



# **Rutland County Council**

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

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Minutes of the **MEETING OF THE CABINET** held via Zoom on Tuesday, 18th January 2022 at 10.00 am

**PRESENT:** Councillor O Hemsley (Chair) Councillor L Stephenson (Deputy Chair)  
Councillor S Harvey Councillor K Payne  
Councillor I Razzell Councillor D Wilby

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| <b>OFFICERS</b> | Mark Andrews    | Chief Executive                                  |
| <b>PRESENT:</b> | Sav Della Rocca | Strategic Director for Resources                 |
|                 | Penny Sharp     | Strategic Director for Places                    |
|                 | John Morley     | Strategic Director for Adult Services and Health |
|                 | Dawn Godfrey    | Strategic Director for Children's Services       |
|                 | Marie Rosenthal | Monitoring Officer                               |
|                 | Tom Delaney     | Governance Manager                               |

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **2 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF THE PAID SERVICE**

Mark Andrews, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service advised the Cabinet that Ofsted were visiting Rutland County Council this week undertaking a focus visit. The next Inspection would be due in around 12 months' time. The Chief Executive stated that the team had worked really hard in terms of improving service with the support of Members and wished them well.

## **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **4 RECORD OF DECISIONS**

The record of decisions made at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21 December 2021 were **APPROVED**.

## **5 ITEMS RAISED BY SCRUTINY**

There were no items raised by Scrutiny.

## 6 DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2022/23

Report No. 01/2022 was introduced by Councillor K Payne, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Change and Transformation.

The report presented the draft Revenue and Capital Budget for 2022/23. Councillor Payne highlighted various key points:

- The Council received a one-year settlement from the Government which gave it more funding than expected.
- This time last year the Council was projecting a deficit in 22/23 of over £2m.
- With additional funding, savings and proposed Council tax increase of 4.99%, the Council would be drawing on less than £100k of reserves to balance the budget.
- One of the key challenges in setting the budget had been the rising cost of services.
- Rutland received £331 less funding per household from the Government than other unitary councils. This factor was one of the key reasons why the draft budget included a proposal to increase council tax by 4.99%.
- The Council intended to use its remaining Government Hardship fund to provide further Council Tax discounts to reduce council tax bills for those on the lowest incomes.
- The Council was projecting a funding shortfall of in excess of £2m in 23/24.
- The Leader and Deputy Leader were working closely with our MP Alicia Kearns to lobby numerous Government ministers to achieve a fairer deal for Rutland residents.

A three week consultation on the budget would be undertaken and that Members were aiming to engage residents directly in Oakham and Uppingham market places over the coming weeks. Following this the final budget would come to Cabinet in February before final approval by Council the same month.

Members thanked Councillor Payne and the finance team for the report and its contents. Councillor L Stephenson stated that it was important for the public to engage with the consultation.

### RESOLVED

In consultation with the Cabinet, Councillor K Payne, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Change and Transformation:

#### 1) **APPROVED** for consultation:

- The General Fund Budget for 2022/23 of £42.345m.
- An increase in Council Tax of 4.99% including 3% for the Adult Social Care precept resulting in a Band D charge of £1,917.36
- Use of the remaining Government hardship fund to provide further council tax discounts to the most vulnerable residents.
- Authority for the Chief Executive and s151 Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance to continue discussions with cost reduction consultants and spend up to £100k on a viable project.
- The questions set out in Appendix 8.

- Additions/deletions to the capital programme as per 12.1.2
- Changes to earmarked reserves as per 9.2.3

2) **NOTED:**

- That the funding position may change when the NNDR (business rates) tax base and local government finance settlement is finalised.
- That additional revenue or capital expenditure may be incurred in 2022/23 funded through 2021/22 budget under spends to be carried forward via earmarked reserves. The use of reserves for budget carry forwards is not currently shown in the budget but will have no impact on the General Fund.
- The estimated surplus of £186k on the Collection Fund as at 31 March 2022 of which £159k is the Rutland share.
- That Council will be considering the Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Investment Strategy separately.
- The position on the Dedicated Schools Grant budget.

## 7 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2022/23**

Report No. 02/2022 was introduced by Councillor K Payne, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Change and Transformation.

The report presented the Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Investment Strategy for recommending Council to approve in February. It was highlighted that the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy were consulting on new versions of the Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code, but many of the expected new provisions were already undertaken by the Council in the proposed and previous Strategies. It was also noted that the Council did not intend to borrow to make commercial investments.

Cllr Payne explained that the Council would look to develop a longer term (10 year) capital plan over the next year. Members welcomed the intention to produce a longer term plan and thanked officers for their hard work in producing the Strategies.

### **RESOLVED**

In consultation with the Cabinet, Councillor K Payne, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Change and Transformation:

Recommended to Council to **APPROVE:**

- 1) The Treasury Management Strategy in Appendix 1 including the Investment Strategy, Borrowing strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision statement and Capital Expenditure Prudential indicators.
- 2) The Capital Investment Strategy in Appendix 2.

## 8 SEND RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE

Report No. 07/2022 was introduced by Councillor D Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services. The purpose of the report was to provide an update on a number of projects being undertaken in relation to support all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities (SEND) via the SEND Recovery Plan. The report also set out a number of deficits in relation to the Dedicated Schools Grant and the High Needs Budget and the actions underway to address these.

Councillor Wilby commended the Rutland SEND staff for the amount of work that had been put in to try and make Rutland as inclusive as possible for all the children and the attitude and help given by the schools.

### RESOLVED

In consultation with the Cabinet, Councillor D Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services:

- 1) **NOTED** the update, the emerging impact of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Recovery Plan group of projects.
- 2) **ENDORSED** the actions planned to continue to address the High Needs Budget deficit.

## 9 ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

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**The Chair declared the meeting closed at 10:21am.**

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