for updating the MTFs for the next ten year period and setting the council tax for 2017/18. Members were advised of the implications of the special expenses scheme for the way in which the council tax was expressed.

An updated copy of the Savings and Transformation Strategy was presented, including revised outline targets and timescales to be revisited and aligned with the latest projected “funding gap”. Finally, the Director of Finance and Transformation explained the basis on which the statement as to the Robustness of the Estimates and Adequacy of the Reserves had been made, including an understanding that the savings target based on latest projections of £1.6m would be delivered.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the fees and charges set out in Annex 2 to the report, as recommended by the appropriate Advisory Boards, be endorsed (see Decision Nos D170010CAB to D170015CAB);
- (2) the Capital Plan be updated as set out in paragraph 1.5.14 to the report as follows and adopted accordingly:
 - (i) the position of the existing Capital Plan (List A) as summarised in Annex 3 to the report be approved;
 - (ii) the schemes as detailed in Annex 4 to the report be added to List C or deleted from List C;
 - (iii) the selection of those schemes listed in Annex 5 to the report for evaluation over the coming year be approved including two for fast-track evaluation;

- (iv) the transfer of the schemes detailed in Annex 6 to the report to List A be approved;
- (v) the updated Capital Plan (List A) as summarised in Annex 7 to the report be approved;
- (3) the Capital Strategy as presented to the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board on 4 January and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2017 be endorsed and adopted by the Council;
- (4) the prudential indicators listed in paragraphs 1.6.5 and 1.6.9 of the report be endorsed and adopted;
- (5) for the financial year 2017/18 the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision, as set out at paragraph 1.6.12 of the report, be noted as nil;
- (6) the high level objectives of the Medium Term Financial Strategy be reaffirmed as set out in paragraph 1.8.4 of the report;
- (7) the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy, as set out at Annex 11a to the report, including the proposed scale and timing of each of the savings tranches indicated in paragraph 1.8.9 of the report, be noted and endorsed;
- (8) the Council be recommended to approve a council tax increase of £5 per annum as the best way forward in updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the next ten-year period and setting the council tax for 2017/18;
- (9) the updates made to the Savings and Transformation Strategy be endorsed and adopted by the Council as part of the Budget setting process;
- (10) the special expenses calculated in accordance with the Special Expenses Scheme set out in Annex 14b to the report be endorsed; and
- (11) the Statement provided by the Director of Finance and Transformation as to the Robustness of the Estimates and the Adequacy of the Reserves be noted and endorsed.

***Referred to Council**

CB 17/20 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX 2017/18

The joint report of the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Transformation, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance,

Innovation and Property set out the requirements under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for a billing authority to set an amount of council tax for each category of dwelling in its area. Members were advised of the position concerning the determination of their respective precepts for 2017/18 by the major precepting authorities.

Consideration was given to a draft resolution identifying the processes to be undertaken in arriving at the levels of council tax applicable to each part of the Borough. The resolution and further information regarding the precepts of the other authorities would be reported to the full Council on 14 February 2017. The Director of Finance and Transformation explained that there would be a basic level of council tax to which any charges under the special expenses scheme would be added, giving a notional "average" Band D charge for official reporting purposes. An explanatory leaflet regarding the introduction of special expenses would be included with council tax bills together with usual financial information on the website.

RECOMMENDED: That the resolution be noted and the Council be recommended to approve a £5 per annum increase in the Borough Council's element of the council tax for 2017/18, representing an annual charge at Band D of £181.61 plus special expenses where applicable (giving a notional "average" charge of £197.51).

***Referred to Council**

**DECISIONS TAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 4,
PART 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION**

CB 17/21 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES

Decision Notice D170010CAB

CB 17/22 HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMO) AND CARAVAN SITE LICENSING

Decision Notice D170011CAB

CB 17/23 REVIEW OF CEMETERY CHARGES 2017/18

Decision Notice D170012CAB

CB 17/24 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18

Decision Notice D170013CAB

CB 17/25 BUILDING REGULATION FEES

Decision Notice D170014CAB

CB 17/26 REVIEW OF PRE-APPLICATION PLANNING CHARGING REGIME

Decision Notice D170015CAB

CB 17/27 TONBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE - STRATEGIC ASSET REVIEW

Decision Notice D170016CAB

CB 17/28 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items considered in private.

PART 2 - PRIVATE**CB 17/29 TONBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE - STRATEGIC ASSET REVIEW - ANNEXES**

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

Supplementary report and Annexes 2, 3(i) – (iv), 4, 6 and 7 containing exempt information in respect of item at Decision Notice D170016CAB.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm