

EXECUTIVE – SPECIAL MEETING

MONDAY 15 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 4.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor J Mallinson (Leader / Chair)
Councillor Ellis (Deputy Leader, and Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Christian (Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Higgs (Culture, Heritage and Leisure Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Mrs Mallinson (Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder)
Councillor Nedved (Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder)

OFFICERS:

Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Corporate Director of Economic Development
Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence submitted.

PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That the Agenda be agreed as circulated.

CALL-IN **

The Leader reported that The Mayor had, on 3 February 2021, agreed that the following item should be exempt from call-in as call-in procedures would overlap the special City Council meeting on 17 February 2021 when the Council would consider the Executive's response and final Budget Proposals:

- Budget 2021/22 – Consideration of Proposed Amendments agreed by the City Council on 2 February 2021

The Leader further announced that, in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services had on 3 February 2021 written (on behalf of the Council) formally informing him of the proposed amendments to the Executive's Budget Proposals 2021/22; and instructing him to require the Executive to reconsider its Budget Proposals for 2021/22 in the light thereof.

This special meeting had been convened in compliance with that instruction.

**EX.29/21 ** BUDGET 2021/22 – CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
AGREED BY THE CITY COUNCIL ON 2 FEBRUARY 2021
(Key Decision)**

(With the consent of the Chairman, and in accordance with Rule 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules; and Regulation 10 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 this item was included on the Agenda as a Key Decision, although not in the Notice of Executive Key Decisions for decision today)

(In accordance with Paragraph 15(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, The Mayor had agreed that call-in procedures should not be applied to this item)

Portfolio Finance, Governance and Resources

Relevant Scrutiny Panel Business and Transformation

Subject Matter

There were submitted the Budget Proposals 2021/22 and Minute Excerpt EX.06/21; and the following proposed amendments to the Executive's Budget recommendations for 2021/22 (including the observations of the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources) which was referred to the Executive by the City Council on 2 February 2021:

1. Mental Health (crisis) Support

To provide a grant of £15,000 to support the work of Carlisle Eden Mind and help to meet the increasing demand for their mental health crisis support services, including the possible expansion of the Lighthouse crisis service. The proposal is to be funded from the 2021/22 allocation of Covid-19 funding provided in the Local Government Finance Settlement.

This budget amendment will assist Carlisle Eden Mind, not only in meeting the increased demand due to the impact of Covid on Carlisle residents' mental health but will also act as match funding for applications and bids to other funding bodies to meet essential demand for support.

This amendment also supports this Council's commitment to improving mental health and wellbeing and support the NHS Every Mind Matters campaign.

2. Removal of Rats in domestic properties charge

It is proposed to remove the charge for treatment of rats in domestic properties. We believe that now is not the time for the introduction of this new charge with the financial difficulties' households are currently encountering with COVID. We therefore ask the Executive to reconsider the implementation of this charge for 2021/22 and fund the income shortfall from Revenue Reserves.

Supplementary reports by the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources (RD.60/20), the Deputy Chief Executive (CS.14/21) and Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services (GD20/21) were also submitted to assist the Executive in responding to the proposed budget amendment carried by Council on 2 February 2021.

Schedule 2 – Proposed Budget Reductions

- There would be an increase in the overall level of Non-Recurring Budget reductions of £15,000 for 2021/22, increasing from £739,000 to £754,000.

Schedule 4 – Non-Recurring Budget Increases

- There would be an increase in the overall level of Non-Recurring Budget increases of £40,000 for 2021/22 from £777,000 to £817,000.

Schedule 5 – Summary Net Budget Requirement

- Total Revenue Expenditure would increase by £25,000 in 2020/21.
- Contributions from Reserves for non-recurring commitments would increase by £25,000 to £97,000 in 2021/22.

Schedule 10 – Useable Reserve Projections

- There would be a decrease in the level of General Fund/Projects Reserve projections of £25,000 by 2025/26.

The Deputy Leader confirmed that the Executive had, as instructed by Council, reconsidered their Budget Proposals for 2021/22 and, as stated at the Council meeting on 2 February 2021, were supportive of the above-mentioned amendments. The amendments had been incorporated into revised Budget Proposals 2021/22 (dated 15 February 2021 – Version 1.0), copies of which were circulated.

The Deputy Leader provided an update on outstanding figures which, alongside the budget amendments, resulted in a net impact of changes to the Medium-Term Financial Plan of £11,000 which would be taken from Council reserves. These changes related to:

- Council Tax base – this has reduced which adds a pressure to the 5-year MTFP of £290,000;
- Council tax surplus/deficit – this has been calculated and spread over the 3 year permitted deficit recovery period; and has added a further pressure of £296,000 over the lifetime of the MTFP;
- All parish precepts have been received, increasing the 2021/22 budget requirement by £3,000 but with no impact on Council Reserves;
- The NNDR1 return has been finalised which has increased the income we expect to receive from business rates when compare to the budget projections; an increase of approximately £600,000;
- The final Local Government Settlement funding has been confirmed with no changes to current budget provisions.

Referring to the two amendments from Council, the Deputy Leader announced that the Executive proposed to provide £15,000 of support to the work of Carlisle and Eden Mind with their Lighthouse Service. In addition, a further £10,000 would be provided in cooperation with Cumbria County Council with match funding to support mental health support in the District. The Executive had also agreed to postpone the introduction of the charge for the removal of rats in domestic properties.

The Deputy Leader formally moved that the Executive make recommendations to Council on 17 February 2021 with regard to the following:

Provide a grant of £15,000 to Carlisle and Eden Mind to support their Lighthouse Service.
Provide £10,000 to be distributed in cooperation with Cumbria County Council with match funding from their Contain Outbreak Mitigation Fund (COMF) to support mental health support in the District.

To postpone the introduction of the charge for the removal of rats in domestic properties.

In seconding the recommendations the Leader highlighted the importance of mental health support in the City and supported the proposals.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder commented that Carlisle City Council had always taken mental health seriously and was delighted to support the grant funding especially in the current circumstances.

Summary of options rejected None

DECISION

That the Executive:

1. Had given consideration to the proposed budget amendments (Mental Health (crisis) Support and Removal of rats in domestic properties charge) carried by Council on 2 February 2021.
2. Agreed the following amendments and that a revised Budget document, attached as Appendix A, incorporating the amendments, be submitted to the City Council on 17 February 2021:

Provide a grant of £15,000 to Carlisle and Eden Mind to support their Lighthouse Service.

Provide £10,000 to be distributed in cooperation with Cumbria County Council with match funding from their Contain Outbreak Mitigation Fund (COMF) to support mental health support in the District.

To postpone the introduction of the charge for the removal of rats in domestic properties.

Reasons for Decision

The Executive was required to respond to the proposed amendments of the City Council and, accordingly, would submit a revised Budget document to the City Council on 17 February 2021.

[The meeting ended at 4.10pm]