



STOCKPORT

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of the Council Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Stockport on 22 February 2024 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor Graham Greenhalgh) in the chair; Deputy Mayor (Councillor Kerry Waters); Councillors Geoff Abell, Shan Alexander, Jake Austin, Joe Barratt, Rosemary Barratt, Grace Baynham, Christine Carrigan, Anna Charles-Jones, Angie Clark, Laura Clingan, Liz Crix, Dickie Davies, Will Dawson, Dean Fitzpatrick, Colin Foster, Helen Foster-Grime, James Frizzell, Sue Glithero, Steve Gribbon, Yvonne Guariento, Dominic Hardwick, Helen Hibbert, Keith Holloway, Ian Hunter, Mark Hunter, Dallas Jones, Mark Jones, Jilly Julian, Gary Lawson, Colin MacAlister, Carole McCann, Holly McCormack, Jeremy Meal, Wendy Meikle, David Meller, Janet Mobbs, Tom Morrison, Ian Powney, Mark Roberts, Dena Ryness, David Sedgwick, Becky Senior, Will Sharp, Frankie Singleton, Lisa Smart, Charlie Stewart, Catherine Stuart, Leah Taylor, John Taylor, Aron Thornley, Sue Thorpe, Claire Vibert, Karl Wardlaw, Pete West, Wendy Wild, Rachel Wise, Suzanne Wyatt, Alex Wynne and Matt Wynne.

1. FORMALITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(i) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reported that the Mayor's Charity Abseil in support of Stockport Sea Cadets was scheduled to take place from 12 noon on Saturday, 23 March 2024 at Stopford House; members had the opportunity to take part themselves or to sponsor a person taking part in the abseil. Councillors interested in taking part were asked to contact representatives of the Mayor's Charity Committee for further information.

It was further reported that the Mayor's Charity Ball was scheduled to take place from 7.00pm on Friday, 5 April 2024, and tickets for the event were still available.

(ii) Declarations of Interest

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests which they had in any of the items on the summons for the meeting.

The following interests were declared:

Personal interests

Councillor

Interest

Karl Wardlaw and Matt Wynne

Summons items 3(ii) 'Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent Levels for 2024/25' and 3(v) '2024/25 Cabinet Revenue Budget' as Stockport Homes Group tenants.

Aron Thornley

Summons item 3(v) '2024/25 Cabinet Revenue Budget' as a Director of Marple Youth Project which received funding from the council.

It was noted that the Standards Committee had approved a wide dispensation to enable any member with a personal and prejudicial interest or a disclosable pecuniary interest in any item under consideration as part of the budget and Council Tax setting to take part and vote at the meeting.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

(i) Public Question Time

Members of the public were invited to put questions to the Mayor and councillors on matters within the powers and duties of the Council.

Three public questions were submitted as follows:-

- Relating to the cost of the council's net zero policy.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Mark Hunter) stated that the cost of doing nothing to tackle climate change was significantly greater than the cost of the council's net zero policy.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change & Environment (Councillor Mark Roberts) further confirmed that the council's policies, including actions to support the electrifying of vehicles, would be led by science. The Cabinet Member reported that he was pleased to be able to offer the opportunity to all councillors to become carbon literate in the coming weeks and months, which would enable members to scrutinise the work of the Climate Change & Environment portfolio in greater depth.

- Relating to assessments for Personal Independence Payments and Attendance Allowance claims and the support available for disabled people.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Mark Hunter) reported that the council was acutely aware of the pressures residents faced owing to the current national cost of living crisis, and especially those faced by Stockport's disabled community. The council continued to work closely with the Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB) and to invest in the council's own advice service, which had been operating for many years and would continue to do so. The council recognised that form-filling for Personal Independence Payments and Attendance Allowance claims was onerous, and both the CAB and the council's advice service, as well as other third-sector organisations funded by the council, offered help with form-filling. Face-to-face support was available at the council's reception (Stopford House) and through libraries. The council continued to lobby government for the continuation of the Household Support Fund.

- Relating to the challenges for setting a balanced budget for Stockport in 2024 – 2025.

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Mark Hunter) stated that local government was facing a bleak financial future and that local authorities across the country were not being adequately resourced to provide the services that residents needed. It was reported that the Local Government Association had calculated a £4 billion shortfall in funding in

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England alone for next year. The number of council's across the country issuing Section 114 (bankruptcy) notices were increasing. The council had a proud history of sound finances, and although the council intended for this to continue, the financial challenges faced by the council were increasingly difficult. The Leader of the Council called for a royal commission into local government finance with the aim of determining whether the system could be improved. The Leader stated that he was fully confident in the work of the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources and the Section 151 Officer on this year's proposed budget, and residents could be assured that Stockport would continue to shape its own future.

Two further public question were submitted where the questioners were not in attendance at the meeting and, in accordance with the Code of Practice, the Chief Executive was requested to respond to the questioners in writing.

(ii) Petitions and Presentations

There were no petitions or presentations.

3. POLICY FRAMEWORK AND BUDGET

(i) Council Plan 2024-2027

The Leader of the Council (Councillor Mark Hunter) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which sought approval for the draft Stockport Council Plan 2024 – 2027.

RESOLVED – That the Stockport Council Plan 2024 – 2027 be approved and adopted.

(ii) Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Rent Levels for 2024/25

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration & Housing (Councillor Colin MacAlister) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) requesting the Council Meeting to set the level of rent and service charges in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and approve the HRA budget for 2024/25.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to:

- (a) An increase of 7.7% for social rent and affordable rent.
- (b) An increase of 9.4% for rent of shared ownership properties.
- (c) Service charge increases as outlined in section 3, with authority delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration & Housing to agree a lower increase should this be necessary.
- (d) The Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1.

(iii) 2024/25 Budget Reports - Update Since Cabinet Meeting

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Jilly Julian) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing changes to the 2024/25 budget reports since their consideration by Cabinet at the meeting held 30 January 2024.

RESOLVED - That the report and changes made to the 2024/25 budget reports be noted.

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(iv) Medium Term Financial Plan – Financial Landscape and Forecasts 2024/25 to 2027/28

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Jilly Julian) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on the council's 2024/25 to 2027/28 Medium-Term Financial Plan forecasts and assumptions as part of setting a robust and resilient budget and financial plan for the council.

RESOLVED – That the Medium-Term Financial Plan forecasts for the council's finances for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28 be noted.

(v) 2024/25 Cabinet Revenue Budget

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Jilly Julian) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which sought approval for the cabinet's proposed 2024/25 revenue budget.

MOVED AND SECONDED – (1) That the budget for 2024/25 described in the report and set out in Appendices 2 and 3 be approved.

(2) That the use of available one-off resources to support the positive investment detailed in Section 6, subject to the council's 2023/24 outturn position and the 2024/25 final settlement be approved.

(3) That the risk assessment of the 2024/25 Budget at Appendix 5 and the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer on the adequacy of proposed financial reserves and robustness of the estimates (also at Appendix 5) be noted.

(4) That the required Council General Fund Balance to reflect the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer's assessment of risks be approved.

(5) That the financial forecasts and assumptions for 2024/25 to 2027/28 at Appendix 6, and the key issues to be addressed in formulating a response to the future financial challenges facing the council be noted and approved.

(6) That the appropriate Council Tax resolutions be passed which produce a Council Tax increase of 4.99% in 2024/25 (2.99% General increase, 2% Adult Social Care Precept increase) as illustrated in Appendix 7 be agreed.

AMENDMENT MOVED AND SECONDED - That the Council Meeting gives approval to the proposed amendments to the 2024/25 Cabinet Revenue Budget put forward by the Labour Group and as set out in its proposals and summarised in the document entitled 'Stockport Labour: Our Approach to the 2024/2025 Revenue Budget' that had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

For the amendment 61.

AMENDMENT CARRIED

The names of those councillors voting on the amendment were recorded as follows:

Those councillors who voted for the amendment were:

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The Mayor (Councillor Graham Greenhalgh); The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Kerry Waters); Councillors Geoff Abell, Shan Alexander, Jake Austin, Joe Barratt, Rosemary Barratt, Grace Baynham, Christine Carrigan, Anna Charles-Jones, Angie Clark, Laura Clingan, Liz Crix, Dickie Davies, Will Dawson, Dean Fitzpatrick, Colin Foster, Helen Foster-Grime, James Frizzell, Sue Glithero, Graham Greenhalgh, Steve Gribbon, Yvonne Guariento, Dominic Hardwick, Helen Hibbert, Keith Holloway, Ian Hunter, Mark Hunter, Dallas Jones, Mark Jones, Jilly Julian, Gary Lawson, Colin MacAlister, Carole McCann, Holly McCormack, Jeremy Meal, Wendy Meikle, David Meller, Janet Mobbs, Tom Morrison, Ian Powney, Mark Roberts, Dena Ryness, David Sedgwick, Becky Senior, Will Sharp, Frankie Singleton, Lisa Smart, Charlie Stewart, Catherine Stuart, Leah Taylor, John Taylor, Aron Thornley, Sue Thorpe, Claire Vibert, Karl Wardlaw, Kerry Waters, Pete West, Wendy Wild, Rachel Wise, Suzanne Wyatt, Alex Wynne and Matt Wynne.

The motion, as amended, was then put as the substantive motion and it was,

RESOLVED – (61 for) - (1) That the budget for 2024/25 described in the report and set out in Appendices 2 and 3 be approved.

(2) That the use of available one-off resources to support the positive investment detailed in Section 6, subject to the council's 2023/24 outturn position and the 2024/25 final settlement be approved.

(3) That the risk assessment of the 2024/25 Budget at Appendix 5 and the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer on the adequacy of proposed financial reserves and robustness of the estimates (also at Appendix 5) be noted.

(4) That the required Council General Fund Balance to reflect the Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer's assessment of risks be approved.

(5) That the financial forecasts and assumptions for 2024/25 to 2027/28 at Appendix 6, and the key issues to be addressed in formulating a response to the future financial challenges facing the council be noted and approved.

(6) That the appropriate Council Tax resolutions be passed which produce a Council Tax increase of 4.99% in 2024/25 (2.99% General increase, 2% Adult Social Care Precept increase) as illustrated in Appendix 7 be agreed.

Subject to:

- undertaking a full assessment, with due regard to the Socio-Economic Duty, of the saving proposals for libraries (no financial impact);
- undertaking a full assessment, with due regard to the Socio-Economic Duty, of the savings proposals for parking (no financial impact);
- investing an additional £160,000 into drainage cleaning with a view to purchasing a new gully cleaner (to be funded by the council's Invest to Save reserve); and
- undertaking a full, independent review to help determine the right model for managing Stockport's housing stock, given the legislative and regulatory changes that had taken place and the financial position the council was in. This included considering whether the existing ALMO model – Stockport Homes – continued to be the right one for Stockport, its tenants, and residents (at a cost of £100,000, to be funded by the council's Invest to Save reserve).

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The names of those councillors voting on this resolution, was recorded as follows:

Those councillors who voted for the resolution were:

The Mayor (Councillor Graham Greenhalgh); The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Kerry Waters); Councillors Geoff Abell, Shan Alexander, Jake Austin, Joe Barratt, Rosemary Barratt, Grace Baynham, Christine Carrigan, Anna Charles-Jones, Angie Clark, Laura Clingan, Liz Crix, Dickie Davies, Will Dawson, Dean Fitzpatrick, Colin Foster, Helen Foster-Grime, James Frizzell, Sue Glithero, Graham Greenhalgh, Steve Gribbon, Yvonne Guariento, Dominic Hardwick, Helen Hibbert, Keith Holloway, Ian Hunter, Mark Hunter, Dallas Jones, Mark Jones, Jilly Julian, Gary Lawson, Colin MacAlister, Carole McCann, Holly McCormack, Jeremy Meal, Wendy Meikle, David Meller, Janet Mobbs, Tom Morrison, Ian Powney, Mark Roberts, Dena Ryness, David Sedgwick, Becky Senior, Will Sharp, Frankie Singleton, Lisa Smart, Charlie Stewart, Catherine Stuart, Leah Taylor, John Taylor, Aron Thornley, Sue Thorpe, Claire Vibert, Karl Wardlaw, Kerry Waters, Pete West, Wendy Wild, Rachel Wise, Suzanne Wyatt, Alex Wynne and Matt Wynne.

(vi) Council Tax 2024/25

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Jilly Julian) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out the Council Tax for 2024/25 and the level of precepts for the Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner Precept and Mayoral General Precept (including fire services) for Greater Manchester.

RESOLVED – (61 for) (1) That it be noted that on 11 January 2024, the Council has calculated the Council Tax Base for the financial year 2024/25 as:

- (a) 98,396.6 for the whole Council area [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]
- (2) That the Council Meeting approve the Council Tax Requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2024/25 as being £194,568,453.
- (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:
 - (a) £835,849,819 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(2) of the Act (Appendix Two).
 - (b) £641,281,366 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31A(3) of the Act (Appendix Two).
 - (c) £194,568,453 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 (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act). (Appendix Two).
 - (d) £1,977.39 being the amount at 3(c) above, 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.

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- (e) £0.00 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in section 34(1) of the Act.
- (f) £1,977.39 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the amount 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 special item relates.

(4) That it be noted that for the year 2024/25 the Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner precept for Greater Manchester and the Mayoral General precept (including Fire Services) have been issued to the Council in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table in below.

(5) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the tables within the report as the amounts of Council Tax for 2024/25 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

Valuation Bands

Authority	£							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council	1,318.26	1,537.97	1,757.68	1,977.39	2,416.81	2,856.23	3,295.65	3,954.78
Mayoral Police and Crime Commissioner Precept	170.86	199.34	227.82	256.30	313.25	370.21	427.16	512.60
Mayoral General Precept (including Fire Services)	75.30	87.85	100.40	112.95	138.05	163.15	188.25	225.90

AGGREGATE OF COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENTS

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council Area	1,564.42	1,825.16	2,085.90	2,346.64	2,868.11	3,389.59	3,911.06	4,693.28

(6) That the Council, in accordance with section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby determines that the Council's relevant basic amount of council tax for 2024/25 is not excessive in accordance with the principles determined by the Secretary of State under section 52ZC of the Act.

The names of those councillors voting on this resolution were recorded as follows:

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Those councillors who voted for the resolution were:

The Mayor (Councillor Graham Greenhalgh); The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Kerry Waters); Councillors Geoff Abell, Shan Alexander, Jake Austin, Joe Barratt, Rosemary Barratt, Grace Baynham, Christine Carrigan, Anna Charles-Jones, Angie Clark, Laura Clingan, Liz Crix, Dickie Davies, Will Dawson, Dean Fitzpatrick, Colin Foster, Helen Foster-Grime, James Frizzell, Sue Glithero, Graham Greenhalgh, Steve Gribbon, Yvonne Guariento, Dominic Hardwick, Helen Hibbert, Keith Holloway, Ian Hunter, Mark Hunter, Dallas Jones, Mark Jones, Jilly Julian, Gary Lawson, Colin MacAlister, Carole McCann, Holly McCormack, Jeremy Meal, Wendy Meikle, David Meller, Janet Mobbs, Tom Morrison, Ian Powney, Mark Roberts, Dena Ryness, David Sedgwick, Becky Senior, Will Sharp, Frankie Singleton, Lisa Smart, Charlie Stewart, Catherine Stuart, Leah Taylor, John Taylor, Aron Thornley, Sue Thorpe, Claire Vibert, Karl Wardlaw, Kerry Waters, Pete West, Wendy Wild, Rachel Wise, Suzanne Wyatt, Alex Wynne and Matt Wynne.

(vii) 2024/25 Capital Strategy and Capital Programme

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Jilly Julian) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing the 2024/25 Capital Strategy and Capital Programme that had been set to support the delivery of outcomes and outputs associated with the priorities of the council.

RESOLVED – (61 for) That approval be given to:

(1) The Capital Strategy at Appendix One.

(2) The 2024/25 to 2026/27 Capital Programme and the funding arrangements as described in the report and set out at Appendix Two.

(3) The prudential indicators supporting the 2024/25 Capital Programme set out in Appendix Three.

The names of those councillors voting on this resolution were recorded as follows:-

Those councillors who voted for the resolution were:-

The Mayor (Councillor Graham Greenhalgh); The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Kerry Waters); Councillors Geoff Abell, Shan Alexander, Jake Austin, Joe Barratt, Rosemary Barratt, Grace Baynham, Christine Carrigan, Anna Charles-Jones, Angie Clark, Laura Clingan, Liz Crix, Dickie Davies, Will Dawson, Dean Fitzpatrick, Colin Foster, Helen Foster-Grime, James Frizzell, Sue Glithero, Graham Greenhalgh, Steve Gribbon, Yvonne Guariento, Dominic Hardwick, Helen Hibbert, Keith Holloway, Ian Hunter, Mark Hunter, Dallas Jones, Mark Jones, Jilly Julian, Gary Lawson, Colin MacAlister, Carole McCann, Holly McCormack, Jeremy Meal, Wendy Meikle, David Meller, Janet Mobbs, Tom Morrison, Ian Powney, Mark Roberts, Dena Ryness, David Sedgwick, Becky Senior, Will Sharp, Frankie Singleton, Lisa Smart, Charlie Stewart, Catherine Stuart, Leah Taylor, John Taylor, Aron Thornley, Sue Thorpe, Claire Vibert, Karl Wardlaw, Kerry Waters, Pete West, Wendy Wild, Rachel Wise, Suzanne Wyatt, Alex Wynne and Matt Wynne.

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(viii) 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Jilly Julian) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) inviting the Council Meeting to consider the 2024/25 Treasury Management Strategy, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to:

- (1) The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2024/25.
- (2) The Capital Expenditure forecasts and Capital Financing Requirement projections.
- (3) The Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25.
- (4) The Treasury and Prudential Indicators and limits 2024/25 - 2026/27.
- (5) The Annual Investment Strategy 2024/25.

The meeting closed at 8.28 pm