



Council Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Thursday, 7 March 2024 at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Council members present:

Councillors Robinson, Catterall, Amos, Lady D Atkins, Sir R Atkins, Baxter, Beavers, Berry, Belshaw, Birch, Bolton, Bowen, Bridge, Cartridge, Collinson, Duffy, Ellison, Fail, Fielding, Higginson, Ibison, Jackson, Kay, Le Marinel, Livesey, Martin, McKay, Meekins, Minto, Moliner, Nicholls, Preston, Rendell, Rushforth, Smith, Sorensen, Swatton, Swift, Vincent, A Walker, C Walker and Wells

Absent- apologies received:

Councillors Blair, Higgs, Leigh, Raynor, Rimmer, C Stephenson, B Stephenson and Thewlis

Officers present:

Rebecca Huddleston, Chief Executive
Mark Billington, Corporate Director Environment
Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer
Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager (Temporary)
George Ratcliffe, Assistant Democratic Services Officer
Joanne Billington, Head of Governance and Business Support
Mary Grimshaw, Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer
Jane Warne, Communications and Visitor Economy Manager
Sandy Lee, Policy, Data Intelligence and Change Manager

2 members of the public or press attended the meeting.

61 Former Councillor and Mayor Ronnie Shewan

A minutes silence was observed in memory of Former Councillor and Mayor Ronnie Shewan.

62 Confirmation of minutes

The Mayor updated members that the draft minutes of the Council meeting held on 24 January 2024 had been amended to correct an error at minute 46.

Councillor Fail raised an amendment to minute 51c. He clarified that although

he referred to the housing type figures shown in the Authority Monitoring report for 2021/22, his question was regarding the housing figures reported for 2022/23.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the minute was not factually incorrect, but acknowledged Councillor Fail's correction and agreed this would be clarified in the minutes of this meeting.

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 25 January 2024 were **approved**, unanimously, by those who were in attendance.

63 Declarations of Interest

None.

64 Announcements

The Mayor announced that the Mayoral Selection Panel had nominated Councillor Jane Preston as the Mayor Elect for 2024/25 for approval at the Annual Council meeting.

On behalf of the Council, Councillor Vincent said a few words in memory of former Councillor and Mayor Ronnie Shewan.

The Mayor reminded members of her charity race night at Garstang Golf Club on Saturday 6 April 2024 to raise money for her Mayor's charities. She thanked those who had bought a horse; this was £5 per horse. Tickets were £40 per person and were available to book online.

The Mayor added that she was going to host a final fundraising event in April; details regarding this would be shared with members in due course.

65 Public questions or statements

None.

66 Questions "On Notice" from councillors

None.

67 Pay Policy Statement 2024/25

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent, and the Chief Executive, Rebecca Huddleston, submitted a report on the council's Pay Policy Statement 2024/25.

Councillor Vincent introduced his report.

It was proposed by Councillor Vincent, seconded by Councillor Berry that the Pay Policy Statement in respect of 2024/25, which was attached at Appendix A of the report be approved.

It was **agreed**, unanimously, that the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 be approved.

68 Review of the staff pay line

Following a verbal update from Councillor Vincent, the Mayor confirmed that the staff pay line report had been **deferred** to a future meeting of the Council.

69 Treasury Management Policy Statement and Practices, Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Capital Strategy 2024/25

The Resources Portfolio Holder, Councillor McKay, and the Corporate Director Resources (and S.151 Officer), Clare James, submitted a report to confirm the Treasury Management Policy and Annual Investment Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement and Capital Strategy 2024/25.

Councillor McKay introduced her report.

It was proposed by Councillor McKay, seconded by Councillor Vincent that the Treasury Management Practices, MRP Policy Statement, Prudential Indicators and Capital Strategy for 2024/25 as considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 14 February 2024.

Councillor McKay and Vincent responded to a question from Councillor A Walker regarding an update on the potential for the council to develop an ethical investment policy.

It was **agreed** (28 votes to 0, with 13 abstentions) that the Treasury Management Practices, MRP Policy Statement, Prudential Indicators and Capital Strategy for 2024/25 be approved.

70 Revenue Budget, Council Tax and Capital Programme

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent, submitted a report on the Revenue Budget, Council Tax, Revised Capital Budget 2023/24, and Capital Programme 2024/25.

The Mayor said that, in accordance with the usual convention, Procedure Rule 16.4 would be suspended so that the Leader when proposing the Budget and the Leader of the Opposition when commenting on or proposing any amendments to it, would not be time limited. However, all other speakers in the debate would, as usual, be limited to a maximum of five minutes each.

The Mayor also proposed that Procedure Rule 16.6(b) be suspended to allow a single debate to be held on any amendments proposed to the budget as a whole. The Council **agreed** unanimously.

Councillor McKay provided members with a verbal correction to the report,

she clarified that the figure at 3.4c ought to read £9,860,830 (£3,000 less than stated in the report published owing to a late change to a Parish Precept). The figure at 3.4d should then read £251.95. She confirmed no other figures were affected.

Councillor Vincent introduced his report, he had unlimited time to do so.

It was proposed by Councillor Vincent, seconded by Councillor Berry that the recommendations as set out in paragraphs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 be approved.

Councillors Fail and Rushforth made comments to the proposed budget, they had unlimited time to do so.

Councillors Belshaw, Sorensen and McKay made additional comments to the proposed budget.

Councillors Berry and Vincent responded to the debate.

In response to comments from Councillor Vincent, Councillor Fail raised a personal explanation to clarify his previous comments regarding the spending of council reserves.

A recorded vote was taken on the Cabinet's recommendations on the budget for 2024/25 as set out in paragraphs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 of the Leader's report.

The following members voted in support of the proposal: Councillors Amos, Lady D Atkins, Sir D Atkins, Baxter, Berry, Birch, Bolton, Bowen, Bridge, Cartridge, Catterall, Collinson, Ellison, Ibison, Jackson, Kay, Le Marinel, Livesey, McKay, Meekins, Minto, Nicholls, Preston, Rendell, Robinson, Rushforth, Swift and Vincent.

The following members voted against the proposal: Councillors Beavers, Belshaw, Duffy, Fail, Fielding, Higginson, Martin, Moliner, Smith, Sorensen, Swatton, A Walker, C Walker and Wells.

The proposal was therefore approved (by 28 to 14) and it was **agreed**:

- 3.1** That the following recommendations of Cabinet on the 14 February 2024 be approved:
 - a.** For the purpose of proposing an indicative Council Tax for 2025/26, 2026/27, 2027/28 and 2028/29 taking into account the Medium Term Financial Plan at Appendix 2 which reflects an increase of 2.99% in 2024/25 and ongoing.
 - b.** The Revised Revenue Budget for the year 2023/24 resulting in a draw down from General Balances totalling £5,950 and the Revenue Budget for 2024/25 resulting in a draw down from General Balances totalling £695,000.

- c. Members' continuing commitment to the approach being taken regarding the efficiency savings, detailed within the council's 'Annual Efficiency Statement' at Appendix 1.
- d. The use of all other Reserves and Balances as indicated in Appendices 4 and 5.
- e. In accordance with the requirements of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance, those indicators included at Appendix 7.
- f. The Revised Capital Budget for 2023/24 and the Capital Programme for 2024/25 onwards in Appendix 8.

3.2 That it be noted that, in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, as agreed by Council at their meeting on 24 February 2005:

- a. The amount of 39,138.48 has been calculated as the 2024/25 Council Tax Base for the whole area [(Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"))]; and
- b. A Council Tax Base, for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates, has been calculated as indicated in Appendix 6.

3.3 That the following be approved:-

The Council Tax requirement for the council's own purposes for 2024/25 (excluding Parish precepts) is £8,857,429.

3.4 That the following be approved:-

That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2024/25 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-

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|-----------|--------------------|---|
| a. | £88,351,610 | 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. | £78,490,780 | Being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. |
| c. | £9,860,830 | Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3.4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3.4(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. £251.95	Being the amount at 3.4(c) above (Item R) all divided by Item T (3.2(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. £1,003,401	Being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act and as detailed in Appendix 6.
f. £226.31	Being the amount at 3.4(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3.4(e) above by Item T (3.2(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.

3.5 That it be noted that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2024/25 is not considered excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

71 Council Tax 2024/25

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Vincent, submitted a report on the setting of Council Tax for 2024/23.

Councillor Vincent introduced his report.

It was proposed by Councillor Vincent, seconded by Councillor Berry that recommendations 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 be approved.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations of the Council Tax 2024/25 report as set out in paragraphs 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.

The following members voted in support of the recommendations: Councillors Amos, Lady D Atkins, Sir D Atkins, Baxter, Berry, Birch, Bolton, Bowen, Bridge, Cartridge, Catterall, Collinson, Ellison, Ibison, Jackson, Kay, Le Marinel, Livesey, McKay, Meekins, Minto, Nicholls, Preston, Rendell, Robinson, Rushforth, Swift and Vincent.

The following member voted against the recommendations: Councillor Sorensen.

The following members abstained from voting: Councillors Beavers, Belshaw, Duffy, Fail, Fielding, Higginson, Martin, Moliner, Smith, Swatton, A Walker, C Walker and Wells.

The proposal was therefore approved (by 28 votes to 1, with 13 absentions) and it was **agreed**:

1. That this Council's Band D equivalent Council Tax for the 2024/25 financial year of £226.31 together with parish precepts, as submitted in the report on the Budget, be approved for each of the valuation bands as set out in table A of the Appendix to these minutes.
2. That it be noted that for the year 2024/25 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings in the Council's area as set out in table B of the Appendix to these minutes.
3. That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3.1 and 3.2 above, and in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the following amounts are set as the Council Tax for the year 2024/25 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in table C of the Appendix to these minutes.

72 Notices of Motion

None.

Appendix to Council Minutes - 7 March 2024

The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 7.56 pm.

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