

POLICY COMMITTEE

4 February 2020

Present – The Chairman Councillor Foster and Councillors Brockbank, Heseltine, Lis, Morrell, Myers, Noland, Place, Solloway and Wheeler.

Officers – Chief Executive, Director of Services, Strategic Manager for Planning and Regeneration, Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer), Accountancy Services Manager, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Human Resources Manager, Planning Manager, Exchequer and Performance Manager, Environmental Services Manager and Democratic Services Manager.

Also in attendance: Councillor Shuttleworth, Chair of Planning Enforcement and Building Control Working Group (agenda item 5 only) and Councillor Andrew Brown.

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 8.30pm

Apologies for Absence and Substitutes: Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors Barrett, Ireton, Madeley, Mulligan, Rose and Welch. Notification had been received that Councillor Solloway was to substitute for Councillor Barrett.

Confirmation of Minutes: The minutes of the Policy Committee meeting held on 14 January 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Public Participation: There were no members of the public in attendance.

Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes for Report

POL.1045

REVIEW OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a report which presented the Select Committee's review of Planning Enforcement and Building Control. The aim of the review was to make an assessment of performance and, where appropriate, make recommendations on a number of key areas. The review was conducted over two sessions when Select Committee received a range of evidence both written and verbal from the Planning Manager and the Planning Enforcement Team Leader.

In concluding the review, the Select Committee recognised that the service was currently operating a re-active service and it was clear that greater resources were needed to develop the service and manage planning enforcement pro-actively.

The Chair thanked the Select Committee for all their hard work in undertaking the review.

Resolved –

- (1) That recommendations one and three as set out in the Select Committee's review of Planning Enforcement and Building Control are agreed.
- (2) That whilst agreed in principle, further discussions by officers are required in relation to recommendation two. A report on a supplementary estimate will be submitted to Policy Committee in March 2020 or as soon as practically possible.

Minutes for Decision

POL.1046

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2020/21

The Human Resources Manager submitted a report which sought approval to implement the Council's 2020/21 Pay Policy Statement in accordance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The

statement outlined the Council's policy towards the pay of the workforce, particularly senior staff and lowest paid employees.

Recommended – That implementation of the Council's 2020/21 Pay Policy Statement is approved.

POL.1047

COUNCIL PLAN 2020 AND BEYOND

The Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) submitted a report which presented the Craven District Council Plan 2020 and Beyond for approval. The Plan sets out the Council's agenda for improving service delivery to Craven's communities as well as organisational change. The Plan represented a substantial change to the 2019 Plan, with four new long-term priorities informed by the Peer Review process and a new strategic planning process. The Plan identified the Council's vision and priorities for Craven and intended outcomes. It also included the delivery mechanisms and projects the Council would implement to achieve those outcomes.

Recommended – That the Council Plan 2020 and Beyond is approved and delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive to:

- a) Make minor amendments including the revision of delivery mechanisms and amendments to timescales for delivery as necessary, in consultation with the Leader of the Council; and
- b) Agree performance indicators and associated targets that will be used to measure progress against the achievement of the priorities and objectives set out in the Plan.

POL.1048

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21

The Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) submitted a report which sought approval for the 2020/21-2023/24 capital programme, subject to there being sufficient capital resources.

Recommended –

- (1) That £2,847,850 of continuing projects from the 2019/20-2022/23 programme is noted and that no slippage has been confirmed at this stage.
- (2) That the new capital programme projects of £1,647,524 are approved.
- (3) That a total capital programme for 2020/21 of £4,495,374 is approved.
- (4) That the final allocation of funding for the 2020/21 capital programme is confirmed once the outturn position of the 2019/2020 revenue budget is finalised.

POL.1049

REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (MTFP) 2020/21 TO 2023/24

The Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) submitted a report which identified a fully funded budget for 2020/21 together with a recommendation for a prudent level of general fund reserve balances for the financial year. The report also outlined the medium term financial plan (MTFP) to 2023/24.

As the settlement had not been confirmed, the 2020/21 budget was based on the draft grant settlement announced in December 2019. Little change to the figures was expected. As part of that announcement, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government gave permission for Council's to increase their Council Tax by 1.99%, without triggering a referendum or £5 whichever was the greater. A £5 increase gave a Council Tax of £177.21 at Band D.

In accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government 2003, the Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) made a specific personal statement that the revenue budget was robust and delivered a balanced budget in 2020/21.

During the debate, Members thanked the Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) and his team for all their hard work in producing a balanced budget.

Recommended –

- (1) That the revenue budget assumptions as detailed in the report are noted.
- (2) That the revenue budget for 2020/21 of £7,042,116 detailed in Appendix A to the report, is approved.
- (3) That the schedule of growth bids of £152,195 as detailed in Appendix C to the report, are approved.
- (4) That the savings of £68,000 as detailed in Appendix D to the report, are approved.
- (5) That a contribution from the New Homes Bonus Reserve of £225,000 is made to support the 2020/21 budget, subject to the realisation of the amber savings identified in Appendix D to the report, in addition to £137,000 for approved projects, giving a total of £353,000.
- (6) That the assessment of the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves in Paragraph 10 and Appendix F of the report, is approved.
- (7) That the estimated sum of £995,000 as identified as the General Fund Balance as at 31 March 2020 in Paragraph 10 and Appendix F of the report, is approved.
- (8) That the Council Tax is increased at Band D by £5 to £177.21.
- (9) That the revenue budget incorporates the net contributions to / (from) earmarked reserves as detailed in Tables 1 and 2, Appendix A and Annex 1.
- (10) a) That as part of the budget setting report to Council, an update is provided on the estimated Craven District Council allocation of retained business rates North and West Yorkshire.
b) That any significant variance to the figures included within the budget report proposals are adjusted through contributions (to) / from the business rates equalisation reserve.
- (11) That should additional resources be available through the retained business rates scheme, a matching contribution to the Business Rates Contingency Reserve is made to mitigate against future uncertainties.
- (12) That the funding sources identified in the report and Appendix A are approved:

		£'000
a)	Revenue Support Grant	-
b)	Rural Services Grant	280
c)	Housing Grants	46
d)	New Homes Bonus	564
e)	Retained Business Rates	1,720
f)	Business Rates Collection Fund (Deficit)	14
g)	Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	25
h)	Council Tax	4,008
i)	Contribution from General Fund Balance	0
j)	Contribution (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	385
	Total Funding	7,042

- (13) That the Medium Term Financial Plan and the estimates of future years' budgets are noted.

POL.1050

**2020/21 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STATEMENT, MINIMUM
REVENUE PROVISION STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT
STRATEGY**

The Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) submitted a report which presented for approval the proposed Treasury Management Strategy together with the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, Prudential Indicators and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2020/21, as required by the Department of Communities and Local Government and CIPFA.

The Council was required to operate a balanced budget and part of treasury management was to ensure that cash flow was adequately planned with cash being available when needed. Surplus monies were invested in low risk counterparties with security of capital and liquidity of funds being considered before investment return. The counterparty lending limits enabled the Council to take full advantage of investment opportunities whilst maintaining a sufficient level of security of capital.

The strategy ensured that the required funding sources was available to support the Council's capital spending plans and longer term cash flow planning was necessary to ensure capital spending obligations were met.

The strategy also determined the limits of borrowing and investments that officers would apply over the next 12 months in order to ensure the Council's capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

Members were advised that all local authorities were required to prepare an additional capital strategy report to ensure that all Elected Members fully understood the overall long-term policy objectives and resultant capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

Recommended –

- (1) That the operational boundary for 2020/21 is set at £10.5m.
- (2) That the authorised limits for 2020/21 is set at £12.75m.
- (3) That delegated authority is given to the Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) to effect movement within the agreed operational boundary and authorised limits for long-term borrowing for 2020/21 onwards.
- (4) That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2020/21 incorporating the Minimum Revenue Position Policy Statement and the Annual Investment Strategy, is approved.
- (5) That the Prudential Indicators for 2020/21, which reflect that the capital expenditure plans are affordable, prudent, and sustainable are approved.

POL.1051

CAPITAL STRATEGY 2020-2024

The Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) submitted a report which presented for approval a Capital Strategy that was intended to give a high level overview of how capital expenditure and financing plans are decided upon and how they contributed to the delivery of the Council Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and overall delivery of services.

The Strategy would be refreshed on an annual basis to enable it to remain consistent with the Council Plan which was set periodically and refreshed in the intervening years. The Strategy gave a framework for budget considerations for the next four years and gave an indication of the likely factors that would have an impact on the budget setting process.

Recommended – That the Capital Strategy 2020-2024 is approved and that it will be refreshed on an annual basis alongside the Treasury Management and Investment Strategies.

POL.1052

CLIMATE EMERGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

The Chief Finance Officer (s151 Officer) submitted a report which presented the Council's Climate Emergency Strategic Plan for approval following a climate emergency declaration made by Craven District Council. On 6 August 2019 the Council resolved that a strategic plan setting out how a carbon neutral District could be achieved and that this should be presented to Members within six months.

The plan had been compiled in partnership with many organisations and community groups across the District and it described how the Council would work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030 both for its own operations and, together with partners, across the Craven District.

The report identified 7 strategic priorities:

- Carbon neutral energy
- Carbon neutral development
- Travel and transportation
- Low carbon waste
- Land and nature
- Use of materials

- Our Council.

Recommended – That the Climate Emergency Strategic Plan is approved and delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive to:

- a) Make any minor amendments to the Plan including revision of the delivery mechanisms and amendments to timescales as necessary, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
- b) Oversee the regular monitoring and reporting of progress in achieving the actions defined within the Plan, as part of the Council's performance management process.

Chairman