
COUNCIL

Thursday, 24th February, 2022

Present: Councillor Kath Pratt (Mayor), Councillors Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Mohammad Ayub, Peter Britcliffe, Andrew Clegg, Loraine Cox, Paul Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Diane Fielding, Melissa Fisher, June Harrison, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Michael Hindley, Terry Hurn, Abdul Khan, Chris Knight, Sajid Mahmood, Michael Miller, Jenny Molineux, Caroline Montague, Tim O'Kane, Dave Parkins, Bernadette Parkinson, Miles Parkinson OBE, Joyce Plummer and Steven Smithson

Apologies: Councillors Noordad Aziz, Eamonn Higgins, Patrick McGinley, Paddy Short and Kate Walsh

269 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence submitted on behalf of Councillors, Noordad Aziz, Eamonn Higgins, Patrick McGinley, Paddy Short and Kate Walsh.

270 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Councillor Munsif Dad BEM JP declared a personal interest in Agenda Items 6 (Medium Term Financial Strategy), 7 (Prudential Indicators Monitoring and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy), and 8 (General Revenue Budget, Council Tax Levels and Capital Programme) in view of his position as a member of the Board of Hyndburn Leisure Trust.

All Councillors had previously been granted a dispensation to speak and vote in relation to the following matters, which were relevant to the business due to be conducted during the meeting:

- Setting Council Tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended from time to time or any superseding legislation.
- Setting a local scheme for the payment of business rates, including eligibility for rebates and reductions for the purposes of the Local Government Finance Act 2012, as amended from time to time and any superseding legislation.

271 Non Attendance by Councillor for 6 Months

Councillor Miles Parkinson OBE, Leader of the Council, introduce a report seeking approval to Councillor Paddy Short continuing to be a member of the Council if he remained unable to attend any relevant meeting of the Council on or before 3rd May 2022. The Leader advised of some corrections to the published report, as follows:-

In relation to Paragraph 3.1 of the report, subsequent updates to the records had confirmed that Councillor Short had been present at meeting of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4th November 2021.

In the light of the above, the final date for Councillor Short to attend a meeting as mentioned at Paragraphs 1.1, 2.1 and 3.4 would be 3rd May 2022. However, Councillor Short had indicated that, due to other commitments, he might be unable to attend the next and final meeting of Council before that date, which would be held on 24th March 2022. Accordingly, he would like the matter to be considered by the Council at the meeting this evening.

The report indicated that Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 provided that where a Councillor had failed to attend any meeting of the authority for a period of six consecutive months from the date of the last attendance, subject to certain exceptions, he or she would automatically cease to be a member of the authority. The exceptions related to military service or service of the Queen at a time of war or any emergency related to that service.

Council could approve that an absent councillor remained a member of the Council, but this decision would have to be made before the end of the 6 month period and the decision could not be made retrospectively.

There was a brief adjournment to the meeting due to disruption by some members of the public.

A number of Members spoke to express their disappointment that the illness of a colleague had been publicised in a way which was not supportive of Councillor Short's wellbeing and expectation of privacy. Members spoke in favour of the extension to Councillor Short's membership on the grounds of ill health and wished him a speedy recovery.

Resolved

- That Council:

- (1) approves that Councillor Paddy Short continues to be a member of the Council if, due to illness, he is unable to attend any relevant meeting of the Council on or before 3rd May 2022, such approval to extend until 30th June 2022; and**
- (2) reviews this approval on or before 30th June 2022 if Councillor Short remains unable to attend any relevant meeting of the Council due to illness.**

272 Announcements

The Mayor, on behalf of the Council and the people of Hyndburn, wished the Queen a speedy recovery from the effects of COVID-19 and wished her all the best for her Platinum Jubilee Year.

The Leader of the Council reminded Members that, while democratic debate was taking place in the Council Chamber, a war was unfolding in Ukraine. It would be appropriate, therefore, to show solidarity for democracy. With the permission of the Council he agreed to write to the Ukrainian Ambassador to express Hyndburn's support for freedom and democracy.

273 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 13th January 2022 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Resolved - **That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 13th January 2022 be approved as a correct record.**

274 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25 - February 2022 Update

Councillor Joyce Plummer, Portfolio Holder for Resources, provided a report setting out the 3-year projections of income and spending for the Council ahead of formulating its 2022/23 Revenue and Capital Budgets. The report had already been considered and approved by the Cabinet on 9th February 2022.

The Cabinet had considered an update on its medium term financial outlook ahead of making recommendations on the setting of the Budget for 2022/23 and determining the level of Council Tax for the new financial year. This report ensured that those decisions were taken with a view to the overall position of the Council going forward and were not limited to a narrow one year perspective.

Councillor Plummer spoke to introduce the report. The substantive report included the following summary:-

The Council's activities and finances had been dominated this year by the continuing impact of COVID-19 and it was expected that COVID-19 and its consequences would continue to have a major impact on the Council's finances for at least the next financial year as a minimum, with the potential for the effects to continue much longer.

In response to the great uncertainty the Council faced, it would operate a roll forward Budget for 2022/23 based on the 2021/22 Budget adjusted for changes to salary and wages, pension contributions and increased income from the Government and the Council Tax Base. This provided Service Managers a fixed reference point from which to continue to respond to the crisis and allowed a degree of stability for one further year, while the Council recovered from the most significant challenge it had ever faced. To achieve a balanced Budget during the year, the Council would need to generate £294,000 of internal savings during the year. As with previous years, the Government was encouraging Councils to increase Council Tax by up to a maximum of 2%. It was proposed that the Council follow this direction. Overall expenditure would need to be contained at below £12m in 2022/23 to set a balanced budget.

The Council would face significant financial challenges over the next two years as it sought to overcome the consequence of COVID-19 and address the impact of any proposed Government funding reforms and increased pressures on its spending. As the extent of the Government financial reforms was unclear at this time and details were unlikely to emerge until December 2022, this produced great uncertainty and potentially significant variance around the forecasts contained in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Previously, for the last four years the expectation had been that the Government would implement what it termed as a "Fair Funding Review of Local Government Finance" and this would effectively end the Revenue Support Grant to the Council and potentially redistribute the amount of Business Rates the Council was allowed to retain. The expected impact of these changes if they went ahead were expected to cause a significant decrease in the funding available to the Council and require it to make substantial reductions in its expenditure levels as a consequence, either immediately in the aftermath of the

announcement or over a short period, if some form of transitional arrangements accompanied these changes to assist those Councils most dramatically impacted.

After 4 years in which these reforms had been postponed for various reasons and in the light of the Government signalling a potential change in its view of public spending commitments during the pandemic, the certainty around the introduction of Fair Funding was no longer as sure as it once seemed, with the potential that current levels of funding to the Council would continue.

As a consequence, the modelling now recognised that there was a real possibility that a largely continuation Budget might be the single most likely outcome over the next few years of all the potential different scenarios that could occur. However, the strong prospect of a Fair Funding Review which would significantly reduce the Council's funding remained a very real prospect. Ministry of Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (MLUHC) officials continued to indicate that they wished to introduce some kind of Fair Funding Review during 2022 to re-shape Council finances and the prospects of this occurring remained high.

This presented the Council with two very different future budget scenarios. The first was a scenario in which funding from Government remained largely in its current shape and where the Council while under some financial pressure, should be able to largely cope. While the second scenario, would see reform of local government finance, with a wide range of possible outcomes for the Council potentially occurring, from changes that were relatively small in consequence, all the way through a whole series of results up to outcomes which would be large and very dramatic in terms of the challenges it presented to the Council.

These 2 scenarios were modelled within the report. The more severe of the two, as the Pessimistic Scenario and the other as the Standard Model. A third model was also presented which indicated the Council's potential position if the Government chose to provide local government with an injection of cash over and above current levels and locally the Council was able to boost its own tax revenue as a consequence of a buoyant tax base. This Optimistic model was considered to have a much lower probability of occurring compared to the other two models but was provided to illustrate the wide range of potential outcomes.

In these circumstances it was prudent for the Council to look to increase its reserves and revenue streams such as Council Tax and Business Rates whenever it could and to avoid committing to any new revenue expenditure while continuing to concentrate on its work to reduce internal costs.

Detailed information was provided in the report on the following matters:-

- Objectives;
- Elements of the MTFS;
- Service Planning to support overall strategy;
- Integrated resource planning with services;
- Background information;
- Financial analysis 2022/23 to 2024/25 (resources; Government grant; business rates; Council Tax; expected loss of income; and changes in costs)
- Growth;
- Reserves;
- Other assumptions;
- Scenarios;

- Robustness of forecast; and
- Overall net position.

The Leader summed up by reiterating that the MTFs set out Optimistic, Pessimistic and Standard Scenarios for the next few years. Although the current situation in Ukraine could result in additional financial pressures across Europe, the Council remained in a strong position to deal with any uncertainty.

Resolved - **That the Council notes the report and the accompanying Medium Term Financial Strategy, as approved by the Cabinet.**

275 Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management & Investment Strategy 2022/23 - 2024/25 including Capital Strategy

Councillor Joyce Plummer, Portfolio Holder for Resources, provided a report setting out the Council's policy and objectives with respect to treasury management, to explain how it would achieve its objectives and manage its activities; and to agree an investment strategy for 2022/23. The report had already been considered by the Cabinet on 9th February 2022 and its recommendations had been approved for submission to the Council.

Councillor Plummer gave a brief introduction to the report. The main report included the following information:

Treasury management was defined as:

- The management of the Council's investment and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions;
- The effective control of the risks associated with these activities;
- And the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.

The Council was required to operate a balanced budget which meant that cash raised during the year would meet cash expenditure. Part of treasury management was to ensure the cash flow was properly planned with cash available when needed. Surplus monies were invested in line with the Council's low risk preferences.

The second function of treasury management was funding the Council's capital plans. The plans gave a guide to the future borrowing need of the Council. The management of this longer term cash flow might involve arranging long or short term loans or using longer term cash flow surpluses. Occasionally, outstanding debt might be restructured to reduce Council risk or meet cost objectives.

The report had been prepared in line with the Treasury Management Code and Guidance (2017) written by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). In the case of local authorities in England and Wales, the Code was significant under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003. This required local authorities 'to have regard (a) to such guidance as the Secretary of State may issue, and (b) to such other guidance as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify'. The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 in paragraph 24 required local authorities to have regard to this guidance. Acceptance of this report fulfilled those obligations. CIPFA had published revised codes on 20th December 2021 and had stated that formal adoption was not required until the 2023/24 financial year.

The report included detailed information on the following matters:-

- The Prudential Code and Prudential Indicators;
- Capital expenditure and the capital financing requirement;
- Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP);
- Affordability prudential indicators;
- Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23 - 2024/25;
- External debt overall limits;
- External v internal borrowing;
- Limits on activity;
- Debt rescheduling;
- Investment strategy;
- Treasury Management Practices (TMP);
- Policy on the use of external service providers; and
- Treasury Management Strategy in-year and year-end reporting.

Resolved

- **That the Council agrees the recommendations of Cabinet to:-**

- (1) Adopt the prudential indicators and limits detailed in the report;**
- (2) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy, and associated indicators, as set out in section 8 of the report;**
- (3) Approve the Investment Strategy as set out in section 13 of the report;**
- (4) Approve that the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for the year 2022/23 – Appendix 1;**
- (5) Approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement 2022/23 – Appendix 2**
- (6) Approve the Treasury Management Practices Statement 2022/23 – Appendix 3**
- (7) Approve the Capital Strategy 2022/23 – Appendix 4**

276 General Revenue Budget, Council Tax Levels and Capital Programme 2022/23

The Mayor introduced this item and sought the approval of Council to the Budget Procedure to be followed at the meeting, which involved changes to the usual Council Procedure Rules. With the consent of the meeting, the proposed order of debate was duly adopted.

Members were reminded that, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, recorded votes would be required in respect of any financial decisions taken under this item.

Proposals for the 2022/23 General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme had been put forward at Cabinet on 9th February 2022 and had been recommended to Council

for approval. The proposals had also been submitted to the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16th February 2022 and a number of questions been raised and comments made.

The following reports were provided:-

a) General Fund - Revenue Budget 2022/23

The report included proposals as presented to and approved by the Cabinet on 9th February 2022. The recommendations agreed by Cabinet were as follows:-

- “(1) That Cabinet proposes to Council an increase in Council Tax for 2022/23 of £5.11 per year for a Band D property. This is equivalent to less than 10 pence per week. As most households in Hyndburn are Band A rather than Band D properties, the vast majority of households will only see a rise of less than 7p per week. This is only the sixth increase in Council Tax by Hyndburn Council in 13 years.*
- (2) The Budget for 2022/23 will therefore be £12,334,000 as detailed in Appendices 1 and 2.*
- (3) That Cabinet recommend approval of the growth items and savings approach outlined for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 3 to ensure the Council has a balanced budget.*
- (4) That Cabinet note the significant improvement made in relation to budget monitoring and cost reduction within the Authority over the past 18 years and confirms its commitment to continuing this approach in the year ahead.*
- (5) That Cabinet recommends during the financial year 2022/23, the Deputy Chief Executive be delegated responsibility to amend the Budget (following consultation with the Leader of the Council) for technical reasons, such as the restructuring of cost centres, the re-apportionment and re-allocation of overheads etc., provided such amendments have an overall neutral impact on the Budget.*
- (6) That Cabinet recommends during the financial year 2022/23, the Deputy Chief Executive be delegated responsibility to amend the Budget (following consultation with the Leader of the Council) should the estimate of Business Rates not be sufficiently accurate, by drawing on reserves if needed or paying over additional contributions to reserves.*
- (7) That to aid future financial management planning, any surpluses generated during 2022/23 are set aside to help the Council reduce its cost base over the next three years, to support its long term capital programme or to strengthen its overall reserve position.*
- (8) That Cabinet recommends that the Lower Tier Service Grant and the 2022/23 Services Grant are used to help balance the Council’s Budget.*
- (9) That Cabinet recommends that the New Homes Bonus and any additional funds from Government that are not ring-fenced funding as well as any other surplus funds can be used if required to support capital expenditure as determined by the Deputy Chief Executive in the overall financing of capital expenditure or be transferred to Reserves.”*

b) General Fund - Capital Programme 2022/23

The report included proposals as presented to and approved by the Cabinet on 9th February 2022. The recommendations agreed by Cabinet were as follows:-

“That Cabinet recommends to Council:-

- (1) To approve a Capital Programme for 2022/23 of £38,593,918 as set out in Appendix 1.*
- (2) That the programme is funded by new anticipated direct external grants of £23,428,958 and £15,164,960 of new investment from the Council’s resources, the redesignation of reserves to support the capital programme and the use of borrowing. External grant funding must be secured before any internal funds are committed to projects that rely on external funding to proceed.*
- (3) That delegated authority is given to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources to flex the programme in accordance with the available funding, provided this does not require any additional borrowing.*
- (4) That the individual projects within the Capital Programme require the written authorisation of the Deputy Chief Executive following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources before commencing and incurring expenditure and that Service Managers provide the Deputy Chief Executive, with written details of estimated costs of schemes with full justification of the need and benefits from undertaking the capital investments before approval is provided and that approval to commence is delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources. Where the Deputy Chief Executive deems it appropriate, he has the authority to release funding in stages to ensure effective financial control can be maintained and project risk managed.*
- (5) That Projects are timed to minimise the need for borrowing and the Deputy Chief Executive be requested to seek project start dates after September 2022 whenever this is practical.*
- (6) That in-year underspends are not made available to fund new projects during the year.”*

c) Comments and Recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny

The report included the comments and recommendations of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft Budget.

Councillor Andrew Clegg, in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee, spoke to outline the following:-

At the annual Budget Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 16th February, the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed the Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals submitted by the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Resources. The budget proposals submitted were reviewed and discussed in depth by the Committee, and the recommendations were as follows:-

“That Council notes the following resolutions of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- (1) *That the Committee notes the content of the reports relating to; Performance Indicators, Treasury Management and Investment Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, General Fund Revenue Budget and General Fund Capital Budget;*
- (2) *That the Committee thanks the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Resources and Leader of the Opposition for their participation in the Scrutiny meeting and debate;*
- (3) *That the Deputy Chief Executive, and all other officers involved, be commended for their work in producing the budget.*
- (4) *That having reviewed and debated the budget submitted, the Committee supports the content of the revenue and capital budget reports as outlined.”*

The Leader thanked the Committee for its due diligence.

A **MOTION**, tabled at the meeting, was proposed by Councillor Miles Parkinson and seconded by Councillor Joyce Plummer, as follows:-

- “1. That Council agree the acceptance and adoption of the Cabinet’s recommendations on the Revenue and Capital Budgets and Prudential Indicators & Treasury Management Report for 2022/23 to 2024/25 made at the Cabinet meeting on 9th February 2022 (a copy of the reports and recommendations have been supplied with the Agenda for today’s meeting),
2. That Council Tax for Hyndburn Borough Council is increased by £5.11 to £260.64 for the year for a Band D property. This is equivalent to a 10p per week increase for a Band D property but most households in Hyndburn will see an annual increase of £3.41 as they live in Band A properties. The weekly increase here will be 7p.
3. That the Council commits to continuing to strengthen its Reserves during the year and requires the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive to take appropriate action to protect the Council’s overall financial position and further strengthen its Reserves during the forthcoming year.
4. That the Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive to take such action as he considers necessary to implement the measures contained in this budget.
5. That it be noted that on 12th January 2022 the Council at its Cabinet calculated:
 - the Council Tax Base 2022/23 for the whole Council area as 21,050 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)) and,
 - for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as 310.
6. That Council agrees that the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purpose for 2022/23 (excluding Parish precepts) is £5,499,098.

7. That Council agrees that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

- a) £53,892,489 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) £48,393,391 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- c) £5,499,098 being the amount by which the aggregate at 7(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 7(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 31A(4) of the Act).
- d) £261.24 being the amount at 7(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (5 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 (including Parish precepts).
- e) £12,731 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix B).
- f) £260.64 being the amount at 7(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 7(e) above by Item T (5 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.

8. That Council notes that the County Council, the Lancashire Police & Crime Commissioner and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below.

9. That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2022/23 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

Band D Council Tax Rates for Each Preceptor

	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Increase

Hyndburn Borough Council	255.53	260.64	1.99%
Lancashire County Council	1,456.19	1,514.29	3.99%
Lancashire Police & Crime Commissioner	226.45	236.45	4.42%
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	72.27	77.27	6.92%
Sub Total	2,010.44	2,088.65	3.89%
Altham Parish Council	40.27	41.07	1.99%
Total	2,050.71	2,129.72	3.85%

10. That the Council note the basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is not considered excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52 ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
11. That the Council note that the interest rate projections made in the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management & Investment Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25 at 8.4.1 in that report have been updated at Appendix 3 as since the report was originally drafted the Bank of England has increased its Base Rate.
12. That the Deputy Chief Executive, is given delegated authority to amend the budget (following consultation with the Leader of the Council) for technical reasons or to comply with legal requirements, such as the restructuring of cost centres, the re-apportionment and re-allocation of overheads etc., so long as these changes have an overall neutral impact on the budget.
13. That any continuing balances on Revenue or Capital previously earmarked for Area Councils continues to be set aside for use by these or their successor bodies.
14. That the Chief Executive is given delegated authority to use any unallocated surplus generated in 2021/22 should this occur to fund any future shortfall in income or additional expenditure, to support "Invest to Save" projects that will help reduce the Council's long term costs(including additional payments to the Pension Fund as outlined below), or support specific capital projects, or finance other commitments that he deems to be in the best long term interest of the Council or to transfer funds to Reserves as required and to allocate funds between Reserves should an overspend occur in 2022/23 to maintain the General Fund Reserve at that appropriate level as advised by the Deputy Chief Executive.

15. That the Chief Executive is given delegated authority following consultation with the Leader to make a payment or payments to the Lancashire Pension Authority to help reduce the extent of the Council's pension liabilities that have amassed from previous years, if this is calculated to be an appropriate use of Council Funds (The liability stood at £41.9m as at the 31st March 2021).
16. That the Council approves the redesignation of £2m of the Housing Stock Environmental Warranty Reserve to a Contingency Reserve in support of the Levelling Up Project.
17. That the Council authorises the Deputy Chief Executive to borrow up to £5m in support of the Leisure Estate Investment Project to help finance the Programme.
18. That the Council approves the redesignation of reserves as outlined in the report to assist in the financing of the Leisure Estate Investment Programme to help reduce the overall borrowing requirement for the Programme and authorises the Deputy Chief Executive to set aside any additional capital receipts or revenue balances to finance the project as necessary."

Councillor Haworth then tabled three Opposition amendments to the Motion. She sought the permission of the Council for a change to the Council Procedure Rules so as to allow her to move and speak to the amendments *en bloc*, then for a single debate to be held as though the amendments were being taken collectively, but with a vote to be taken on each amendment separately. The meeting did not consent to the proposed procedure and, accordingly, each amendment would be moved, debated and voted upon separately.

A brief adjournment of around 15 minutes was agreed to allow time for Members to consider the information tabled. The meeting then resumed with the amendments taken, as follows:-

Amendment 1

The following **AMENDMENT** was moved and seconded:-

"Following a miserable two years which has resulted in terrible hardship across the Borough, the Conservative Group ask that the controlling group look to ease their burden by freezing the Council Tax this year the cost would be approximately £108k taken from our Revenue Reserves which, after speaking to our lead officer, is achievable and we believe this would go a long way in helping them."

After a debate, the Leader outlined the principal reasons why it would not be in the Council's interests to agree to the amendment, as this would store up additional financial pressures to be met from future years' Budgets.

AMENDMENT 1 was then put to the **VOTE**.

For the Motion

Councillors Kath Pratt (Mayor), Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn, Sajid Mahmood, Michael Miller, Jenny Molineux and Steven Smithson. Kath Pratt (Mayor)

Against the Motion

Councillor Andrew Clegg, Loraine Cox, Paul Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Diane Fielding, Melissa Fisher, June Harrison, Michael Hindley, Abdul Khan, Chris Knight, Caroline Montague, T O’Kane, Dave Parkins, Bernadette Parkinson, Miles Parkinson OBE and Joyce Plummer.

Abstentions

None.

Accordingly, the **AMENDMENT** was **LOST**.

Amendment 2

The following **AMENDMENT** was moved and seconded:-

“£100,000 one off pot to be funded from Revenue Reserves to be given to an organisation within the Borough to provide additional mental health counselling services for those who have been waiting over six months for help.”

After a debate, the Leader outlined the principal reasons why it would not be in the Council’s interests to agree to the amendment, as notwithstanding the laudable aims of the proposal, the Council already supported the wellbeing of its residents through investment in and collaboration with various partners, such as Hyndburn Leisure.

AMENDMENT 2 was then put to the **VOTE**.

For the Motion

Councillors Kath Pratt (Mayor), Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn, Sajid Mahmood, Michael Miller, Jenny Molineux and Steven Smithson. Kath Pratt (Mayor)

Against the Motion

Councillor Mohammad Ayub, Andrew Clegg, Loraine Cox, Paul Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Diane Fielding, Melissa Fisher, June Harrison, Michael Hindley, Abdul Khan, Chris Knight, Caroline Montague, T O’Kane, Dave Parkins, Bernadette Parkinson, Miles Parkinson OBE and Joyce Plummer.

Abstentions

None.

Accordingly, the **AMENDMENT** was **LOST**.

Amendment 3

“£500.000k of Capital Reserves alongside matched funding be used to replace and refurbish parks and playgrounds, across the Borough, such as the one in Netherton, Rishton. Our green spaces need to be preserved and the well-being of our children looked after.”

After a debate, the Leader outlined the principal reasons why it would not be in the Council's interests to agree to the amendment, as the Council already held multiple Green Flag Awards and had strategy for playground renewal in accordance with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) play safety standards. Investment was carried out under a rolling programme, which enabled the Council to maximise matched funding opportunities.

AMENDMENT 3 was then put to the **VOTE**.

For the Motion

Councillors Kath Pratt (Mayor), Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn, Sajid Mahmood, Michael Miller, Jenny Molineux and Steven Smithson. Kath Pratt (Mayor)

Against the Motion

Councillor Mohammad Ayub, Andrew Clegg, Loraine Cox, Paul Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Diane Fielding, Melissa Fisher, June Harrison, Michael Hindley, Abdul Khan, Chris Knight, Caroline Montague, T O'Kane, Dave Parkins, Bernadette Parkinson, Miles Parkinson OBE and Joyce Plummer.

Abstentions

None.

Accordingly, the **AMENDMENT** was **LOST**.

The Leader then spoke on the Substantive Motion as follows:-

Unity across the Council Chamber and in local communities was important. 2021/22 had been a difficult year, with COVID-19 dominating the agenda. Much of the Council's focus had been on responding to the pandemic, including helping the NHS around testing and vaccination centres, giving advice and grants to businesses and providing other guidance.

It was hoped that society would now begin to return to normal, but in 2022/23 people were already starting to see the effects of price rises, with inflation in December 2021 at 5.4%. Due to strong financial management within the Council, the authority did not need to raise Council Tax by 5.4%, but could limit this to only 2%. The Council had a strong track record of protecting frontline services. This year would also see a £150 Council Tax refund for properties in Bands A-D, which would be paid automatically in April/May 2022 for those residents who were signed up to pay by Direct Debit. An announcement would be made shortly about how those who elected to pay by other means could access the refund. Financial assistance was also available for those suffering hardship.

The Budget would fund a series of major investments which were planned to rejuvenate the local economy. This included £20m from the Government for Accrington Town Centre from the Levelling Up Fund, £12m to improve sports facilities and an Infrastructure Bid to support the Huncoat Garden Village Masterplan. The 3 major projects together would boost leisure opportunities, create new homes and jobs and improve health. The largest ever Capital Programme of £38m had been put together by councillors and stakeholders working closely together. Hyndburn should have the same quality facilities as its peers. The proposed Budget provided for investment, not cuts. It would be further supported by development highlighted in the Local Plan, which was due to be published in March 2022.

Overall, the Accrington Town Centre Investment Plan was a strategy developed by listening to stakeholders. COVID-19 had helped to foster closer working with partners and stakeholders, through ventures such as the Hyndburn Hub. This approach had produced a vision which was both bold and deliverable. The Leader was pleased to have been able to work collaboratively with the Leader of the Opposition and MP. The proposed Budget represented the start of 10-15 year plans, which were owned by the people and businesses of Hyndburn.

Members from both sides of the Council Chamber spoke in support of the Budget and acknowledged the high level of cooperation which had produced the underlying plans. Councillor June Harrison thanked the Leader and Joe McIntyre, Deputy Chief Executive, and his staff for their hard work in developing the Budget.

The Leader summed up by reiterating the importance of unity and working together, even where different opinions were expressed. He thanked councillors and officers for their efforts and support.

The **MOTION** was then put to the **VOTE**.

For the Motion

Councillors Kath Pratt (Mayor), Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Mohammad Ayub, Peter Britcliffe, Andrew Clegg, Loraine Cox, Paul Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Diane Fielding, Melissa Fisher, June Harrison, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Michael Hindley, Terry Hurn, Abdul Khan, Chris Knight, Sajid Mahmood, Michael Miller, Caroline Montague, Tim O'Kane, Dave Parkins, Bernadette Parkinson, Miles Parkinson OBE, Joyce Plummer and Steven Smithson

Against the Motion

None

Abstentions

None

Accordingly, the **MOTION** was **CARRIED** and it was:-.

Resolved

- (1) That Council agree the acceptance and adoption of the Cabinet's recommendations on the Revenue and Capital Budgets and Prudential Indicators & Treasury Management Report for 2022/23 to 2024/25 made at the Cabinet meeting on 9th February 2022 (a copy of the reports and recommendations have been supplied with the Agenda for today's meeting),**
- (2) That Council Tax for Hyndburn Borough Council is increased by £5.11 to £260.64 for the year for a Band D property. This is equivalent to a 10p per week increase for a Band D property but most households in Hyndburn will see an annual increase of £3.41 as they live in Band A properties. The weekly increase here will be 7p.**

- (3) That the Council commits to continuing to strengthen its Reserves during the year and requires the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive to take appropriate action to protect the Council's overall financial position and further strengthen its Reserves during the forthcoming year.
- (4) That the Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive to take such action as he considers necessary to implement the measures contained in this budget.
- (5) That it be noted that on 12th January 2022 the Council at its Cabinet calculated:
- the Council Tax Base 2022/23 for the whole Council area as 21,050 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")) and,
 - for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as 310.
- (6) That Council agrees that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purpose for 2022/23 (excluding Parish precepts) is £5,499,098.
- (7) That Council agrees that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
- a) £53,892,489 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) £48,393,391 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - c) £5,499,098 being the amount by which the aggregate at 7(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 7(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 31A(4) of the Act).

- d) £261.24 being the amount at 7(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (5 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 (including Parish precepts).
- e) £12,731 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix B).
- f) £260.64 being the amount at 7(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 7(e) above by Item T (5 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.

- (1) That Council notes that the County Council, the Lancashire Police & Crime Commissioner and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below.
- (2) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate amounts shown in the table below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2022/23 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings.

Band D Council Tax Rates for Each Preceptor

	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Increase
Hyndburn Borough Council	255.53	260.64	1.99%
Lancashire County Council	1,456.19	1,514.29	3.99%

Lancashire Police & Crime Commissioner	226.45	236.45	4.42%
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	72.27	77.27	6.92%
Sub Total	2,010.44	2,088.65	3.89%
Altham Parish Council	40.27	41.07	1.99%
Total	2,050.71	2,129.72	3.85%

- (3) That the Council note the basic amount of Council Tax for 2022/23 is not considered excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52 ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (4) That the Council note that the interest rate projections made in the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management & Investment Strategy 2022/23 to 2024/25 at 8.4.1 in that report have been updated at Appendix 3 as since the report was originally drafted the Bank of England has increased its Base Rate.
- (5) That the Deputy Chief Executive, is given delegated authority to amend the budget (following consultation with the Leader of the Council) for technical reasons or to comply with legal requirements, such as the restructuring of cost centres, the re-apportionment and re-allocation of overheads etc., so long as these changes have an overall neutral impact on the budget.
- (6) That any continuing balances on Revenue or Capital previously earmarked for Area Councils continues to be set aside for use by these or their successor bodies.
- (7) That the Chief Executive is given delegated authority to use any unallocated surplus generated in 2021/22 should this occur to fund any future shortfall in

income or additional expenditure, to support “Invest to Save” projects that will help reduce the Council’s long term costs(including additional payments to the Pension Fund as outlined below), or support specific capital projects, or finance other commitments that he deems to be in the best long term interest of the Council or to transfer funds to Reserves as required and to allocate funds between Reserves should an overspend occur in 2022/23 to maintain the General Fund Reserve at that appropriate level as advised by the Deputy Chief Executive.

- (8) That the Chief Executive is given delegated authority following consultation with the Leader to make a payment or payments to the Lancashire Pension Authority to help reduce the extent of the Council’s pension liabilities that have amassed from previous years, if this is calculated to be an appropriate use of Council Funds (The liability stood at £41.9m as at the 31st March 2021).
- (9) That the Council approves the redesignation of £2m of the Housing Stock Environmental Warranty Reserve to a Contingency Reserve in support of the Levelling Up Project.
- (10) That the Council authorises the Deputy Chief Executive to borrow up to £5m in support of the Leisure Estate Investment Project to help finance the Programme.
- (11) That the Council approves the redesignation of reserves as outlined in the report to assist in the financing of the Leisure Estate Investment Programme to help reduce the overall borrowing requirement for the Programme and authorises the Deputy Chief Executive to set aside any additional capital receipts or revenue balances to finance the project as necessary.

277 External Audit - Appointment Arrangements 2023/24

Councillor Chris Knight, Chair of the Audit Committee, provided a report setting out proposals for appointing the external auditor to the Council for the accounts for the five-year period from 2023/24.

The current auditor appointment arrangements were made via Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA) and covered the period up to and including the audit of the 2022/23 accounts after the Council had previously opted to accept their invitation to join the national procurement exercise for external audit services.

PSAA was now undertaking a procurement for the next appointing period, covering audits for 2023/24 to 2027/28. All local government bodies needed to make decisions about their external audit arrangements from 2023/24. Councils had options to arrange their own procurement and make the appointment themselves or in conjunction with other bodies, or they could join and take advantage of the national collective scheme administered by PSAA.

The report concluded that the sector-wide procurement conducted by PSAA would produce better outcomes and would be less burdensome for the Council than a procurement undertaken locally because:

- collective procurement reduced costs for the sector and for individual authorities compared to a multiplicity of smaller local procurements;
- if it did not use the national appointment arrangements, the Council would need to establish its own auditor panel with an independent chair and independent members to oversee a local auditor procurement and ongoing management of an audit contract.

If the Council wished to take advantage of the national auditor appointment arrangements, it was required under the local audit regulations to make the decision at full Council. The opt-in period had started on 22nd September 2021 and would close on 11th March 2022. To opt into the national scheme from 2023/24, the Council needed to return completed opt-in documents to PSAA by 11th March 2022.

The report included detailed information on the following:

- Legislative requirements for the procurement of external audit;
- The appointed auditor;
- Appointment by the council/authority itself or jointly;
- The national auditor appointment scheme;
- Pressures in the current local audit market and delays in issuing opinions;
- The invitation by PSAA;
- The next audit procurement;
- Assessment of options and officer recommendation;
- The way forward; and
- Financial implications.

Resolved - **That the Council accepts Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 1st April 2023.**

278 National Non Domestic Rates Reliefs for 2022/2023

Councillor Joyce Plummer, Portfolio Holder for Resources, provided a report which presented a new Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Non Domestic Rate Relief for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, providing eligible businesses with a 50% rate relief on their business rates liability for this period. Councillor Plummer highlighted the key elements of the new scheme.

The report indicated that in its response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Government had announced a raft of measures to support business rates payers – deliverable via billing authorities using their existing discretionary powers under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

Government had supported billing authorities and their preceptors by funding, in full, the discretionary reliefs awarded under these measures using grants delivered under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The administration of the discount scheme described in the report was subject to restrictions laid out in Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, which stipulated that any variation or termination of a discount scheme under Section 47 that would result in an increased financial liability for the ratepayer must be done at the end of a financial year and with 12 months' notice. By implementing this new scheme from 1st April 2022, the Council's administration of business rates relief remained within the legal boundaries of its discretionary powers.

Since 2019/20 the Government had provided a Business Rates Retail Discount for retail properties, which for 2020/21 it had expanded to include the leisure and hospitality sectors. On 27th October 2021 the Government had confirmed that a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief would apply in 2022/2023 providing a 50% rate relief for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

For 2022/2023, the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief was applied after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs funded by grants made under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 had been applied. Other locally applied discounts under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 must be applied after the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Discount.

Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief awards were made under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended.

For the new 2022/2023 scheme, the Council had identified over 200 businesses that were considered to meet the relevant eligibility criteria from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023, with a total of £1.1m in business rates relief awarded. As a pro-active measure, and in line with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) guidance, the Council intended to apply the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief for these businesses automatically as part of the annual billing process for 2022/2023.

For the new 2022/2023 scheme, awards of Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief were capped at £110,000 per business. In light of this, the Council would request applications to be made for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief from businesses that were part of a national chain, or a subsidiary of another business.

The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief Scheme provided by the Council, in line with guidance and funding provided via DLUHC, had been updated to reflect changes made to policy on a national scale. A comparison between the new scheme announced in October 2021 and its predecessors (listed below) were set out in a table in the report:

- Initial Retail Discount Scheme for 2020/21 prior to the Pandemic;
- 2020/21 Retail Discount Scheme changes announced in March 2020; and
- 2020/21 Extension to the Retail Discount Scheme announced in March 2021.

For the 2022/2023 scheme, ratepayers would be given the right to refuse the discount.

For the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief 2022/2023, no ratepayer could in any circumstances exceed the £110,000 cash cap across all of their hereditaments in England.

Where a ratepayer had a qualifying connection with another ratepayer then those ratepayers should be considered as one ratepayer for the purposes of the cash caps. A ratepayer should be treated as having a qualifying connection with another:

- “a. Where both ratepayers are companies, and
 - i. One is a subsidiary of the other, or
 - ii. Both are subsidiaries of the same company, or
- b. Where only one ratepayer is a company, the other ratepayer (the “second ratepayer”) has such an interest in that company as would, if the second ratepayer were a company, result in its being the holding company of the other.”

Whilst EU State Aid rules no longer apply within the UK following the end of the transition period on 31st December 2020, the UK still had several international obligations relating to subsidies. These included those arising from the UK’s continued membership of the World Trade Organisation, or from the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The Government considered that relief awarded under the schemes in this report was a subsidy that was subject of the new subsidy control principles. This meant that local authorities might lawfully award relief to all eligible properties up to the caps specified in the guidance.

The Leader indicated that this support was critical to local businesses. Council staff had acted very quickly to passport the money to eligible businesses during the pandemic and this had been recognised in an announcement by 10 Downing Street. The Leader applauded the staff for their efforts in continuing to operate the Business Rate Relief schemes.

Resolved

- (1) That the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Non Domestic Rate Relief Scheme 2022/2023 attached to the report, as Appendix 1, be approved and applied to business rates bills as soon as is reasonably practicable in order to provide businesses with certainty around their business rates liabilities for 2022/2023.**
- (2) That the Deputy Chief Executive is given delegated power to undertake the calculation, collection, administration and recovery of National Non Domestic Rates in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1988, (as amended from time to time) and further government regulations that may be issued pursuant to the same.**

279 Non Domestic Rates Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) Scheme

Councillor Joyce Plummer, Portfolio Holder for Resources, provided a report in connection with funding the Council had available from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to assist local businesses that were ineligible for existing support linked to business rates, by providing a rate relief for 2021/2022. The report also sought

approval to a policy to distribute that funding in accordance with the guidance issued by DLUHC in December 2021. Councillor Plummer outlined the main elements of the new scheme.

The report indicated that the Government had provided a wide range of support to businesses in an attempt to reduce the impact of the pandemic on the economy since March 2020. This report sought approval for a scheme to provide a rate relief to businesses in Hyndburn under the Government's COVID-19 Additional Relief (CARF) scheme.

DLUHC had made £1,468,781 available to the Council to provide rate relief for 2021/2022 to eligible local businesses adversely affected by the pandemic, but that were not eligible for existing support linked to business rates.

The CARF scheme was not available to businesses who either were, or, would be eligible for the Expanded Retail Discount (covering Retail, Hospitality and Leisure), or the Nursery Discount during 2021/2022.

The CARF scheme was not available for hereditaments for a period that it had been unoccupied during 2021/2022 (other than hereditaments which had become temporarily closed due to the Government's advice on COVID-19, which should be treated as occupied for the purpose of CARF).

The funding of £1,468,781 from the Government available to the Council was capped. It was expected that demand for assistance from this fund might exceed the funds available from the Government and therefore the Council might need to consider a cap on the level of CARF award to determine how much eligible businesses might be entitled to.

The Council needed to approve a policy to administer the distribution the funds available in an appropriate way and this policy was set out at Appendix 1 of the report. Appendix 3 set out a copy of the latest DLUHC guidance in relation to this scheme. The policy approval would cover all future reliefs awarded under this relief funding heading, should the scheme be extended or additional funding be made available by the Government.

The Council was under time pressure to allocate this rate relief as quickly as possible to businesses and the intention was to have the application process operating on the authority's website during late February 2022/early March 2022. After evaluation of the applications received against the eligibility criteria and priorities of the relief scheme, the Council would expect to be able to award CARF before 31st March 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic of early 2020 led to the Government taking a number of measures to protect the population from the health risk of the virus. Some of the measures introduced since March 2020, had caused businesses across the country significant financial hardship and in response, the Government had introduced a wide range of support to the business sector to assist them during this period.

Most of the support to businesses had been supplied direct from Government to businesses. However, the Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy also provided a range of grant funding to businesses via local councils.

The CARF fund had replaced the legal right for businesses to appeal to the Valuation Office Agency on Material Change of Circumstances grounds due to COVID. It was expected therefore that most relief allocations to successful applicants would be limited to a certain percentage, which meant that businesses who did qualify would still have some business rates to pay.

The Council's policy to determine who was eligible to receive CARF rate relief and to prioritise between the applications received, followed the DLUHC mandatory guidance on eligibility for the grant and the priorities it set out in its guidance document. The Council's policy therefore outlined:

- not to award CARF relief to ratepayers who for the same period of the relief either were or would have been eligible for the Extended Retail Discount (covering Retail, Hospitality and Leisure), the Nursery Discount or the Airport and Ground Operations Support Scheme (AGOSS),
- not to award CARF to a hereditament for a period when it was unoccupied (other than hereditaments which had become closed temporarily due to the government's advice on COVID-19, which should be treated as occupied for the purposes of this relief), and
- direct their support towards ratepayers who had been adversely affected by the pandemic and had been unable to adequately adapt to that impact.

For the CARF scheme, the Council had identified over 250 businesses that were considered to potentially meet the relevant eligibility criteria. These were predominately from the manufacturing, and industrial sectors. As a pro-active measure the Council would target the publicity, and, availability of the CARF scheme to those businesses to encourage applications to maximise the distribution of funding available.

The Council reserved the right to end the relief scheme at any point including when it appeared that applications received would exceed the funding available. The scheme would also require applicants to supply all requested information and to provide additional information or clarity on their application if required. If the Council introduced a deadline for the submission of applications, an application submitted after the deadline had passed would not be considered.

There were a number of key requirements for applicants to submit relevant evidence to be considered for rate relief in the CARF scheme, and these were detailed in the policy document and were also contained in the application form.

To protect the Council from fraudulent applications there would be requirements for applicants to sign declarations to allow the Council to cross match and verify any data supplied with internal and external organisations including but not limited to, other Government Departments and HMRC. Applicants would be required to sign an undertaking to return the relief funding, if the Council deemed the funding had been awarded incorrectly due to their false or misleading statements and applicants would be required to sign to state they would not contravene EU State Aid rules.

Whilst EU State Aid rules no longer applied within the UK following the end of the transition period on 31st December 2020, the UK still had several international obligations relating to subsidies. These included those arising from the UK's continued membership of the World Trade Organisation, or from the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The Government considered that relief awarded under the schemes in this report was a subsidy that was subject of the new subsidy control principles. This meant that local authorities might lawfully award relief to all eligible properties up to the caps specified in the guidance.

Resolved

(1) That the Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund Scheme attached to the report as Appendix 1, be approved

and implemented as soon as is reasonably practicable in order to provide a rate relief to eligible businesses in Hyndburn for the financial year 2021/2022.

- (2) That delegated power be granted to the Deputy Chief Executive to make amendments to the CARF Scheme so that the scheme can remain in line with Government requirements without formal approval for each change and to make other minor adjustments to the scheme to aid in its smooth administration. This delegated authority is requested for the duration of the CARF scheme (currently up to 30 September 2022) so that the Council's management of the COVID-19 pandemic in Hyndburn remains dynamic and responsive to business needs.**

The Mayor thanked all for their attendance and reminded councillors that the next Council meeting would be held on 24th March 2022.

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed