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COUNCIL

Date and Time: Thursday 23 February 2023 at 7.00 pm

Place: Council Chamber

Present:

COUNCILLORS -

Worlock (Chairman)

Axam	Delaney	Makepeace-Browne
Bailey	Dorn	Neighbour
Blewett	Engström	Oliver
Butler	Farmer	Quarterman
Clarke	Forster	Radley
Coburn	Hale	Smith
Cockarill	Harward	Southern
Collins	Kennett	Wright
Crisp	Kinnell	
Davies	Lamb	

Officers Present:

Daryl Phillips	Chief Executive
Graeme Clark	Executive Director, Corporate Services & S151 Officer
Sharon Black	Committee Services Manager
Claire Lord	Committee and Members Services Officer
Emma Evans	Committee and Members Services Officer

61 PRESENTATION FROM MUSTARD SEED AUTISM

Sarah Clements from Mustard Seed Autism gave a presentation on the work of the organisation.

- Charity registered in 2012 and has 2 full time and 3 part time staff with 20 volunteers
- Work with whole family as well as the child and siblings
- Currently working with 3-11 year olds – parental referrals only
- 120 families per year directly supported; another 150 supported through advice line
- 50% of funding comes from grants, rest from donations

Members asked:

- Whether the organisation had a membership scheme and used gift aid
- Whether the whole of Hart was covered
- Why the organisation was called Mustard Seed
- Whether the organisation worked with Autism Friendly Fleet

- Whether Mustard Seed helped families with their gaining of a diagnosis of autism

62 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of 26 January 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Proposed by: Cllr Neighbour; Seconded by Cllr Farmer

63 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Butcher, Crampton, Wildsmith and Woods.

64 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Farmer declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 11 as he was Chairman of Hart Swimming Club, which hired facilities at the leisure centre.

Cllr Forster declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Hampshire County Councillor

65 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12 - QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC

There had been no questions received from members of the public.

66 COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 14 - QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

A question had been received from Councillor Kennett, as detailed in Appendix A.

Appendix A - Questions from Members

67 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman's engagements since the last meeting were noted:

5 Feb: Mayor of Yateley Town Civic Service at St Peter's Church, Yateley

14 Feb: Visit to Abundance Finance, Fleet

The programme for the Civic Day being held on 21 March had been confirmed and a full report would be made at the April Meeting. The Chairman's Charity Dinner was to be held on 20 April at The Elvetham hotel, to be preceded by the Chairman's Volunteer Awards. Information was being circulated, including via social media and Hart Voluntary Action.

68 CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council, and member for Strategic Direction, Partnership and Countryside, Councillor Neighbour:

- The County deal was proceeding but did not involve district councils. More information would be given when available

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Radley:

- Nothing to report

The Cabinet Member for Digital and Communications, Councillor Clarke:

- Nothing to report

The Cabinet Member for Community, Councillor Bailey:

- Members may have picked up that the government announced a few days ago further funding would be made available for the Hardship Support Fund. Our money comes through Hampshire HCC and we are waiting to learn them about the distribution formula that will be used. However, there is still some limited money in our current budget - and the details of how to access this are on our website. The email address is hardship@hart.gov.uk We cannot help residents with cash but we can assist with practical solutions.
- On Tuesday evening the Housing Team held a successful landlords forum, attended by 37 landlords. These landlords are key to the homelessness prevention work we do – providing a mix of homes (family homes and HMO's) for those facing homelessness. There were a range of external speakers including DWP and Stop Domestic Abuse as well as discussions about how landlords can tackle climate change with energy efficiency works and how they can work with us to provide homes for Ukrainian families.
- Despite Hart having one of lowest incidences of ASB in Hampshire this council takes great importance in its role supporting community safety. And from the 1st March our community safety team will be increased by 50%. I am also delighted to announce that on 1st March Hart's CCTV service currently supported from Rushmoor is transferring to Runnymede Borough Council in Addlestone. The move will provide a more resilient service supported by state-of-the-art technology. The Runnymede control centre operates 24/7 and in addition to managing our CCTV's the control centre will provide other areas of out of hours service support for the Council.

Councillors queried:

- Whether it was correct that the feed from Hart to Rushmoor had been interrupted earlier in the week
- Whether it was correct that the control room at Runnymede was not in radio contact with emergency services
- Whether Hart was aware of the growing trend of families in private rented accommodation being made homeless, and what was being done?

Cllr Bailey responded by saying he would be visiting the Runnymede facility shortly and would provide a written response to these questions after that

visit. However, it was to be noted that Runnymede was not yet responsible for the CCTV service.

Hart was aware of the issue with those who privately rent being evicted and knew of some cases within the District. Members were reassured that the Housing team worked with those at risk to find alternative accommodation.

The Cabinet Member for Place, Councillor Cockarill:

- Nothing to report

The Cabinet Member for Regulatory, Councillor Collins:

- Nothing to report

The Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Oliver:

- It has been decided that in recognition of the Kings Coronation in May that HDC will suspend all car parking fees for the celebratory Bank Holiday of 8th May. This will be for all council managed car parks. Residents will need to check if privately owned car parks or on-street parking such as HCC Harlington Way in Fleet amend their charges for the Coronation
- I am pleased to announce that this Administration is freezing all car park charges in the Budget for the 5th year in a row. This shows are focus on supporting our retail and leisure businesses across Hart in this cost of living crisis and helping our hard pressed residents to use our High Streets. This is in stark contrast to Harts neighbouring Conservative run councils. Using long term parking in the town centre for 2 hours as an example, Fleet currently has a charge of £1. This compares to Basingstoke £2.20, Camberley £2.20, Farnborough £1.50 and Farnham £2.20. Actions speak louder than out-of-touch (or should that be In Touch) promises
- I am pleased to announce that we have agreed and contracted for a trial of touch screen car parking ticket machines. This is in response to concerns raised on usability of existing machines trialled and procured under a previous Hart Conservative administration. The trial will be in Victoria Road car park in Fleet and will also look at future ability to introduce more flexible tariffs and cashless options. I can assure members that the trial this time around will be conducted professionally and not be rushed to get election photo opportunities for Portfolio holders.

The Cabinet Member for Commercialisation and Corporate Services, Councillor Quarterman

- Nothing to report.

(Councillor Southern left the Chamber between 7.03 and 7.04pm)

69 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members noted:

- That the pre-election period (formerly known as purdah) would commence on 22 March. For guidance please contact either the Chief Executive or Monitoring Officer
- A reminder not to use personal email accounts when contacting Officers
- Staffing levels were down at present, although interviews were taking place. Members were encouraged to use the Councillor Enquiries mailbox, so that enquiries can be directed appropriately.
- There would be a minute's silence at 11am on Friday 24 February to mark the first anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine

Members queried:

- Approximately how many certificates had been applied for (about 30)
- Whether there were plans for a photograph of the new King to be put up in the Chamber

70 BUDGET 2023/24

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, introduced the budget for 2023/24 and Members noted the following points:

- That a balanced budget was being proposed
- Car parking charges were being frozen for the 5th year running
- There was uncertainty around future funding from central government
- This was a very economically uncertain time

Cllr Radley proposed the budget with the following amendment:

“That Council approves a council tax exemption for care leavers aged 18 to 25 who are living independently, with a delegation to the S151 Officer to agree the necessary criteria and process”

The amended budget was seconded by Cllr Neighbour

An **amendment** was proposed by Cllr Farmer and seconded by Cllr Forster:

“This Council recognises the importance of an effectively monitored, well maintained CCTV service with cameras capable of recording high quality images and collecting viable evidence to support the identification and prosecution of offenders, and approves:-

- i) that the transfer of the monitoring of Harts CCTV cameras to Runnymede Borough Council with monitoring 24 hours a day is completed by 1st April 2023.
- ii) that a capital budget of up to £160K is allocated to the Council's capital programme for 2023/24 to fund a replacement of all the Council's existing

CCTV camera stock to high resolution cameras of which £45K has already been allocated, but not spent, by Cabinet in October 2020.

- iii) that this Council expands the existing CCTV network by 4 additional cameras, subject to confirmation of external funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner ASB Fund.”

Members debated and noted:

- Whether there was sufficient evidence that the CCTV cameras were not fit for purpose. It was countered that there was insufficient coverage by the existing CCTV cameras and that the police state the images were not of sufficient quality to identify individuals or secure convictions
- That the real issue was insufficient police resource to deal with incidents
- That if the police highlight there was an issue this would be looked at accordingly by Cabinet
- Whether there was a need to replace the existing cameras and whether four additional cameras would be sufficient. Further assessment was required
- Whether point (i) was a legitimate point for debate as it did not refer to the 2023/24 budget

In response to the final point, the Chief Executive confirmed that point (i) was not referring to 2023/24 and was not a budgetary decision, and was therefore ruled as being out of order.

A recorded vote was taken on the amended amendment:

For: Coburn; Dorn; Farmer; Forster; Hale; Southern; Wright (7)

Against: Axam; Bailey; Blewett; Butler; Clarke; Cockarill; Collins; Crisp; Davies; Delaney; Engstrom; Harward; Kinnell; Lamb; Makepeace-Browne; Neighbour; Oliver; Quarterman; Radley; Smith (20)

Abstain: Kennett; Worlock (2)

The amended amendment was therefore **defeated**

Cllr Forster proposed a further **amendment** relating to all licensing fees and charges proposed increases; seconded by Cllr Farmer,

“This Council will restrict any increases to a maximum of 10% to cover inflation so as to support businesses across Hart,”

Cllr Forster introduced the following points:

- The impact on traders due to the increases in licensing costs, in some cases up to 300%
- That these increases will be passed on to businesses
- That the budget impact would be £5,500pa

Members discussed:

- What the increases were and who would be most impacted
- Where the funding for the £5,500 cost of the cap would come from and whether this was the full impact of the proposed amendment
- That the increase in taxi and Hackney Carriage costs had been covered at Licensing Committee and there had been no complaints from any drivers
- That some increases were mandatory

A recorded vote was held on the **amendment**:

For: Coburn; Dorn; Farmer; Forster; Hale; Southern; Wright (7)

Against: Axam; Bailey; Blewett; Butler; Clarke; Cockarill; Collins; Crisp; Davies; Delaney; Engstrom; Harward; Kinnell; Lamb; Makepeace-Browne; Neighbour; Oliver; Quarterman; Radley; Smith (20)

Abstain: Kennett; Worlock (2)

The amended amendment was therefore **defeated**

A recorded vote was held on the substantive motion, as amended by Cllr Radley in his introduction

For: Axam; Bailey; Blewett; Butler; Clarke; Cockarill; Collins; Crisp; Davies; Delaney; Engstrom; Harward; Kinnell; Lamb; Makepeace-Browne; Neighbour; Oliver; Quarterman; Radley; Smith (20)

Against: Coburn; Dorn; Farmer; Forster; Hale; Kennett; Southern; Wright

Abstain: Worlock

DECISION

Council:

- i. agrees a 2.99% increase in Hart District Council's Band D Council Tax Charge for 2023/24,
- ii. agrees not to change the Council's existing Council Tax Support Scheme other than the required statutory uprating, Page 3 4
- iii. agrees to make changes to fees and charges for 2023/24 in line with the principles set out in this report, with full details being reported to full Council,
 - iiia To approve the schedule of fees and charges as set out in Appendix 5
- iv. approves the draft Revenue Budget for 2023/24 as summarised in paragraph 10.1 and Appendix 3, incorporating the baseline net service cost variations included at Appendix 4,
- v. approves the new Capital Bids as detailed in Appendix 1,
- vi. requests the S151 Officer to undertake a comprehensive review of reserves, provisions and SANG funds, as detailed in section 7 of this report, in Spring 2023 when the 2022/23 outturn is known and a more accurate assessment of economic conditions and business rate provisions can be made,

- vii. approves the Medium-Term Financial Strategy as set out in Appendix 2,
- viii. notes the emerging pressures and risks set out in the report and the S151 Officer's intention to undertake a mid-year review of detailed budgets, and
- ix. approves the capital receipt flexibility strategy detailed in the report under the Direction issued by the Government early in 2022
- x. That Council approves a council tax exemption for care leavers aged 18 to 25 who are living independently, with a delegation to the S151 Officer to agree the necessary criteria and process.

71 COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2023/24

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the item by reminding members that this was a paper setting out the process of collecting taxes on behalf of other authorities as well as the Council's. It was noted that Hampshire County Council had that day set their budget at expected levels.

Seconded by Cllr Neighbour.

A recorded vote was undertaken for this item:

For: Axam; Bailey; Blewett; Butler; Clarke; Cockarill; Collins; Crisp; Davies; Delaney; Dorn; Engstrom; Farmer; Forster; Hale; Harward; Kennett; Kinnell; Lamb; Makepeace-Browne; Neighbour; Oliver; Quarterman; Radley; Smith Southern; Warlock; Wright

Against: Nil

Abstain: Nil

DECISION

Cabinet is recommending to Council:

- 2.1 That the Council Tax Base for 2023/24 be
 - a) for the whole Council area as 42,313.27 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and
 - b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in the attached Appendix 1A.
- 2.2 The Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding Parish precepts) is £8,141,920.11
- 2.3 That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2023/24 in accordance with Sections 31 and 34 to 36 of the Act:
 - a) £40,221,781 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the

- Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
- b) £28,104,580 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - c) £12,117,201 being the amount by which the aggregate at 2.3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2.3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B(1) of the Act).
 - d) £286.37 being the amount at 2.3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
 - e) £3,975,281 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per Column 2 of Appendix 1A).
 - f) £192.42 being the amount at 2.3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2.3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates
 - g) The amounts set out in column 6 of Appendix 1A for each part of the Council's area being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 2.3(f) above the amounts of the special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned in Appendix 1A divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34 of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate
 - h) The amounts set out in columns 1 to 9 of Appendix 1B for each part of the Council's area being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 2.3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

2.4 That it be noted that for the year 2023/24 Hampshire Country Council's precept figures are subject to approval on the 23rd February 2023 and are listed below. If any changes are required as a result of Hampshire County Council approval provision for delegation to change is provided in 2.8 of this report. The Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority have stated the following amounts

in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings below:

Valuation Band	Hampshire County Council (£)	HCC Adult Social Care (£)	Police & Crime Commissioner for Hampshire (£)	Hampshire Fire & Rescue (£)
A(R)	704.74	106.51	139.7	44.68
A	845.69	127.81	167.64	53.62
B	986.63	149.12	195.58	62.56
C	1127.58	170.42	223.52	71.49
D	1268.53	191.72	251.46	80.43
E	1550.43	234.32	307.34	98.30
F	1832.32	276.93	363.22	116.18
G	2114.22	319.53	419.10	134.05
H	2537.06	383.44	502.92	160.86

- 2.5 That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.3(h) and 2.2 above, the Council, in accordance with section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts shown in Appendix 1D as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2023/24 for each of the categories of dwellings in each of the Parishes.
- 2.6 That for the purposes of section 35 (2) (d) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, any expenses incurred by the District Council in the financial year 2023/24 in performing functions in a part of the district which elsewhere in the district are performed by a Parish Council, shall not be special expenses of the District Council.
- 2.7 That the Council concluded the 2.99% increase in Council Tax for Hart District Council for 2023/24 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992
- 2.8 That the Director of Corporate Services in consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance be given delegated authority to amend the final council tax calculations in the event of approved changes from the other precepting authorities

72 TREASURY MANAGEMENT, STRATEGY STATEMENT, ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND CAPITAL STRATEGY

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced this item, informing members that it was a statutory requirement to review and agree these items each year. The report had been reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny.

Seconded by Cllr Neighbour.

DECISION

Cabinet is recommending to Council that it:

- I. approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 and the revised Minimum Revenue Provision policy contained within it,
- II. approve the Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24 noting the changes to the counterparty financial limits and ESG criteria and approach, and;
- III. approve and draft Capital Strategy 2023/24.

73 REVIEW OF FINANCE REGULATIONS AND CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced this item, and explained that these had been updated by the S151 Officer and reviewed at by Overview and Scrutiny.

Seconded by Cllr Neighbour

It was queried by a Member what steps would be put in place to ensure that these policies would be adhered. Members noted that a standardised central filing system was being put in place and this would ensure capturing of conflicts of interest and ensure that suitable checks and balances were in place for all projects and procurement processes.

DECISION

Council approved the revised Financial Regulations, as set out in Appendix 1, and Contract Standing Orders, as set out in Appendix 2 and the Constitution is updated accordingly.

74 CORPORATE PLAN

The Portfolio Holder for Commercialisation and Corporate introduced this item by informing Members that the Corporate Plan had been drawn up by a Working Group from Cabinet members and reflected current Cabinet priorities. The draft plan had gone out to consultation, with around 90 responses being received, with a 3:1 ratio of comments in favour.

Seconded by Cllr Neighbour.

As the vote by show of hands was not unanimous, a recorded vote was held:

For: Axam; Bailey; Blewett; Butler; Clarke; Cockarill; Collins; Crisp; Davies; Delaney; Engstrom; Harward; Kinnell; Lamb; Makepeace-Browne; Neighbour; Oliver; Quarterman; Radley; Smith (20)

Against: Dorn; Forster; Southern; Wright (4)

Abstain: Coburn; Farmer; Hale; Kennett; Worlock (5)

The Corporate Plan was therefore **adopted**.

75 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The Minutes of the following Committees, which met on the dates shown, were received by Council.

Meeting	Date
Cabinet (draft)	2 nd February 2023
Overview and Scrutiny (draft)	17 th January 2023
Planning	18 th January 2023
Planning Enforcement Sub Committee (draft)	30 th January 2023
Licensing (draft)	7 th February 2023
Staffing (draft)	9 th February 2023

It was noted that the recommendations in the Licensing Committee minutes of 7 February 2023 were subject to consultation,

The Pay Policy recommended by the Staffing Committee was proposed by Cllr Makepeace-Browne and seconded by Cllr Butler. There was no debate.

DECISION

Council agreed to adopt the Pay Policy 2023/24 as recommended by Staffing Committee.

76 OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Dorn – FACC

Cllr Dorn reported that FACC met at Hart recently, and it was for noting that the Post Implementation Review Process Report should be released at the end of April with a 28 day consultation period.

Cllr Oliver – Project Integra Board

Cllr Oliver reported that HCC had agreed to build a materials recovery facility near Eastleigh which would enable Hart to collect a wider range of materials by 2025. There was a challenge to reduce black bin waste by 50%, although there was an issue with sourcing food waste trucks at present.

(Cllr Blewett left the chamber between 9:23 and 9.25pm)

The meeting closed at 9.26 pm

HART DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2023

APPENDIX A – QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Councillor Kennett:

“There seems to be a high turnover of staff at Hart. Please could councillors be provided with figures on this, by seniority band and department, for this council year so far, with figures from adjoining councils for comparison?”

Response from Cllr Neighbour, Leader of the Council

I am not able to give exact figures tonight, most other Council’s do not publish numbers of their vacancies, but we will ask our neighbouring Councils for information. We will provide a written response to you on this.

Hart had 50 vacancies reported to Staffing Committee in February. This was higher than the last 2 years. In 2021/22 there were 24; in 2020/21 there were 27. We do undertake exit interviews and have found no concerning trends. Some people have taken retirement, some have made a change in their lifestyle choice and some have gone on to promotion roles elsewhere.

We will, however, ask Staffing to look at the exit interviews annually.

As I mentioned earlier, a written response will be provided with information on other Councils if we are able to provide that information.

Councillor Kennett reserved the right to ask a supplementary question once the information had been provided to him.