
COUNCIL

Tuesday, 27th February, 2024

Present: Councillor Terry Hurn (Mayor), Councillors Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steve Button, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Bernard Dawson MBE, Peter Edwards, Melissa Fisher, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Abdul Khan, Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Colin McKenzie, Caroline Montague, Dave Parkins, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson, Kate Walsh, Kimberley Whitehead and Mohammed Younis

Apologies: Councillors Heather Anderson, Loraine Cox and Paul Cox

325 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Anderson, Loraine Cox and Paul Cox.

326 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest submitted at the meeting.

All Councillors had been granted a dispensation to speak and vote in respect of item 7 – General Fund – Revenue Budget, Council Tax Levels and Capital Programme 2024/25.

The Mayor reminded the meeting that 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 at item 8 of the agenda:

- 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.

327 Announcements

Announcements of the Mayor

Passing of Former Mayor and Councillor, Doug Hayes

The Mayor, Councillor Terry Hurn, informed the meeting of the sad passing of a former Mayor, Honorary Alderman and councillor of the ward of St. Oswalds, Doug Hayes.

The Acting Leader of the Council, Councillor Peter Britcliffe, the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor Munsif Dad and Councillor Dave Parkins all expressed their deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Mr. Hayes.

The Council were upstanding for a one minute's silence, as a mark of respect.

Mayor's Ball

The Mayor informed Council that the Mayor's Ball had been well attended and had been a great night of food and entertainment, raising over £13,000 for his nominated charities.

Announcements of the Acting Leader of the Council

The Acting Leader of the Council made the following announcements:

Mayor's Ball

He congratulated the Mayor on the success of the Mayor's Ball and his achievement in raising a large amount of money for his charities.

National Highways & Homes England

He referred to the success of talks with National Highways and Homes England in securing funding for Huncoat Garden Village.

Demolition of Market Cabins

He congratulated the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Levelling Up, Councillor Younis, for successfully ensuring progress of works in respect of the demolition of the market cabins and for works to enhance the Accrington Pals Garden.

Altham Parish Councillor Rennie Pinder

He referred to the recent ill-health of Altham Parish Councillor Rennie Pinder, and requested that a letter wishing him a speedy recovery was sent to him on behalf of the Council.

Councillor Marlene Haworth, Leader of the Council

He welcomed the Leader of the Council, Councillor Marlene Haworth, back to Council after recent ill- health. Councillor Haworth thanked everyone for their kind wishes and cards and informed the meeting that her health was improving and she would be able to return to work soon.

Announcements of Chief Executive

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive.

328 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 11th January 2024 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Councillor Dave Parkins referred to item 261 – Announcements, item 8 – Planning Grant, and congratulated the Head of Planning & Transportation and his staff for the improvements to the stability of the Planning Department.

Resolved - **That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 11th January 2024 be approved as a correct record.**

329 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27

Councillor Peter Britcliffe, Portfolio Holder for Resources, provided a report setting out the 3-year projections of income and expenditure for the Council ahead of formulating its

2024/27 Revenue and Capital Budgets. The report had already been considered and approved by the Cabinet on 13th February 2024 and the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 20th February 2024.

Councillor Britcliffe 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 impact from the War in Ukraine and focussing on the Levelling Up/Town Centre regeneration along with ensuring it delivered its day to day services and other key strategic projects. It is expected that these key events and their impact on the Council's finances will continue over the next few financial years, with the potential for the effects to continue much longer.

The Council would, therefore, operate a roll forward Budget for 2024/25 based on the 2023/24 Budget adjusted for changes to salary and wages, energy and other cost pressures. This provided Service Managers the ability to respond to inflationary pressures and allows a degree of stability for 2024/25. In order to achieve a balanced Budget the Council would need to generate £106,300 of internal savings during the year. Overall expenditure would be needed to be contained at around £16.122m in 2024/25 to set a balanced budget.

If necessary the Council would have to use some of its Reserves to help balance the Budget. This is particularly likely if the Government reduces the amount of financial support it provides the Council or reduces the amount of Business Rates it is allowed to retain. Additionally, it may be necessary to use Reserves if it is believed that in the current economic climate it would be inappropriate to raise Council Tax.

The Council would face significant financial challenges over the next three years as it sought to overcome the consequence of the War in Ukraine and ongoing conflict in the Middle East. Addressing the impact of any proposed Government funding reforms and increased pressures on its spending would present it with further challenges over this period. As the extent of the Government financial reforms was unclear at this time, this produces great uncertainty and potentially significant variance around the forecasts contained in the MTFS.

Previously, for the last five years the expectation had been that the Government would implement what it termed as a "Fair Funding Review of Local Government Finance." This proposal would effectively end the Revenue Support Grant to the Council and potentially redistribute the amount of Business Rates the Council was allowed to retain to other Councils. The expected impact of these changes, if they went ahead, were expected to cause a significant decrease in the funding available to the Council.

In these circumstances the Council would need to make substantial reductions in its expenditure levels as a consequence. The changes would need to be made 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 5 years in which these reforms had been postponed for various reasons and with a new Government with Rishi Sunak as Prime Minister, the certainty around the introduction of Fair Funding is no longer as sure as it once appeared and it may be the case these reforms were postponed for a number of years or dropped altogether. This would allow the potential current levels of funding to the Council to continue.

As a consequence, the modelling now recognised that there was a real possibility that continuation of Government funding at current levels may be the most likely outcome over the next few years of all the potential different scenarios that could occur. However, many of the drivers around the need to reform the finances of Local Government still exist. DLUHC officials continue to indicate they wish to introduce some kind of Fair Funding Review to re-shape Council finances and the prospectus of this occurring over the next few years remains a distinct possibility.

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 from high pay inflation and a steep rise in its energy costs, 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 potential results some of which would be large and very dramatic in terms of the challenges it presented to the Council.

These two 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:-

- Elements of the MTFs;
- Background;
- Resources;
- Government Grant;
- Council Tax;
- Business Rates;
- Changes in Costs
- Budget Pressures;
- Capital Costs;
- Growth;
- Reserves;
- Other Assumptions;
- Scenarios;
- Robustness of forecast; and
- Overall net position.

Resolved

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

330 Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management & Investment Strategy 2024/25 - 2026/27 Including Capital Strategy

Councillor Peter Britcliffe, the Acting Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Resources, submitted a report to set out the Council's policy and objectives with respect to treasury management, to explain how it will achieve its objectives and manage its activities; and to agree an investment strategy for 2024/25.

The report had been submitted to Cabinet on 13th February 2024. The report informed Council that the information that had changed in the document within the last 12 months was minimal and that investments had been volatile which had worked to the Council's advantage. The following details were summarised in the attachment to the report:-

- Background
- Prudential Code & Prudential Indicators
- Capital Expenditure & Capital Financing Requirement
- IFRS 16 –Leasing
- Minimum Revenue Provision
- Affordability Prudential Indicators
- Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27
- Current Treasury Position
- Expected Movement Interest Rates
- External Debt Overall Limits
- External Vs Internal Borrowing
- Liability Benchmark
- Limits on Activity
- Debt Rescheduling
- Investment Strategy
- Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG)
- Treasury Management Practices (TMP)
- Policy on the Use of External Service Providers
- Treasury Management Strategy in – Year & Year-End Reporting

Also included with the report are the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2024/25, the Treasury Management Policy Statement 2024/25 and the Treasury Management Practices 2024/25.

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 Appendix 1 of the report;**
- (3) Approve the Investment Strategy as set out in section 13 of Appendix 1 of the report;**
- (4) Approve that the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for the year 2024/25 – as set out in**

section 5 of Appendix 1, as attached to the report;

(5) **Approve the Treasury Management Policy Statement 2024/25 – Appendix 2 of the attached report;**

(6) **Approve the Treasury Management Practices Statement 2024/25 – Appendix 3, as attached to the report;**

(7) **Approve the Capital Strategy 2024/25 – Appendix 4, as attached to the report.**

331 General Fund - Revenue Budget, Council Tax Levels and Capital Programme 2024/25

Budget Debate Procedure

The Mayor introduced the proposed Budget Debate Procedure and sought approval of Council to adopt the procedure 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.

The Acting Leader of the Council informed the Council that proposals for the 2024/25 General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme had been put forward at Cabinet on 13th February 2024 and had been recommended to Council for approval. The proposals had also been submitted to the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20th February 2024 at which a number of questions had been raised, comments made and three amendments to the recommendations had been submitted by the Labour Party. These amendments had subsequently been approved by the Committee. Councillor Short, Chair of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee, outlined the decisions of the Committee indicating their support of the General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/25 and Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27, inclusive of the amendments.

The following reports were provided:-

a) General Fund - Revenue Budget 2024/25

The report included proposals as presented to and approved by the Cabinet on 13th February 2024, however, the report had been updated since the Cabinet meeting to include additional growth. This growth had been fully funded by an increase in funding of £123,354, which was announced in the Government's final finance settlement for 2024/25.

The recommendations agreed by Cabinet were as follows:-

- (1) *That Council approves an increase in Council Tax for 2024/25 of 2.99% increasing the charge for a Band D property to £268.43;*

- (2) *That the Budget for 2024/25 would therefore be £16,121,900 as detailed in Appendices 1 to 3 of the Revenue Budget 2024-2025 report attached at Appendix A of the report;*
- (3) *That Council approves the changes in budget requirement including inflation, growth and savings identified in Appendix 3 of the Revenue Budget 2024-25 report, to ensure the Council could set and approve a balanced budget;*
- (4) *That Council note the significant improvement made in relation to budget monitoring and cost reduction within the Authority over the past 20 years and confirmed its commitment to continuing this approach in the year ahead;*
- (5) *That Council approves that during the financial year 2024/25, the Executive Director of Resources 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 had an overall neutral impact on the Budget;*
- (6) *That Council approves that during the financial year 2024/25, the Executive Director of Resources 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 2024/25 were 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 Council approves that the Service, Funding Guarantee and New Homes Bonus Grants awarded for 2024/25 be used to help balance the Council's Budget; and*
- (9) *That Council approves that any additional funds from Government that are not ring-fenced funding, as well as any other surplus funds, could be used if required to support capital expenditure as determined by the Executive Director – Resources, in the overall financing of capital expenditure or be transferred to Reserves.”*

Council was informed that increases in Council Tax were also expected by Lancashire County Council at 2.99% and a 2.0% increase to assist with meeting the cost of Adult Social Care, the Police Commissioner at 4.75%, Lancashire Combined Fire Authority at 2.99 % and Altham Parish Council has set a separate precept at 5.14%.

Council Tax Resolution

The report set out the Council's budget requirement for 2024/25 as presented to Cabinet on 13th February 2024, its Precept on the Collection Fund and the formal details surrounding

the Precept of other bodies on the Collection Fund. The Council was, therefore, requested to consider the following recommendations:

That Council approves:

- (1) the acceptance and adoption of the Cabinet's recommendations on the Revenue and Capital Budgets and Prudential Indicators & Treasury Management Report for 2024/25 to 2025/26 made at the Cabinet meeting on 13th February 2024;*
- (2) That Council Tax for Hyndburn Borough Council be increased by 2.99% from the 2023/24 charge and therefore, increase the charge by £7.79 to a new charge of £268.43 for the year for a Band D property;*
- (3) That the Council commits to continuing to strengthen its Reserves during the year and requires the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Resources 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 the Revenue Budget for 2024/25;*
- (5) That, it be noted that on 24th January 2024 the Council at its Cabinet calculated: the Council Tax Base 2024/25 for the whole Council area as 22,095 (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 317;*
- (6) That, Council agreed that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purpose for 2024/25 (excluding Parish precepts) is £5,930,961;*
- (7) That, Council agrees that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2024/25 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:*
 - a) £58,604,193 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) £52,659,544 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.*
 - c) £5,944,649 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) £269.05 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) £13,688 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per Appendix B);*

- f) £268.43 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 note 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 2024/25 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings;

Band D Council Tax Rates for Each Preceptor

	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Increase
Hyndburn Borough Council	260.64	268.43	2.99%
Lancashire County Council	1,574.71	1,653.29	4.99%
Lancashire Police & Crime Commissioner	251.45	263.40	4.75%
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	82.27	84.73	2.99%
Sub Total	2,169.07	2,269.85	4.65%
Altham Parish Council	41.07	43.18	5.14%
Total	2,210.14	2,313.03	4.66%

- 10) That the Council note the basic amount of Council Tax for 2024/25 is not considered excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52 ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- 11) That the Executive Director of Resources, 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;

- 12) *That any continuing balances on Revenue or Capital previously earmarked for Area Council continues to be set aside for use by these or their successor bodies;*
- 13) *That the Chief Executive is given delegated authority to use any unallocated surplus generated in 2024/25 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 2024/25 to maintain the General Fund Reserve at that appropriate level as advised by the Executive Director of Resources; and*
- 14) *That the Chief Executive is given delegated authority following consultation with the Leader of the Council to make a payment or payments to the Lancashire Pension Authority to help to reduce any of the Council's pension liabilities, if this is calculated to be an appropriate use of Council Funds.*

b) General Fund - Capital Programme 2022/23

The report informed the Council of the proposed capital programme for 2024/25 – 26/27. It set out the Council's Capital Programme including forecast slippage on schemes for 2023/24 and the additions of new schemes to the Council's Capital Programme for 2024/25. The recommendations agreed by Cabinet were as follows:-

"That Cabinet recommended that Council:-

- "(1) approve the Capital Programme for 2024/25 including new scheme additions of £4,404,015 with a net cost to the Council of £1,861,000 as set out in Appendix 3.*
- (2) Approve the funding of the programme by the use of newly anticipated direct external grants totalling £2,543,015 with the remaining funding of £1,861,000 to come from the Council's resources.*
- (3) Note the expected new scheme additions for 2025/26 and 2026/27;*
- (4) That delegated authority is given to the Executive Director (Resources), 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;*
- (5) That the individual projects with the Capital Programme require the written authorisation of the Executive Director (Resources) following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources before commencing and incurring expenditure and that Service Managers provided the Executive Director of Resources, 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 Executive Director (Resources), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources. That where he deems it appropriate, the Executive Director (Resources) be given authority to release funding in stages to ensure effective financial control can be maintained and project risk managed; and

(6) That in-year underspends are not made available to fund new projects during the year.”

Budget Motion

A **motion** was proposed by the Acting Leader of the Council, Councillor Peter Britcliffe and seconded by Councillor Steven Smithson to approve the budget recommendations for the General Fund Revenue Budget, General Fund Capital Programme Budget and Council Tax Levels for 2024/25, as submitted by the Controlling Group of the Council, as outlined above.

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 Paddy Short, in the absence of the 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 Opposition Group, Labour Party, submitted four alternative proposals for debate. Consideration was given to the additional proposals and the following three additional proposals were then put before the Committee:

- Participation in Pathway to Planning LGA Programme - £36,000
- An increase in support for the Citizens Advice Bureau for the period 2024/25 to assist more Hyndburn residents during the cost of living crisis and assist residents in the migration across to universal credit - £10,000
- Roll out of community clean up days (2 days per ward every year) – provision for skips and safety equipment - £19,000

The Committee considered the proposals 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, Capital, Treasury Management and Investment Strategies 2024/25 – 2026/27, Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27, General Fund Revenue Budget 2024/25 and the Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27;*
- (2) That the Committee thanks the Deputy Leader of the Council and Leader of the Labour Group for their participation in the Scrutiny meeting and debate;*

- (3) *That the Executive Director or Resources, 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, with the following amendments to the revenue budget (to be funded by an increase in the corporate savings target) which were submitted at the meeting:*
- *Participate in Pathway to Planning LGA Programme - £36,000*
 - *Increase support for CAB for the period 24/25 to assist more Hyndburn residents during cost-of-living crisis and assist resident the migration across to UC - £10,000*
 - *Roll out of community clean up days (2 per ward every year) – Provision for skips and safety equipment - £19,000.”*

Amendments submitted by the Opposition Group (Labour Party)

The three amendments, as presented at the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee by the Opposition Group (Labour Party) and as set out above, were moved and seconded en bloc and debated at the meeting. Each of the amendments were voted on as follows:

(Councillors Heather Anderson, Loraine Cox and Paul Cox were absent from the meeting)

Amendment 1 – Participate in Pathway to Planning LGA Programme, was then put to the **VOTE**

For the Motion

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, Dave Parkins, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Against the Motion

Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn (Mayor), Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Abstentions

None

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

Amendment 2 - Increase support for CAB for the period 24/25 to assist more Hyndburn residents during cost-of-living crisis and assist resident the migration across too UC, was then put to the **VOTE**.

For the Motion

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, Dave Parkins, Paddy Short, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Against the Motion

Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn (Mayor), Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Abstentions

None

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

Amendment 3 – Roll out of community clean up days (2 per ward every year) – Provision for skips and safety equipment, was then put to the **VOTE**

For the Motion

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, Dave Parkins, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Against the Motion

Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn (Mayor), Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Abstentions

None

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

The Mayor, Councillor Hurn, then invited the main Opposition Group (Labour Party), to table any further amendments.

The Opposition Leader, Councillor Dad, circulated details of five proposed amendments to the revenue budget, as follows:

1. Develop a policy and framework around HMOs and Care Homes in Community in Hyndburn (£25,000);
2. Remove Pest Control Call Out Charge 'Rat Tax' brought in by the Conservative Administration and allow it to return to be a free service (£10,000)'
3. Review HBC Spare Land for potential creation of Bark Park around the borough (£3000)

4. Undertake a review of housing stock and prepare a bid to become a pilot area for Retro Fitting to regenerate Hyndburn and its Townships focused on historic housing stock (£50,000)
5. Implementation of Hyndburn Community Energy Programme (£50,000).

The meeting was then **adjourned** to consider the amendments tabled and the Political Groups were allocated 'break out' rooms to consider the amendments.

On return to the meeting, the amendments were proposed en bloc by Councillor Dad and seconded by Councillor Aziz. The meeting debated the amendments and voted upon them as follows:

Amendment 1 – Develop a policy and framework around HMOs and Care Homes in Community in Hyndburn

£25, 000 Revenue Impact

The Hyndburn Labour budget amendment signifies a proactive step towards addressing residents' concerns surrounding Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and Care Homes' applications mushrooming across Hyndburn. With an allocation of £25,000, this initiative aims to develop a comprehensive policy framework tailored to the unique challenges posed by the surge of HMOs and care homes in the borough.

This amount has been agreed as appropriate with the officer and will accelerate towards the development & implementation of a robust policy that can be adopted by the council, incorporating research, stakeholder consultation, and expert analysis.

This strategic investment underscores Hyndburn Labour dedication to addressing issues from residents' feedback and filling a policy gap, ultimately striving to enhance accommodation standards within the community.

Amendment 1 was then put to the **VOTE**

For the Motion

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, Dave Parkins, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Against the Motion

Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn (Mayor), Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Abstentions

None

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

Amendment 2 – Remove Pest Control Call Out Charge 'Rat Tax' brought in by the Conservative Administration and allow it to return to be a free service

£10,000 Revenue Impact

The fundamental aim of this budget amendment is alleviating some of the financial burden on Hyndburn poorest residents, the Hyndburn Labour Council has proposed a budget amendment to abolish the controversial Conservative 'Rat Tax' introduced and championed by members of this Conservative administration.

This tax, which imposed charges for pest control call-outs, is widely criticised for disproportionately affecting low-income households and exacerbating hygiene issues across the townships in Hyndburn. By advocating for the removal of this charge, Labour aims to restore fairness and accessibility to this essential pest control services, ensuring that all residents, regardless of their economic status, can access the support they need to maintain a healthy living environment.

Hyndburn Labour also recognises that the charge led to fewer missed appointments, so we would still retain a fee for missed appointments, enabling our officers to be utilised in an effective and efficient manner.

The decision to eliminate the 'Rat Tax' reflects Hyndburn Labour's commitment to prioritising the welfare of Hyndburn's residents above all else. Recognising the detrimental impact of financial barriers on public health and well-being, the proposed budget amendment seeks to reinstate pest control services as a free and accessible resource for all members of the community. By removing this regressive tax, Labour aims to foster a more inclusive and supportive environment where individuals can address pests-related issues without fear of financial repercussions.

Furthermore, the move to revert to a free pest control service underscores Hyndburn labour's dedication to being responsive and accountable to residents' concerns and taking action to rectify inequities that Hyndburn residents face.

Amendment 2 was then put to the **VOTE**

For the Motion

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, Dave Parkins, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Against the Motion

Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn (Mayor), Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Abstentions

None

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

Amendment 3 - Review HBC Spare Land for potential creation of Bark Park around the borough

£3,000 Revenue Impact

This Hyndburn Labour Budget amendment focuses on investigating council-owned land to assess the feasibility of establishing a 'Bark Park' within the borough. This initiative aims to address the needs of residents by providing a dedicated space for exercising their dogs safely. By repurposing unused council land, the project not only meets a community demand but also presents an opportunity for potential income generation adding to the parks and open spaces budget in the future.

The Bark Park concept aligns with the council's commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles for both residents and their pets, fostering a sense of community engagement and responsible pet ownership. It also incorporates concepts that are being implemented successfully in other areas but acting on resident's feedback.

The proposed Bark Park underscores Hyndburn Labour's commitment to utilising resources efficiently while meeting the needs of the borough. Beyond its recreational benefits, the project offers a sustainable solution to repurpose idle council-owned land, transforming it into a valuable asset for the community. As a potential income-generating venture, the Bark Park demonstrates innovation, tapping into the growing demand for pet-friendly amenities while revitalising underutilised spaces.

Hyndburn Labour aims to create the basis of potentially delivering a tangible and inclusive solution that enhances the quality of life for residents and their furry companions alike.

This would be funded by the Invest to Save reserve unallocated balance and would lead to establishment of a working group to prepare a report of the possible locations and future costs involved. This £3,000 would allow them a resource in delivering this.

Amendment 3 was then put to the **VOTE**

For the Motion

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, Dave Parkins, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Against the Motion

Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn (Mayor), Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Abstentions

None

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

Amendment 4 – Undertake a review of housing stock and prepare a bid to become a pilot area for Retro Fitting to regenerate Hyndburn and its Townships focused on historic housing stock.

£50,000 Revenue Impact

The proposed budget amendment aims to initiate a transformative shift in Hyndburn's housing landscape by conducting a comprehensive review of its historic stock. This initiative seeks to lay the groundwork for large-scale housing regeneration and retrofitting investment in our historic housing stock, positioning Hyndburn as a pioneering pilot area. By prioritising decarbonisation, the amendment underscores the council's commitment aim to environmental sustainability while addressing pressing housing needs. The resulting report will serve as a blue print for future initiatives, leveraging innovative solutions to create healthier, more vibrant neighbourhoods across Hyndburn and its townships.

This would allow the creation of a collaborative approach that would bring all the funding around this together with the sole focus of it leveraging further funding from other sources like Homes England and Central Government.

Though strategic investment in housing regeneration and retrofitting, Hyndburn aims to enhance the quality of life for its residents while mitigating the impacts of climate change. By accelerating the decarbonisation agenda, the proposed amendment aligns with broader efforts of the Hyndburn Climate Emergency Fund. Additionally, the initiative recognises the interconnectedness of environmental health and community well-being, fostering social cohesion and economic prosperity in Hyndburn and its townships.

Ultimately, the budget amendment represents a forward-thinking approach to urban development, prioritising sustainability and inclusivity in housing across Hyndburn. By embracing innovation and collaboration, Hyndburn can position itself as a model for other communities seeking to address both housing affordability and environmental sustainability. Through this holistic approach, Hyndburn can cultivate thriving, resilient communities that serve as beacons of progress and prosperity for years to come.

This would be funded from the Hyndburn Climate Emergency Fund reserve unallocated balance.

Amendment 4 was then put to the **VOTE**

For the Motion

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, Dave Parkins, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Against the Motion

Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn (Mayor), Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Abstentions

None

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

Amendment 5 – Implementation of Hyndburn Community Energy Programme

£50,000 Revenue impact

Amendment 5 was then put to the **VOTE**

Hyndburn Labour is proud to announce the launch of the Community Energy Programme, an initiative aimed at ushering in a greener, more sustainable era for Hyndburn and its residents. With a firm commitment to transforming our neighbourhoods through enabling renewable energy projects. By breaking down barriers and empowering residents to access clean, affordable energy, we aim to create a more resilient community that thrives on innovation and cooperation.

At the heart of the Community Energy Programme is its key objectives of having framework to maximise impact and ensure the success of green and sustainability initiatives. This will allow projects that take place in Hyndburn to be planned, efficient, and sustainable. From the installation of solar panels on residents' properties and community buildings to the establishment of community power stations and cooperative EV charging points.

This investment will allow us create a framework that will enable implementation clean energy projects and drive investment into the borough.

This would be funded from the Hyndburn Climate Emergency Fund reserve unallocated balance and would accelerate in the implementation of the aims Hyndburn Climate Emergency Fund.

Amendment 5 was then put to the **VOTE**

For the Motion

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brerton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Colin McKenzie, Dave Parkins, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Against the Motion

Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn (Mayor), Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Abstentions

None

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

There were no amendments proposed by the Green Party

The Substantive Motion

The Acting Leader of the Council, Councillor Peter Britcliffe, having moved the Substantive Motion, then spoke as follows:-

The proposed Budget for 2024 had been set to invest in the regeneration and future of the people of Hyndburn. He explained that community grants had been made available to support local needs and there had been an abundance of funding brought into the borough to be invested in the town centre and Leisure. He referred to the importance of investment in the borough and to responding the climate emergency. The Acting Leader of the Council also paid tribute to Councillor Zak Khan for his environmental work.

A debate on the substantive motion followed. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Levelling Up, Councillor Younis, pointed out that the proposed Budget was a prudent and cautious one and commended all involved in the setting the budget. He also commended the Member of Parliament, Sara Britcliffe, who had brought millions of pounds into the Borough. He pointed out that the budget was one for the future and would move the Borough forward.

Councillor Addison thanked the staff of Hyndburn Borough Council for their supportive work on setting the budget.

Councillor Aziz, Acting Deputy Leader of the Labour Group, commented that the Budget lacked ambition and would not address residents' concerns. Councillor Zak Khan responded that much of the budget had been allocated to salaries and that it was important that this should happen to enable a good Council service.

THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION was then put to the **VOTE**.

(Councillors Heather Anderson, Loraine Cox and Paul Cox were absent from the meeting and Councillor Colin McKenzie had left the meeting before its conclusion)

For the Motion

Councillors Judith Addison, Dominik Allen, Josh Allen, Peter Britcliffe, Danny Cassidy, Peter Edwards, Marlene Haworth, Susan Hayes, Carole Haythornthwaite, Terry Hurn, Zak Khan, Sajid Mahmood, Caroline Montague, Joyce Plummer, Kath Pratt, Paddy Short, Steven Smithson and Mohammed Younis.

Against the Motion

None

Abstentions

Councillors Noordad Aziz, Mike Booth, Scott Brereton, Steven Button, Andrew Clegg, Jodi Clements, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Bernard Dawson, Melissa Fisher, Abdul Khan, Dave Parkins, Kate Walsh and Kimberley Whitehead.

Accordingly, the **MOTION** was **CARRIED** as follows:-

Resolved

- (1) That, Council approved the acceptance and adoption of the Cabinet's recommendations on the Revenue and Capital Budgets and Prudential Indicators & Treasury Management Report for 2024/25 to 2025/26 made at the Cabinet meeting on 13th February 2024 ;**

- (2) That, Council approved Council Tax for Hyndburn Borough Council to be increased by 2.99% from the 2023/24 charge and therefore, increase the charge by £7.79 to a new charge of £268.43 for the year for a Band D property;**
- (3) That, Council commits to continuing to strengthen its Reserves during the year and requires the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Resources to take appropriate action to protect the Council's overall financial position and further strengthen its reserves during the forthcoming year;**
- (4) That, Council delegates authority to the Chief Executive to take such action as he considers necessary to implement the measures contained in the Revenue Budget for 2024/25;**
- (5) That, it be noted that on 24th January 2024 the Council at its Cabinet calculated: the Council Tax Base 2024/25 for the whole Council area as 22,095 (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 317;**
- (6) That, Council agreed that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purpose for 2024/25 (excluding Parish precepts) is £5,930,961;**
- (7) That, Council agreed that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2024/25 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:**
 - a) £58,604,193 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) £52,659,544 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 21A(3) of the Act.**
 - c) £5,944,649 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) £269.05 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) £13,688 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1)**

of the A (as per Appendix B, as attached to the report;

- f) £268.43 being the amount at 7(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 7€ 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 part of its area to which no Parish precept relates.
- 8) That Council noted that Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Police & Crime Commissioner and the Lancashire Combined Fire Authority had 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, as set out in the report, as the amounts of Council Tax for 2024/25 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings;
- 10) That the Council noted the basic amount of Council Tax for 2024/25 was not considered excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52 ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992;
- 11) That the Executive Director of Resources, be 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;
- 12) That any continuing balances on Revenue or Capital previously earmarked for Area Council continues to be set aside for use by these or their successor bodies;
- 13) That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority to use any unallocated surplus generated in 2024/25 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 deemed 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 2024/25 or to maintain the General Fund Reserve at that

appropriate level as advised by the Executive Director of Resources; and

- 14) That the Chief Executive be given delegated authority following consultation with the Leader of the Council to make a payment or payments to the Lancashire Pension Authority to help to reduce any of the Council's pension liabilities, if this is calculated to be an appropriate use of Council Funds.

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed