

Council

Tuesday, 21 February 2023

7.30 pm

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr Peter Scollard
The Deputy Mayor, Cllr John Caller

Councillors:	Derek Ashenden	Lyn Milner
	Helen Ashenden	Shane Mochrie-Cox
	Gurjit Bains	Emma Morley
	Conrad Broadley	Diane Morton
	Gurdip Ram Bungar	Elizabeth Mulheran
	John Burden	Leslie Pearton
	Harold Craske	Anthony Pritchard
	Lee Croxton	Tony Rana
	Dakota Dibben	Tony Rice
	Aaron Elliott	Christina Rolles
	Emma Elliott	Lenny Rolles
	Brian Francis	Brian Sangha
	Sarah Gow	Gurbax Singh
	Gary Harding	Lauren Sullivan
	Baljit Hayre	Narinderjit Singh Thandi
	Leslie Hills	Steve Thompson
	Leslie Hoskins	Denise Tiran
	Samir Jassal	Jenny Wallace
	Nirmal Khabra	Frank Wardle
	Bob Lane	
	Jordan Meade	

Stuart Bobby	Chief Executive
Nick Brown	Director (Environment) & Deputy Chief Executive
Jamie Izzard	Director (Communities)
Daniel Killian	Director (Housing)
Sarah Parfitt	Director (Corporate Services)
Lisa Nyon	Assistant Director (Corporate Services)
Vicky Nutley	Head of Legal Services
Simon Walsh	Service Manager (Communities)
Andy Rayfield	Communications Manager
Carlie Simmonds	Committee Services Manager (Minutes)

The Mayor expressed the Council's sympathy and condolences on the loss of former Councillors Douglas Rapley, Brian Colley and Elizabeth Colley.

54. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ejaz Aslam and Alan Ridgers.

55. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 6 December 2022 were signed by the Mayor.

56. Declarations of Interest

The Chief Executive advised that, in accordance with advice received from the Council's Monitoring Officer, Members only needed to declare interests which had not already been listed within their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form.

No declarations of interest were made.

57. To answer any questions received from members of the public of which notice has been given under Council Procedure Rule 13

No questions had been received.

58. Minutes of Committees

Motions that proceedings, reports and recommendations of Committees, except those reserved under Council Procedure 5.2(6) as referred to below be received and adopted and where applicable the Orders made by them be ratified and confirmed were duly proposed, seconded and resolved in each case.

- Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 3 January 2023
- Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 4 January 2023
- Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 30 January 2023
- Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 1 February 2023
- Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Audit Committee held on Monday, 13 February 2023

The Council's attention was drawn to Minute 34 (Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Strategy 2023-24) of the Finance and Audit Committee held on Monday 13 February 2023.

59. Reserved Minutes

There were no reserved minutes.

60. Council Tax and Budget Setting 2023-24

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.4.1, an extension of time was given to Councillor John Burden and an equal amount of time to Cllr Jordan Meade.

The Chief Executive reminded Members that all individual votes in relation to the budget and any amendments thereto would be recorded as required by legislation.

It was moved by Cllr John Burden and seconded by Cllr Lee Croxton that:-

the motion before Council as set out in the order paper be approved.

The motion was put to the meeting and declared to be carried by 23 votes to 15:-

For the motion	Against the motion	Abstain
The Worshipful the Mayor Cllrs: Bungar, Burden, Caller, Craske, Croxton, Francis, Gow, Hayre, Khabra, L Milner, Mochrie-Cox, Morley, Mulheran, Rana, C Rolles, L Rolles, Sangha, Singh, Sullivan, Thandi, Thompson, Wallace.	Cllrs: Bains, Broadley, Dibben, A Elliott, E Elliott, Harding, Hills, Hoskins, Jassal, Lane, Meade, Morton, Pearton, Tiran, Wardle.	Cllrs: D Ashenden, H Ashenden, Pritchard, Rice.

It was therefore **resolved** that:-

1. It be noted that on 5 January 2023 the Director (Corporate Services) calculated;

- (a) the Council Tax Base 2023-24 for the whole Council area as **35,266.50** Band D equivalent properties, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011.
- (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as set out below;

Part of the Council's area:	Units
Cobham	674.83
Higham	1,598.47
Luddesdown	103.72
Meopham	3,065.80
Shorne	1,152.17
Vigo	724.20
Gravesham & Northfleet	27,947.31
Total	35,266.50

2 Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023-24 (excluding Parish precepts) is £7,915,920 (£224.46 per Band D Property).

3 That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2023-24 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011:

- (a) £80,829,060 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) £72,397,420 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) £8,431,640 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- (d) £239.08 being the amount at 3(c) above, all divided by Item 1a above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
- (e) £515,720 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (f) £224.46 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item 1a 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) Part of the Council's area: £
- Parish of:
- | | |
|------------|--------|
| Cobham | 291.14 |
| Higham | 308.92 |
| Luddesdown | 296.10 |
| Meopham | 273.57 |
| Shorne | 264.74 |
| Vigo | 405.79 |

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for the dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

- (h) Part of the Council's area

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Parish of:	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cobham	194.09	226.44	258.79	291.14	355.84	420.54	485.23	582.28
Higham	205.95	240.27	274.60	308.92	377.57	446.22	514.87	617.84
Luddesdown	197.40	230.30	263.20	296.10	361.90	427.70	493.50	592.20
Meopham	182.38	212.78	243.17	273.57	334.36	395.16	455.95	547.14
Shorne	176.49	205.91	235.32	264.74	323.57	382.40	441.23	529.48
Vigo	270.53	315.61	360.70	⁴ 405.79	495.97	586.14	676.32	811.58
All other parts	149.64	174.58	199.52	224.46	274.34	324.22	374.10	448.92

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(f) and 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.

- 4 That it be noted that for the year 2023-24 the Kent County Council has 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 shown below:-

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1,022.82	1,193.29	1,363.76	1,534.23	1,875.17	2,216.11	2,557.05	3,068.46

- 5 That it be noted that for the year 2023-24 the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent has 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 shown below:-

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
162.10	189.12	216.13	243.15	297.18	351.22	405.25	486.30

- 6 That it be noted that for the year 2023-24 the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority, has 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 shown below: -

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
58.20	67.90	77.60	87.30	106.70	126.10	145.50	174.60

- 7 That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h), 4, 5 and 6 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2023-24 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Part of the Council's area	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Parish of:	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cobham	1,437.21	1,676.75	1,916.28	2,155.82	2,634.89	3,113.97	3,593.03	4,311.64
Higham	1,449.07	1,690.58	1,932.09	2,173.60	2,656.62	3,139.65	3,622.67	4,347.20
Luddesdown	1,440.52	1,680.61	1,920.69	2,160.78	2,640.95	3,121.13	3,601.30	4,321.56
Meopham	1,425.50	1,663.09	1,900.66	2,138.25	2,613.41	3,088.59	3,563.75	4,276.50
Shorne	1,419.61	1,656.22	1,892.81	2,129.42	2,602.62	3,075.83	3,549.03	4,258.84
Vigo	1,513.65	1,765.92	2,018.19	2,270.47	2,775.02	3,279.57	3,784.12	4,540.94
All other parts	1,392.76	1,624.89	1,857.01	2,089.14	2,553.39	3,017.65	3,481.90	4,178.28

8. the amended Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022-23 to 2026-27 at Appendix 3 be approved;
9. the retention of the Key Decision financial threshold at £100,000 be approved;
10. the Council Tax Base as at Appendix 4 be ratified;
11. the amended Council Tax Reduction Scheme uprated bands be approved;
12. consideration was given to the budget proposals contained within the report and the proposed Budget Book for Gravesham Borough Council provided at Appendix 7 and the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets for 2023-24 be determined, noting the provisional estimates for the further nine years;
13. consideration was given to the view of the Director (Corporate Services) (as S151 Officer) on the robustness of estimates for the coming year and the adequacy of proposed reserves and balances, as required under Section 25 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003 at Appendix 8;
14. the application of the 100% council tax premium on properties empty for at least 1 year but less than 5 years, applicable from 1 April 2024, should the Regeneration & Levelling-Up Bill receive Royal assent be approved. Delegated authority be given to the Director (Corporate Services) (as S151 Officer) to take all necessary and timely action to implement this recommendation, taking into account any Secretary of State Guidance that may be issued; and
15. the application of a 100% council tax premium on 'second homes', applicable from 1 April 2024, should the Regeneration & Levelling-Up Bill receive Royal Assent be approved. Delegated authority be given to the Director (Corporate Services) (as S151 Officer) to take all necessary and timely action to implement this recommendation, taking into account any Secretary of State Guidance that may be issued.

61. Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Strategy 2023-24

The Council was presented with the Treasury Management Strategy and associated Annual Investment Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2023/24 along with the Capital Strategy for 2023/27.

Resolved that:-

1. the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved;

2. the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) calculation on all new capital expenditure as set out in Section 5 of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement be approved for 2023/24 and beyond in accordance with the Authority's Capital Programme with delegated authority given to the Director (Corporate Services) to amend as required;
3. the Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24 as set out in Section 15 of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement be approved;
4. the Capital Strategy for 2023/27 set out in Appendix 2 be approved;
5. delegated authority be given to the Director (Corporate Services), in consultation with the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, to amend the prudential and treasury indicators as necessary as a result of the budget approved by Full Council on 21 February 2023; and
6. delegated authority be given to the Director (Corporate Services), in consultation with the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, to amend the Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24 and the Capital Strategy for 2023/27 as required following successful completion of the 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 final accounts process.

62. Review of the Governance Framework for Rosherville Limited

The Council was presented with a proposal to revise the governance framework for the Rosherville group of companies, which had previously been discussed at Cabinet and recommended for Full Council consideration. Specifically to:

- amend the Rosherville Limited Board structure to remove Councillors from the Board and replace them with non-executive Directors (at an officer level). The revised structure will include introduction of an independent non-executive Director and recruitment of a specialist manager/Director at the appropriate time, to drive forward the commercial nature of the group of companies, once the company is in a position to fund these posts themselves;
- replace the current Shareholder Group with the Rosherville Shareholder Advisory Board which will be formed of Councillors and be an Advisory Board to the Cabinet; and
- implement a performance management framework for the Rosherville group of companies which will focus on key performance indicators for each entity and include performance reviews of the Directors to ensure they are continuing to deliver against the objectives of the companies.

Resolved that:-

1. the amended governance framework surrounding the operating model for Local Authority Trading Companies in Gravesham, as set out in section five of the report be approved;
2. subject to a request coming forward from Rosherville Limited to amend its Articles of Association in line with the revised framework set out within the report, delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Executive, the Monitoring Officer, the Section 151 Officer and the Chair of Rosherville Limited to make all necessary amendments to the company Articles of Association and Shareholder Agreement to reflect the agreed changes;
3. upon amending the Articles of Association and Shareholder Agreement, officers submit these documents to Cabinet to formally approve the changes in March 2023; and
4. the changes outlined in the report formally take effect from 1 April 2023.

63. Representation of Political Groups on Committees / Appointments to Committees

The Council reviewed the representation of political groups on Committees, following the recent move of Cllr Leslie Pearton from the Independent Group to the Conservative Group, and appointed Councillors, including Chairs and Vice-Chairs, to those seats accordingly.

Resolved that:-

1. the size of each committee as set out in the report be agreed;
2. the allocation of seats on committees to each of the Council's political groups as set out within the report be agreed; and
3. the appointment of councillors to sit on the committees (including to the positions of Chairs and Vice-Chairs) as set out in Appendix One be agreed.

64. To consider questions from Members of the Council of which notice has been given under Council Procedure Rule 14.

No questions had been received.

65. To receive the Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor thanked those that had attended his fundraiser event on Thursday 9 February 2023.

The Mayor invited those present to 'Northfleet Day' which will be held on Saturday 22 April 2023 at St Botolph's Church, Northfleet.

The Mayor wished everyone a happy Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday.

The Mayor invited those present to join him in the Parlour for refreshments.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8.58 pm