

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2017 commencing at 10.00 am

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Lowe (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Dickins, Firth, Hogarth and Piper

An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Scholey

Cllrs. Mrs. Hunter, McGarvey, Pett and Thornton were also present.

56. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings of Cabinet held on 1 December 2016, be approved and signed as a correct record.

57. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

58. Questions from Members

There were none.

59. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee or Cabinet Advisory Committees

There were none.

60. Budget Update

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report which set out progress made in preparing the 2017/18 budget and updated Members on key financial information.

The Chief Finance Officer explained that the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement was announced on 15 December 2016 and had no material impact on the 10-year budget position, however it did change the New Homes Bonus assumptions. He set out that previously this had been based on cumulative figures for six years but this was being reduced to five years from 2017/18 and four years from 2018/19. He also explained that last year the Council had anticipated the 2018/19 change but not the 2017/18 change. In future New Homes Bonus would only be received on tax base growth above 0.4% instead of on all growth. It did not help fund the revenue budget but did support the Property Investment Strategy, therefore other sources could be required to fund part of the schemes

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planned in 2017/18 and 2018/19. He indicated that as normal there would be a review of reserves as part of the budget process and that he would endeavour to reallocate funds to the Property Investment Strategy as part of this process.

It was further explained that the other items of note in the settlement were that the Business Rates Retention safety net level for the Council had increased very slightly and the Tariff Adjustment (negative Revenue Support Grant) which first appeared last year was still included in the calculations for 2019/20 but would be reconsidered as part of the Government's review of Business Rates Retention which had not yet been completed.

The other amendments to the budget were updating the Property Investment Strategy income, changing the Council Tax Base to reflect the next report and the three new growth and savings proposals shown in Appendix E (on page 23 of the report).

The Chief Finance Officer took Members through the growth and savings proposals in Appendix E. Members had asked officers to look at increasing Planning income and SCIA 4 related to pre-application charges. £20,000 of additional income was agreed at the last Cabinet and SCIA 4 increased that by £5,000 to £25,000. SCIA 27 increased the Planning application income budget by £5,000.

He explained that SCIA 28 was about an increase in Business Rates expenditure for the Council's properties. Nationally all properties subject to Business Rates had been revalued and on 20 December 2016 further information had been issued enabling the Council to calculate the Business Rates payable by the Council next year. The increase of £30,000 set out in the SCIA was due to car parking assessments going up nationally and this increase had partly been offset by a reduction in Business Rates for the Argyle Road building and Dunbriek depot.

The Chief Finance Officer set out that he was not expecting any further changes before the budget was finalised at Council in the next month and that the Council would once again have a balanced 10-year budget and be self-sufficient from direct government funding.

In respect of the updated SCIA 4 Members discussed the performance indicators set out in the report regarding the processing of planning applications.

Cabinet was due to make its final recommendation on the budget at its meeting on 9 February 2017, after taking into account any updated information available at that date.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the growth and savings proposals set out in the report, be agreed.

61. Calculation of Council Tax Base and other tax setting issues

The Principal Accountant presented the report which set out details of the calculation of the District's tax base for council tax setting purposes. These figures were used to determine tax rates for each of the council tax bands once the Council's budget requirement was known. The report also advised Members of the timetable for setting the 2017/18 council tax.

He stated that as part of the budget cycle the Council was required to calculate the council tax base of the district for tax setting purposes for the coming financial year and that the calculation had to be approved by Cabinet and Full Council. He explained that the tax base was determined by converting all property and occupancy data to the equivalent number of band D properties and that this figure was used to calculate the band D charge.

The report showed that the current tax base for 2016/17 was 48,895.68 and the tax base for 2017/18 would be 49,382.42, an increase of 1%. Apart from the increase in the number of dwellings, there was a fluctuation in the number of discounts granted each year.

A collection rate of 99.4% had been included which was the same as the rate used in 2016/17.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Council that

- a) the report of the Chief Finance Officer for the calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2017/18 be approved;
- b) pursuant to the report of the Chief Finance Officer and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended) the amount calculated by the Sevenoaks District Council as its council tax base for the whole area for the year 2017/18 shall be 49,382.42;
- c) pursuant to the report of the Chief Finance Officer and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended) the amount calculated by the Sevenoaks District Council as the council tax base for 2017/18 for the calculation of local precepts shall be:

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Tax Base</u>
Ash-cum-Ridley	2,417.81
Badgers Mount	329.71
Brasted	772.34

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Chevening	1,448.06
Chiddingstone	595.80
Cowden	406.15
Crockenhill	647.99
Dunton Green	1,116.66
Edenbridge	3,505.34
Eynsford	929.09
Farningham	650.57
Fawkham	284.48
Halstead	760.41
Hartley	2,527.05
Hever	599.88
Hextable	1,650.64
Horton Kirby & South Darent	1,292.20
Kemsing	1,824.29
Knockholt	619.36
Leigh	818.76
Otford	1,668.43
Penshurst	829.69
Riverhead	1,237.13
Seal	1,198.96
Sevenoaks Town	9,315.37
Sevenoaks Weald	619.66
Shoreham	682.88
Sundridge	924.22
Swanley	5,407.86
Westerham	1,979.25
West Kingsdown	2,322.38

- d) any expenses incurred by the Council in performing in part of its area a function performed elsewhere in its area by a parish or community council or the chairman of a parish meeting shall not be treated as special expenses for the purposes of section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

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THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 10.28 AM

CHAIRMAN

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 24 January 2017. The decision contained in Minute 60 takes effect immediately. The decision contained in Minute 61 is a reference to Council.