

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS -

Meeting:	Council
Date:	Thursday, 23 February 2023
Place:	Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage
Members Present:	<p>Councillors: Margaret Notley (Mayor), Myla Arceno (Deputy Mayor), Julie Ashley-Wren, Sandra Barr, Philip Bibby CC, Stephen Booth, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Adrian Brown, Jim Brown, Teresa Callaghan, Nazmin Chowdhury, Michael Downing, Bret Facey, Alex Farquharson, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Chris Howells, Wendy Kerby, Graham Lawrence CC, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Lin Martin-Haugh, Conor McGrath, Andy McGuinness, Maureen McKay, Sarah Mead, Adam Mitchell CC, Robin Parker CC, Claire Parris, Graham Snell, Simon Speller, Baroness Taylor of Stevenage, OBE, Jeannette Thomas, Anne Wells and Tom Wren</p>

1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
	<p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Duncan, Liz Harrington, Loraine Rossati and Paige Abrey – Youth Mayor.</p> <p>At this juncture tributes were given, and a minute's silence observed in remembrance of former Councillor and Mayor David Weston who had passed away on 8 February 2023. Members were advised that his funeral would be taking place on Wednesday, 8 March 2023.</p>	
2	MINUTES - 25 JANUARY 2023	
	<p>It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council held on 25 January 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.</p>	

3	BOROUGH COUNCIL BY-ELECTION 2023	
	It was RESOLVED that the results of the Bedwell By-Election held on 19 January 2023, together with the percentage turnout, be noted.	
4	GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2023/24 AND CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/23 - 2027/28	
	<p>Councillor Richard Henry, Leader of the Council, then introduced the proposed 2023/2024 General Fund Budget and final proposals for the 2023/24 Council Tax and Council Tax Support Scheme.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs Joan Lloyd, Executive Member for Resources, Transformation and ICT then moved the Motion, recommendations of the Executive and the formal Council Tax Resolution that had been circulated to Members. This was then formally seconded by the Leader, Councillor Henry.</p> <p>Councillor Phil Bibby, Leader of the Opposition moved and Councillor Adam Mitchell seconded the following amendment:</p> <p>‘The Stevenage Conservative Group propose the following amendments to the 2023/24 General Fund budget. This is a fully costed proposal that seeks to deliver a £55,000 pot of money which children’s groups/clubs/sports bodies can bid for to provide extra sessions, spaces and/or resources for children to attend during school holidays.</p> <p>This proposal is funded through the following budget reductions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of Town Twinning from the 2023/24 budget saving £14,000 (noting this is not in the budget for 2024/25) • Reduction in the growth for the Climate Change Head of Service Post to a part time role with a 100% focus on dealing with the climate impact of our Housing stock saving the General Fund £41,000 <p>These General Fund budget reductions total £55,000 and mean the proposed amendment is cost neutral to the General Fund</p>	

for 2023/24.'

Following a full debate and a vote, the amendment was lost.

After further debate, a recorded vote* was taken on the substantive motion and it was **RESOLVED:**

1. That the following be approved:
 - a. the revised working revenue estimates for the year 2022/23 amounting to £11,368,750 and the revenue estimates for 2023/24 amounting to £12,463,780;
 - b. the contribution from balances totalling £1,932,974 in 2022/23;
 - c. the contribution from balances totalling £572,268 in 2023/24.
2. That it be noted that at its meeting on 7 December 2022 the Executive calculated the amount of 28,153.1 Band D equivalent properties as its council tax base for the year 2023/24 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.
3. That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2023/24 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011:

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| a. | £80,829,244 | Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2)(a) to (f) of the Act, less the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) |
| b. | £74,288,875 | Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) of the Act. |
| c. | £6,540,369 | Being the amount by which the aggregate at 3a above exceeds the aggregate at 3b above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. |

d. £232.31 Being the amount at 3c divided by the amount at 2 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

e. Valuation

Bands

A £ 154.87

B £ 180.69

C £ 206.50

D £ 232.31

E £ 283.93

F £ 335.56

G £ 387.18

H £ 464.62

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 3d. 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 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. a. That it be noted that for the year 2023/24 Hertfordshire County Council have 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 the dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

	Basic Amount Of Council Tax	Adult Social Care Charge	2023/24 Council Tax
A	£ 929.57	£ 140.85	£ 1,070.42
B	£ 1,084.50	£ 164.32	£ 1,248.82
C	£ 1,239.43	£ 187.80	£ 1,427.23
D	£ 1,394.36	£ 211.27	£ 1,605.63
E	£ 1,704.22	£ 258.22	£ 1,962.44
F	£ 2,014.08	£ 305.17	£ 2,319.25
G	£ 2,323.93	£ 352.12	£ 2,676.05

H	£ 2,788.72	£ 422.54	£ 3,211.26
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- b. That it be noted that for the year 2023/24 Hertfordshire Police Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and amended by Section 27 of the Police and Magistrates' Court Act 1994, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£ 158.67
B	£ 185.11
C	£ 211.56
D	£ 238.00
E	£ 290.89
F	£ 343.78
G	£ 396.67
H	£ 476.00

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3e. and 4a. and b. above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts for council tax for the year 2023/24 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands

A	£1,383.96
B	£1,614.62
C	£1,845.29
D	£2,075.94
E	£2,537.26
F	£2,998.59
G	£3,459.90
H	£4,151.88

6. To determine in accordance with Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992 that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2023/24 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved by the Secretary of State under Section 52ZC having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3e.
7. That the 2022/23 revised net expenditure for the General Fund of £11,368,750, as set out in Paragraph 4.12.1 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report, be approved.
8. That the inclusion of the 2023/24 Fees and Charges of £325,840, including the 5% increase in market rents approved for inclusion at the December 2022 Executive (Appendix B to the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report), in the draft 2023/24 budget, be noted.
9. That the draft General Fund Budget for 2023/24 of £12,463,780, with a contribution from balances of £572,268 and a

Band D Council Tax of £232.31 (assuming a 2.99% increase), and as summarised in Appendix H to the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report, be approved.

10. That the updated position on the General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), as summarised in Section 4.14 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report, be noted.
11. That the minimum level of General Fund reserves of £3,419,753, in line with the 2023/24 risk assessment of balances, as shown at Appendix C to the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report, be approved.
12. That the contingency sum of £400,000 within which the Executive can approve supplementary estimates, be approved for 2023/24 (reflecting the level of balances available above the minimum amount).
13. That the 2023/24 Council Tax Support Scheme, as set out in Section 4.4 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report, be approved.
14. That the 2023/24 Making Your Money Count (MYMC) options, as set out in Section 4.9 and Appendix A of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report, totalling £1,342,999 and £32,502 (cost) for the General Fund and HRA respectively, be approved.
15. That the Growth options included in Section 4.10 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report, be approved for inclusion in the 2023/24 General Fund (£73,150) and HRA (£56,892) budgets.
16. That the pressures identified in Section 4.2 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report be approved.
17. That it be noted that for 2023/24 a £300,000 budget to pump prime Transformation has been included in the General Fund budget to support efforts to realise the savings targets, as set out in Section 4.7 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report.
18. That the use of the business rate gains only once realised, with their use being ring fenced to maintain the financial resilience of the Council, be approved.
19. That the comments from Overview and Scrutiny as set out in Section 4.18 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting

report be noted.

20. That the Equalities Impact Assessments, appended to the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report in Appendices D and E, be noted.
21. That key partners and other stakeholders be consulted and their views considered as part of the 2023/24 General Fund budget setting process.
22. That it be noted that the Executive had approved a recommendation that the discretionary element of the funding for the Local Council Tax Top Up Scheme be awarded as set out in Paragraph 4.5.9 of the General Fund and Council Tax Setting report, and any revisions to the Scheme be delegated to the Strategic Director (S151 Officer), after consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Transformation and ICT.
23. That final General Fund Capital Growth Bids for 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix A (and incorporated into Appendix C) to the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, be approved.
24. That the revisions to the 2022/23 General Fund budget, as incorporated into Appendix C to the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, be approved.
25. That the Final 2023/24 General Fund Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix C to the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, together with the recommended resourcing, be approved.
26. That the CFO brings a report forward during the 2023/24 financial year setting out the Council's key capital regeneration and community asset ambitions and key land and asset disposals, not currently in the capital strategy to determine a funding strategy to meet these Corporate priorities.
27. That the Final HRA budget requests for 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix B (and incorporated into Appendix D) to the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, as approved at the 18 January 2023 Executive meeting, be noted.
28. That the Final 2023/24 HRA Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix D to the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, be approved.

29. That the updated forecast of resources 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix C (General Fund) and Appendix D (HRA) to the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, be approved.
30. That the risk mitigation strategy to ensure the 2023/24 capital programme is fully financed, as set out Paragraphs 4.3.2 and 4.3.4 of the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, and that the Executive will be updated in the Capital Quarterly monitoring reports, be noted.
31. That the 2023/24 de-minimis expenditure limit, as set out in section 4.11 of the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, be approved.
32. That the 2023/24 contingency allowances, as set out in Section 4.12 of the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, be approved.
33. That the appropriation of the Dunn Close garage block, valued at £540,000, from the General Fund to the HRA, as detailed in Paragraph 4.14.3 of the Capital Strategy 2022/23 - 2027/28 report, be approved.

*Recorded Vote For – Councillors Myla Arceno, Sandra Barr, Lloyd Briscoe, Rob Broom, Adrian Brown, Jim Brown, Teresa Callaghan, Nazmin Chowdhury, Michael Downing, John Gardner, Richard Henry, Jackie Hollywell, Mrs Joan Lloyd, Lin Martin-Haugh, Conor McGrath, Maureen McKay, Sarah Mead, Claire Parris, Simon Speller, Baroness Taylor, Jeanette Thomas and Anne Wells - 22

Against – Councillors Julie Ashley-Wren, Phil Bibby, Stephen Booth, Bret Facey, Alex Farquharson, Chris Howells, Wendy Kerby, Graham Lawrence, Adam Mitchell and Margaret Notley, Robin Parker, Graham Snell and Tom Wren - 13

Abstentions – 0

Not present – Councillors John Duncan, Liz Harrington, Andy McGuinness and Loraine Rossati - 4

5	ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCLUDING PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2023/24	
	<p>The Council considered a report in respect of the Annual Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24, including its Annual Investment Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy following consideration by the Audit Committee and Executive.</p> <p>It was moved, seconded and RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24, as attached at Appendix A to the report, be approved.</p>	
6	RESOLUTION TO EXTEND 6 MONTH RULE - SECTION 85 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972	
	<p>The Council considered a report in accordance with Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, to extend Councillor Liz Harrington's non-attendance at meetings of the Council until 4 May 2023 (the date of the Borough Council Elections).</p> <p>It was moved, seconded and RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, Councillor Liz Harrington's non-attendance at meetings of the Council until 4 May 2023 (the date of the Borough Council Elections) on the grounds of ill health be approved.</p>	
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