

## **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**11th December 2018**

**Present:** Councillor Stephen in the Chair

**Councillors Agar, Bayliss (Vice-Chairman), Berry, Denlegh-Maxwell, Geraghty, Gregson (Vice-Chairman), Hodges, Mrs L. Hodgson, Knight, Lamb, J. Squires and Stanley**

**Also in Attendance:**

**Councillor Johnson**

**Officers:**

**Mark Baldwin, Head of Finance  
David Blake, Managing Director  
Shane Flynn, Corporate Director – Finance and Resources  
Warwick Neale, Team Manager - Community Engagement  
Andrew Round, Corporate Director – Place  
David Sutton, Deputy Director - Corporate Policy and Strategy  
Rishi Verma, Corporate Strategy and Policy Manager**

### **62 Appointment of Substitutes**

Councillor Denlegh-Maxwell for Councillor Mitchell. Councillor Lamb for Councillor Denham.

### **63 Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **64 Public Representations**

None.

### **65 Minutes**

**RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

### **66 Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-2024 and Draft Budget & Council Tax 2019/20**

The Committee considered a report setting out the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2019-2024; the Transformation and Savings Plan from 2017/18-2018/19; the draft Capital Programme and Capital Financing 2019-2024; and the Draft Budget and Council Tax 2019/20. The Corporate Director – Finance and Resources presented the report and highlighted the main points. Officers responded to questions from Members on detailed aspects of the report.

In summary, the main headlines for the Draft Budget and Council Tax 2019/20 were:

- i. A balanced budget for 2019/20;
- ii. Assumption of a 2% pay award and adoption of the new NJC pay scales, subject to maintaining the differential created by the Council's pay freeze in 2014, which increases the overall cost to approximately 2.8%;
- iii. Continued freeze on City Council car parking charges;
- iv. Capital programme investment of £5.4m;
- v. Council Tax increases of 2.99% at Band D;
- vi. Allocating £0.76m of New Homes Bonus for investment, being 51% of the total amount received.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- The MTFP and the Draft Budget & Council Tax 2019/20 will be updated for the Committee meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019.
- In response to a question about local business rates pilots and the extent to which these will support County Council services, Members were advised that details can be provided on County and City elements of the bid. More information will be available for the budget briefing for Members that has been arranged for 17<sup>th</sup> January.
- In response to a comment on pay and the living wage, Members were advised that the February budget report will clarify that the Council pays the real living wage.
- It was highlighted that approximately 90% of the Transformation and Savings Plan has been achieved. Furthermore, almost £500k has been generated from income generation initiatives. The MTFP 2019/20 includes a number of new initiatives for both efficiencies and income generation.
- Members welcomed the report and the forecast to deliver a balanced budget for five years, although it was acknowledged that circumstances can change.

Committee Members expressed support for the recommendations as set out in the report.

**RESOLVED: That the Committee agree to:**

- 1. refer the Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2019-2024, and the proposed Draft Budget & Council Tax for 2019/20, including the financial management priorities and key assumptions for the short term and medium term planning horizon to members for consideration at the committee meetings in January 2019 and feedback to the Policy and Resources Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019;**

2. **approve, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2003 and the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012, that the Council Tax Base calculation for the year 2019/20 will be 31,898.0 for Worcester City Council, including 3,951.9 for Warndon Parish Council and 2,197.1 for St Peter's Parish Council (as detailed in Appendix 5);**
3. **note that the proposals will be updated for any agreed changes following budget consultation with members, and for any significant changes following the publication of the Local Government Finance Settlement. Formal adoption of the MTFP and the Budget & Council Tax 2019/20, will be recommended to Full Council for approval on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019; and**
4. **invite all political groups and/or individual members to notify the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources no later than 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 of any other budget proposals that they wish officers to explore and request the Corporate Director to include such proposals in the reports for consideration by members at the January meetings.**

## **67 CCTV Investment Plan**

The Committee considered a report on proposals for modernisation of, and investment in, CCTV cameras in the City. The Corporate Director – Place presented the report and summarised the main points. Officers responded to questions from Committee Members on detailed aspects of the report.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- Officers advised that the net funding requirement of £398,000 is not dependent on partner investment, and the camera locations on the west side of the river are not affected by the level of contribution from the University of Worcester.
- Officers will consider whether to include mobile cameras when drafting the contract specification.
- There was no facility to view footage from the Castle Street Police Station as the control room is located at Wychavon Council's Pershore office. Officers would establish with the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner whether Police locally can access footage via mobile devices.

Committee Members expressed support for the proposals for investment as set out in the report.

### **RESOLVED: That the Committee agree to:**

1. **note the recommendation of the Communities Committee at its meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018 to support the modernisation of, and investment in CCTV cameras (see Appendix 1 to the report);**

2. **recommend to Council an increase in the Capital Programme of £398,000 to complement partner investment from the Police and Crime Commissioner and the University of Worcester to replace analogue CCTV street cameras and supporting fibre and technology with a completely digital HD system; and**
3. **instruct officers to procure works to upgrade and maintain the conversion from an analogue CCTV street camera network to a completely digital HD system. To delegate the award of the contract to Director of Place in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Communities Committee.**

## **68 Fees and Charges for 2019 - Freedom Leisure Contract**

The Committee considered a report on proposals from Freedom Leisure for fees and charges with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019. The Corporate Director – Place presented the report and explained that the majority of the Council’s fees and charges are agreed at the February Council meeting and implemented with effect from the following 1<sup>st</sup> April. However, Freedom Leisure had previously submitted a formal request to increase their fees and charges with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January each year, the rationale being that demand for indoor leisure provision is at its highest in the first quarter of the calendar year.

Officers responded to questions from Committee Members on detailed aspects of the report.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- The reasons for the significant increase in rig/de-rig charges for clubs and private hire were explained. The increased had been agreed with Worcester Swimming Club.
- Reference was made to the proposed re- introduced a fee for under 8s toddler swimming. The view was expressed that this might deter adults with young children. Officers agreed to establish the rationale with Freedom Leisure.
- Members asked if there could be engagement with Public Health Worcestershire when preparing the fees and charges for 2020/21.

Committee Members expressed support for the recommendations as set out in the report.

**RESOLVED: That the Committee approve the Fees & Charges submitted by Freedom Leisure for 2019 (covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 inclusive) and relating to Perdiswell Leisure Centre, St Johns Sports Centre, Nunnery Wood Sports Complex and Active Communities Worcester (formerly the Sport, Art & Play Development Service).**

**69 Shared Services Governance and Reporting**

The Committee received a report for information on the various governance arrangements, reporting structures and content currently in place for shared services. The Deputy Director - Corporate Policy and Strategy presented the report and answered Members' questions.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were made:

- This report provided an overview and any questions of detail could be answered outside the meeting.
- With reference to the Joint Museums Service, it was clarified that the current Chair of Communities Committee is not one of the Council's representatives on the Joint Museums Committee.
- In response to a question about standardising hackney carriage vehicle licence conditions across Worcestershire, the Managing Director stated that he would take this up with the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

**RESOLVED: That the Committee note the content of this report.**

**70 Any Other Business**

None.

**Duration of the meeting:** 7.00p.m. – 8.45p.m.

Chairman at the meeting on  
5th February 2019

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