

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 22 February 2022 commencing at 6:00 pm

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Deputy Mayor

Councillor A S Reece
Councillor J W Murphy

and Councillors:

K Berliner, R A Bird, G F Blackwell, G J Bocking, C L J Carter, C M Cody, K J Cromwell, M Dean, R D East, J H Evetts, P A Godwin, M A Gore, D W Gray, D J Harwood, M L Jordan, E J MacTiernan, J R Mason, H C McLain, P D McLain, C E Mills, H S Munro, C Reid, J K Smith, R J G Smith, V D Smith, C Softley, R J Stanley, P D Surman, M G Sztymiak, S Thomson, R J E Vines, M J Williams and P N Workman

CL.60 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 60.1 The evacuation procedure, as noted on the Agenda, was advised to those present.
- 60.2 The Mayor welcomed a member of the public to the meeting and indicated that he would be asking questions in accordance with the scheme of public participation at Agenda Item 5.

CL.61 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 61.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P W Ockelton and P E Smith.

CL.62 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 62.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.
- 62.2 The following declarations were made:

Councillor	Application No./Item	Nature of Interest (where disclosed)	Declared Action in respect of Disclosure
K J Cromwell	Item 12 – Land Acquisition within the Tewkesbury Garden Town Area.	Councillor has a Code of Conduct interest in the Garden Town area.	Would not speak or vote and would leave the meeting for consideration of the item.

- 62.3 There were no further declarations made on this occasion.

CL.63 MINUTES

- 63.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2022, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

CL.64 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- 64.1 A member of the public had used the Council's Scheme of Public Participation to ask a question of the relevant Lead Member. The Mayor invited the member of the public to address the Council and ask his questions and the Lead Member for Built Environment responded as follows:

Question:

How much has the Council spent annually on planning since 2015?

Answer:

Year	Cost
2015/16	£1,050,286.75
2016/17	£1,147,952.03
2017/18	£1,520,995.28
2018/19	£1,493,356.58
2019/20	£1,568,782.84
2020/21	£1,629,069.59

Question:

How many staff has the Planning department employed year by year since 2015?

Answer:

The answer includes both Development Management and Planning Policy staff

Year	Number of staff
2015/16	34
2016/17	38
2017/18	37
2018/19	41
2019/20	39
2020/21	37

Question:

How many people in the Planning Department have been employed on PLANNING ENFORCEMENT since 2015?

Answer:

Year	Number of Staff
2015	1
2016	1
2017	2
2018	3
2019	3
2020	2
2021	2
2022	3

Question:

What has the annual expenditure been on the Joint Core Strategy and how many people have been dedicated to it since 2015?

Answer:

Year	Annual expenditure	Annual expenditure
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	(Salaries incl.)	(Salaries excl.)
2015/16	£217,166.85	£167,942.54
2016/17	£256,206.28	£207,156.57
2017/18	£144,242.33	£76,280.59
2018/19	£246,037.35	£192,104.61
2019/20	£505,065.65	£434,604.75
2020/21	£165,479.63	£111,946.44

Year	Number of dedicated Planning staff across the JCS Partnership.
2015	10
2016	10
2017	10
2018	3
2019	2
2020	2
2021	2
2022	7

Question:

How many staff have been employed on the LOCAL PLAN and when were they employed since 2015?

Answer:

Year	Number of Planning Staff
2015	6
2016	6
2017	4
2018	5
2019	5
2020	4
2021	4
2022	4

Question:

How much money has been spent on the LOCAL PLAN since 2015?

Answer:

Year	Cost
2015/16	£11,460.41
2016/17	£76,655.74
2017/18	£77,026.95
2018/19	£43,515.00
2019/20	£155,999.70
2020/21	£94,253.60

Question:

How much money has the Council spent on “planning consultants” since 2015?

Answer:

£405,083.95

The figure relates to monies paid to agency/contract staff to support existing staff in carrying out the planning functions of the Council. It does not include the costs of consultants commissioned to undertake technical studies or evidence based pieces of work.

64.2 It was noted that, due to a misunderstanding, there were other questions which had not been answered and it was agreed those would be answered separately. The Mayor thanked the member of the public for his participation and indicated that supplementary questions were not permitted but he was welcome to watch the remainder of the meeting from the public gallery, should he so wish.

CL.65 MEMBER QUESTIONS PROPERLY SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

65.1 There were no Member questions.

CL.66 RECOMMENDATION FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Budget 2022/23

66.1 At its meeting on 2 February 2022 the Executive Committee considered the 2022/23 budget and made a recommendation to Council.

66.2 The report which was considered by the Executive Committee had been circulated with the Agenda for the current meeting at Pages No. 7-32.

66.3 In proposing the recommendation, the Chair of the Executive Committee offered his thanks to everyone involved in the work to ensure the Council had a balanced budget to agree. The Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management seconded the recommendation from the Executive Committee.

66.4 During the brief discussion which ensued, a Member questioned whether the budgeted 2% increase for the pay award would be enough and whether other authorities were putting aside the same provision. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that, in terms of what was affordable for the Council, a 2% pay award was on the high side; however, in respect of inflation and what employees needed, 2% was on the low side. Currently the offer on the table was approximately 1.5% but this was still under negotiation – the Council had reserves in place to deal with anything higher than 2% although he hoped this figure would not be exceeded. Referring to Appendix A, Section A, the Member questioned what neighbour notification letters were. In response, the Head of Development Services explained that the Development Management review was considering the introduction of neighbour notification letters which would be sent to neighbouring properties when a planning application was submitted. Referring to Section C, a Member questioned what the Regeneration Officer would be doing and the Head of Finance and Asset Management confirmed the post would add extra capacity to support the Council's ambitions in Tewkesbury Town Centre which it was intended would be moved forward in the next year. In terms of the One Legal Business Development Manager, the Head of Finance and Asset Management explained that there were income targets in the One Legal budget and the post would, along with the rest of the service, be looking to maximise income to meet – and hopefully exceed – those targets. In addition, he responded to a query regarding the Section 106 Officer post and explained that the Officer was already in post using COVID-19 funding but, long-term, there was a need to pay for the post on an ongoing basis from Section 106 funds. The two year funding for the post would give time to get the Section 106 fund up and running.

66.5 A Member thanked the Head of Finance and Asset Management for the sessions he had provided to Members prior to the Council meeting which had explained in easy to understand terms what the different areas of the budget were. Another Member echoed those comments but indicated that he would abstain from the vote because he could not support a Council Tax rise that increased to the maximum at a time when residents were finding it hard to make ends meet.

66.6 The proposal was seconded and, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing

Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting on the proposal was recorded as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Absent
K Berliner		H S Munro	P W Ockelton
R A Bird		R J G Smith	P E Smith
G F Blackwell		R J Stanley	C Softley
G J Bocking		S Thomson	
C L J Carter			
C M Cody			
K J Cromwell			
M Dean			
R D East			
J H Evetts			
P A Godwin			
M A Gore			
D W Gray			
D J Harwood			
M L Jordan			
E J MacTiernan			
J R Mason			
H C McLain			
P D McLain			
C E Mills			
J W Murphy			
A S Reece			
C Reid			
J K Smith			
V D Smith			
P D Surman			
M G Szymiak			

R J E Vines

M J Williams

P N Workman

66.7 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED**
1. That a net budget of £9,821,535 be **APPROVED**.
 2. That a Band D Council Tax of £134.36, an increase of £5.00 per annum, be **APPROVED**.
 4. That growth items be included within the budget for 2022/23, as proposed in Appendix A to the report.
 5. That the Capital Programme, as proposed in Appendix B to the report, be **AGREED**.

CL.67 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022/23

67.1 The report of the Head of Corporate Services, circulated ay Pages No. 33-44, asked Members to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23.

67.2 The Lead Member for Organisational Development advised that the Localism Act 2011 required the Council to approve and publish a Pay Policy Statement relating to the pay of its workforce each financial year. The Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 had been slightly updated from the previous statement and set out the Council's approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act. Members would recall that the Pay Policy Statement 2021/22 had been significantly rewritten so the 2022/23 Statement included only fairly minor amendments which were shown in the appendix as track changes. If the pay award was agreed prior to the Pay Policy Statement being published it would be amended accordingly.

67.3 Upon being proposed and seconded, it was

- RESOLVED** That the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 be **APPROVED**.

CL.68 CONTINUATION OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE ECONOMIC GROWTH JOINT COMMITTEE - TO 31 MARCH 2023

68.1 The report of the Chief Executive, circulated at Pages No. 45-48, asked the Council to consider extending the operation of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) until 31 March 2023 and to delegate authority to the Borough Solicitor to amend the associated Inter-Authority Agreement accordingly.

68.2 In introducing the report, the Chief Executive explained that Tewkesbury Borough Council had been a member of the GEGJC since it had been established in 2015. When established, it had a fixed life and that had been extended for a period which would expire in March 2022. The extension had been agreed to allow for a review of governance arrangements relating to the county's economic growth pending the government White Paper on devolution and now levelling up. That White Paper had not come forward as quickly as expected and the original extension was due to expire meaning there was a need to extend the agreement for a further 12 months to allow the governance review to take place. The GEGJC was the body responsible for making strategic economic decisions across the county and, without it, the county would not have capability to spend the strategic economic fund. Authority was also requested for the Borough Solicitor to agree and complete the appropriate legal documentation to allow the Inter-Authority Agreement to be extended to 31 March 2023.

68.3 The Leader of the Council was of the view that the Committee needed to continue and that it was important the Council remained a partner in it. Accordingly, it was proposed, seconded and

RESOLVED

1. That the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee continues to operate with the Council's participation as a member authority, from 4 March 2022 until 31 March 2023, under the terms set out in the associated Inter-Authority Agreement.
2. That authority be delegated to the Borough Solicitor to agree and complete the appropriate legal documentation to allow the Inter-Authority Agreement to be extended until 31 March 2023.

CL.69 COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2022/23

69.1 Having agreed the Council's 2022/23 budget earlier in the meeting, attention was drawn to a report, circulated separately, which asked Members to approve and set a Council Tax requirement for 2022/23.

69.2 The recommendation was proposed and seconded and, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting was recorded as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Absent
K Berliner		M L Jordan	P W Ockelton
R A Bird		H S Munro	P E Smith
G F Blackwell		R J G Smith	
G J Bocking		C Softley	
C L J Carter		R J Stanley	
C M Cody		S Thomson	
K J Cromwell			
M Dean			
R D East			
J H Evetts			
P A Godwin			
M A Gore			
D W Gray			
D J Harwood			
E J MacTiernan			
J R Mason			

H C McLain

P D McLain

C E Mills

J W Murphy

A S Reece

C Reid

J K Smith

V D Smith

P D Surman

M G Sztymiak

R J E Vines

M J Williams

P N Workman

69.3 Accordingly, it was

- RESOLVED**
1. That it be **NOTED** that, on 1 December 2021, the Council calculated:
 - a) the Council Tax Base 2022/23 for the whole Council area as £35,811.22 (Item T in the formula in section 31B 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 attached to the report at Appendix C.
 2. That the Council Tax requirement calculated for the Council's own purposes for 2022/23 (excluding Parish precepts) is £4,811,596.
 3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Act:
 - a. £49,760,393 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. £42,515,487 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act;
 - c. £7,244,906 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);
 - d. £202.31 being the amount at 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. £2,433,311 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish

precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per Appendix C to the report);

- f. £134.36 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 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 stated in Column 5 (Band D Parish/Town and Borough b)) of Appendix B to the report are given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area specified in Column 1 of Appendix B in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act. For completeness the table shows all areas; and
 - h. the amount set out in Appendix B to the report given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in 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 2022/23, Gloucestershire County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Borough Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands	Gloucestershire County Council			Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire
	£			£
	ASC	General	Total	
A	113.21	854.36	967.57	186.72
B	132.08	996.76	1,128.84	217.84
C	150.95	1,139.15	1,290.10	248.96
D	169.82	1,281.54	1,451.36	280.08
E	207.56	1,566.32	1,773.88	342.32
F	245.30	1,851.11	2,096.41	404.56
G	283.03	2,135.90	2,418.93	466.80
H	339.64	2,563.08	2,902.72	560.16

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts, set out in Appendix B to the report, as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2022/2023 for each of the categories of dwellings shown in Schedule 3.
6. The Council has determined that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is not excessive in accordance with principles

approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. As the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

CL.70 SEPARATE BUSINESS

70.1 The Mayor proposed, and it was

RESOLVED That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

CL.71 LAND ACQUISITION WITHIN THE TEWKESBURY GARDEN TOWN AREA

(Exempt –Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 –Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

71.1 Members considered the possible procurement of land within the Tewkesbury Garden Town area and agreed a way forward in respect of that acquisition.

CL.72 APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

(Exempt –Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to any individual)

72.1 The Council received a recommendation from the Chief Executive Appointment Committee on the appointment of a new Chief Executive and agreed to the recommended appointment.

The meeting closed at 7:15 pm