

Council

Tuesday, 20 February 2024

7.30 pm

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor, Gurdip Bungar
The Deputy Mayor, Daniel Adewale King

Councillors	Derek Ashenden	Jordan Meade
	Helen Ashenden	Alan Metcalf
	Ejaz Aslam	Lyn Milner
	Rajinder Atwal	Shane Mochrie-Cox
	Gurjit Bains	Emma Morley
	David Beattie	Karina O'Malley
	John Burden	Leslie Pearton
	Deborah Croxton	Tony Rana
	Lee Croxton	Alan Ridgers
	Dakota Dibben (<i>left part way through the meeting</i>)	Lenny Rolles
	Aaron Elliott	Peter Scollard
	Emma Elliott	Benjamin Sizer
	Gary Harding	Lauren Sullivan
	Jo Hart	Ektaveen Thandi
	Baljit Hayre	Narinderjit Singh Thandi
	Leslie Hills	Jenny Wallace
	Samir Jassal (<i>left part way through the meeting</i>)	Frank Wardle
	Gavin Larkins	

Stuart Bobby	Chief Executive
Nick Brown	Director (Environment) & Deputy Chief Executive
Jamie Izzard	Director (Communities & Inclusive Growth)
Daniel Killian	Director (Housing)
Sarah Parfitt	Director (Corporate Services)
Pat Knight	Interim Assistant Director (Corporate Services)
Simon Walsh	Assistant Director (Organisational Development & Democratic Support)
Vicky Nutley	Head of Legal Services
Andy Rayfield	Communications Manager
Carlie Simmonds	Committee Services Manager

62. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Christina Rolles and Alison Williams.

63. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5 December 2023 were signed by the Mayor.

64. 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.

Cllr John Burden declared a non-fiduciary, non-prejudicial interest in agenda item 6 - Reserved Minutes as the minute of Cabinet in relation to 'Acquisition of Land Assets' had been reserved. Cllr Burden advised that he left the meeting of Cabinet during the discussion and vote of this item as he is a resident of Istead Rise. Therefore, Cllr Burden would leave this meeting whilst the reserved minute was being discussed.

65. 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.

66. 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 Cabinet held on Monday, 18 December 2023;
- Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee held on Thursday, 21 December 2023;
- Minutes of the Overview Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 04 January 2024;
- Minutes of the Cabinet held on Monday, 29 January 2024;
- Minutes of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 31 January 2024;
- Minutes of the Overview Scrutiny Committee held on 08 February 2024; and
- Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee held on Monday, 12 February 2024.

67. Reserved Minutes

The following minute of Cabinet held on Monday, 29 January 2024 was reserved:-

- Acquisition of Land Assets

The minute was ratified and confirmed.

Note: Cllr John Burden left the Chamber during consideration of this item.

68. Council Tax and Budget Setting 2024/25

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 Shane Mochrie-Cox 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 20 votes to 15:-

For the motion	Against the motion	Abstain
The Worshipful the Mayor Cllrs: Atwal, Burden, D Croxtton, L Croxtton, Hart, Hayre, King, Larkins, L Milner, Mochrie-Cox, Morley, O'Malley, Rana, L Rolles, Scollard, Sullivan, E Thandi, N Thandi, Wallace.	Cllrs: D Ashenden, H Ashenden, Aslam, Bains, Beattie, A Elliott, E Elliott, Harding, Hills, Meade, Metcalf, Pearton, Ridgers, Sizer, Wardle.	None.

Note: Cllrs Dibben and Jassal left part way through the meeting therefore did not vote on this item and the remaining items listed on the agenda.

It was therefore **resolved** that:-

1. it be noted that on 15 January 2024 the Director (Corporate Services) calculated;
 - (a) the Council Tax Base 2024-25 for the whole Council area as **35,994.62** 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	670.28
Higham	1,598.62
Luddesdown	108.34
Meopham	3,091.72
Shorne	1,165.74
Vigo	723.50
Gravesham & Northfleet	28,636.42
Total	35,994.62

2. calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2024-25 (excluding Parish precepts) is £8,315,840 (£231.03 per Band D Property).

3. that the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2024-25 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) | £86,940,990 | 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) | £77,999,890 | being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. |
| (c) | £8,941,100 | 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) | £248.40 | 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) | £625,260 | being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act. |
| (f) | £231.03 | 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 | 357.84 |
| | Higham | 327.99 |
| | Luddesdown | 307.59 |
| | Meopham | 294.47 |
| | Shorne | 269.34 |
| | Vigo | 419.22 |

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:

Parish of:	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cobham	238.56	278.32	318.08	357.84	437.36	516.88	596.40	715.68
Higham	218.66	255.10	291.55	327.99	400.88	473.76	546.65	655.98
Luddesdown	205.06	239.24	273.41	307.59	375.94	444.30	512.65	615.18
Meopham	196.31	229.03	261.75	294.47	359.91	425.35	490.78	588.94
Shorne	179.56	209.49	239.41	269.34	329.19	389.05	448.90	538.68
Vigo	279.48	326.06	372.64	419.22	512.38	605.54	698.70	838.44
All other parts	154.02	179.69	205.36	231.03	282.37	333.71	385.05	462.06

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 2024-25 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
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1,073.88	1,252.86	1,431.84	1,610.82	1,968.78	2,326.74	2,684.70	3,221.64

5. that it be noted that for the year 2024-25 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
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
170.77	199.23	227.69	256.15	313.07	369.99	426.92	512.30

6. that it be noted that for the year 2024-25 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
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
59.94	69.93	79.92	89.91	109.89	129.87	149.85	179.82

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 2024-25 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	1,543.15	1,800.34	2,057.53	2,314.72	2,829.10	3,343.48	3,857.87	4,629.44
Higham	1,523.25	1,777.12	2,031.00	2,284.87	2,792.62	3,300.36	3,808.12	4,569.74
Luddesdown	1,509.65	1,761.26	2,012.86	2,264.47	2,767.68	3,270.90	3,774.12	4,528.94
Meopham	1,500.90	1,751.05	2,001.20	2,251.35	2,751.65	3,251.95	3,752.25	4,502.70
Shorne	1,484.15	1,731.51	1,978.86	2,226.22	2,720.93	3,215.65	3,710.37	4,452.44
Vigo	1,584.07	1,848.08	2,112.09	2,376.10	2,904.12	3,432.14	3,960.17	4,752.20
All other parts	1,458.61	1,701.71	1,944.81	2,187.91	2,674.11	3,160.31	3,646.52	4,375.82

8. the decision by Full Council in February 2023 be recognised to apply the 100% council tax premium on properties empty for at least 1 year but less than 5 years, applicable from 1 April 2024, as enabled by Section 79 of the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023;
9. the reduction of the current Prescribed Class C discount to 0% with effect from 1 April 2024 as enabled by the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 be approved;
10. the reduction of the current Prescribed Class D discount to 0% with effect from 1 April 2024 as enabled by the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 be approved;
11. the council tax resolution for Gravesham Borough Council at Appendix 1 be approved and delegated authority be given to the Director (Corporate Services), in consultation with the Leader of the Executive, to make any amendment required resulting from final decisions taken by Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KF&RS) and Kent County Council (KCC) on their council tax levels for 2024-25;
12. the Council Tax Base as at Appendix 2 be ratified;
13. consideration was given to the budget proposals contained within the report and the proposed Budget Book for Gravesham Borough Council provided at Appendix 5 and the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital budgets for 2024-25 be determined, noting the provisional estimates for the further nine years;

14. 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 6;
15. the retention of the Key Decision financial threshold at £100,000 be approved;
16. the amended Council Tax Reduction Scheme uprated bands be approved; and
17. the application of a 100% council tax premium on 'second homes', applicable from 1 April 2025, (in order to provide the required one-year minimum notice), as enabled by Section 80 of the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 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.

Before proceeding to the next item, the meeting was adjourned in order to provide the Palantypist with an appropriate break.

69. Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Strategy 2024/25

The Council was presented with the Treasury Management Strategy and associated Annual Investment Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2024/25 along with the Capital Strategy for 2024/25-2028/29.

Resolved that:-

1. the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25 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 2024/25 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 2024/25 as set out in Section 15 of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement be approved;
4. the Capital Strategy for 2024/25-2028/29 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 20 February 2024; 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 2024/25 and the Capital Strategy for 2024/25 to 2028/29 as required following successful completion of the 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 final accounts process or any process that is put in place by Government to deal with accounts not completed ahead of the backstop date.

70. Appointment to Outside Body (Henry Pinnocks Charity)

Resolved that Mr Philip Painter be reappointed to the Henry Pinnocks Charity as a representative trustee for a four-year term.

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

No questions had been received.

72. To receive the Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor thanked those that had attended Sunday Lunch at Cobham Hall on Sunday 11 February 2024.

The Mayor invited Members to attend the following events:-

- the Vaisakhi celebrations/procession which would be taking place on 13 April 2024;
- the Mayor's Coffee Morning which would be taking place on 17 April 2024; and
- the Mayor's retirement Curry Night at The Woodville which would be taking place on Friday 10 May 2024.

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

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm.