



Executive Committee

Monday, 27th February,
2023

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Nyear Nazir (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Karen Ashley, Peter Fleming, Lucy Harrison, Anthony Lovell and Emma Marshall

Also Present:

Councillors Joe Baker, Michael Chalk, Bill Hartnett, Sharon Harvey, Joanna Kane and Sid Khan

Officers:

Peter Carpenter, Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton, Sue Hanley, Michelle Howell, Simon Parry and Guy Revans

Principal Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill

127. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Joanne Beecham and Craig Warhurst.

128. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

129. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader advised that at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 23rd February 2023 Members had pre-scrutinised the 30 Year Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, at Minute Item No. 131 on the agenda. A number of recommendations had been made on this subject at that meeting and the Executive Committee was urged to refer to these recommendations during the debate in respect of this item.

130. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

Chair

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 7th February 2023 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

131. 30 YEAR HRA BUSINESS PLAN, INVESTMENT PROGRAMME AND ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR COUNCIL HOUSING

The Housing Property Services Manager presented the 30-year HRA Business Plan, Investment Programme and Asset Management Strategy for Council housing for the Executive Committee's consideration.

Members were advised that the report contained three key documents that had a strategic focus:

- The 30-year HRA Business Plan, which outlined a range of matters including in relation to housing income and how the HRA would achieve a balanced position moving forward. A number of assumptions had been made in developing the content of this plan, including in respect of the numbers of void properties, rental increases, management costs, debt and borrowing.
- The Asset Management Strategy, which provided a strategic overview of improvements needed to the Council's housing stock to ensure that this continued to comply with modern standards. A key challenge would be in respect of the works required to ensure that in future all properties achieved a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C.
- The five-year capital investment programme, which focused on £40 million of investment in new and existing Council housing stock. Improvements would be informed by the outcomes of the ongoing stock condition survey. There would also be further investment in order to enhance compliance.

Following the presentation of the report, Members commented that the stock condition survey was very important as it would help to inform action taken by the Council to improve the condition of properties. A significant amount of expenditure was planned and Members noted that this was the first time such a plan had been considered by the Council since 2001.

During consideration of this report, Members discussed the recent debate in respect of this item that had occurred at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 23rd February 2023. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had endorsed the proposals detailed in the report and had also proposed a number of additional recommendations. These were addressed in turn by the Executive Committee:

- Recommendation 4(a) - Providing more parking spaces, or being more specific about when and where parking spaces would be provided for Council houses. Members of the Executive Committee commented that there was already a programme in place for the provision of parking spaces. The action that could be taken by the Council was limited, in terms of the land owned by the authority that could be used for parking as well as the space available near to properties for this purpose. Members also commented that it was not appropriate to refer to specific parking spaces and locations in a high level, strategic document.
- Recommendation 4(b) - Transferring funding for handling mould and damp on properties from the Repairs and Maintenance (R&M) budget to the Capital Programme. Members commented that the revenue and capital budgets were separate and funding for this purpose was included in the Repairs and Maintenance budget because that was the most appropriate funding stream for such activities. Should circumstances change, then a capital budget could be introduced for works on damp and mould in future, but this would be subject to the submission of an appropriate business case.
- Recommendation 4(c) - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee highlighted the projected loss of 600 properties and the need to consider what could be done to reduce this figure. The Executive Committee noted that the number quoted, 600 properties, was a projected figure and the Council could not pre-empt the outcomes on this. However, Members commented that action was already being taken to build new Council houses in the Borough.
- Recommendation 4(d) - Fitting solar panels to new build properties and / or suitable existing properties in the Council's housing stock. Consideration was given to the fitting of solar panels to Council houses and Members commented that this would not, alone, meet the requirements necessary to upgrade the EPC ratings of those properties. Members also commented that there were complicating factors, in relation to right to buy and owner-occupied properties which needed to be addressed. The Council had already submitted a bid for £1.6 million, which would be match funded, to help enhance the energy efficiency of Council properties. There would be options available to upgrade the energy efficiency of Council houses in future but this would be subject to the submission of appropriate business cases. Initially, the Council would need to focus on upgrading insulation, windows and doors on properties and this would have a more beneficial impact on the energy efficiency of those properties than the installation of solar panels.

- Recommendation 4(e) - Adding a provisional budget, which could be amended at a later date, to pay for works needed to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock to at least an EPC C rating. Members commented that this was already in the process of being worked on and therefore the recommendation was unnecessary.

For these reasons, the Executive Committee concluded that they could not support the additional recommendations that had been proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this subject.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the Housing Revenue Account 30-year Business Plan 2023-2053 be approved;**
- 2) **the Housing Asset Management Strategy be approved; and**
- 3) **the Housing Capital Programme 2023-2027 be approved.**

132. COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS 2023/24

The Head of Finance and Customer Services presented the Council Tax Resolutions 2023/24.

Members were advised that the Council was required to agree Council Tax resolutions on an annual basis. The content of the report took into account the Council Tax Base 2023/24 which had been agreed by the Executive Committee and Council in January 2023. The report detailed the Council Tax requirements for each of the precepting authorities, all of which had chosen to increase the amount of Council Tax required from local residents. This included a 2.99 per cent increase for Redditch Borough Council. When the increases proposed by all the precepting authorities were taken into account collectively, the Council Tax bill for Band D equivalent properties in the Borough would increase by 5.4 per cent in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23.

RESOLVED to

note that at a meeting on 10th January 2023, the Executive Committee calculated the Council Tax Base 2023/24 as:

- (a) **for the whole Council area as 26,304.94 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")]; and**

- (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates; this being Feckenham Parish as 375.79.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve:

- 1) the calculation for the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2023/24 (excluding Parish precepts) as £6,885,318.04.
- 2) that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2023/24 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £49,710,521 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) (*i.e.*, *Gross expenditure*);
 - (b) £42,805,203 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act. (*i.e.*, *Gross income*);
 - (c) £6,905,318 being the amount by which the aggregate of 1.2.2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 1.2.2(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 31B of the Act);
 - (d) £262.51 being the amount at 1.2.2 (c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1.1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);
 - (e) £20,000 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Feckenham Parish precept) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act;
 - (f) £261.75 being the amount at 1.2.2 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 1.2.2 (e) above by Item T (1.1 (a) 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;

- (g) £314.97 being the amount given by adding to the amount at 1.2.2(f), the amount of the special item relating to the Parish of Feckenham 1.2.2(e), divided by the amount in 1.1(b) above;
- (h) the amounts below given by multiplying the amounts at 1.2.2(f) and 1.2.2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands;

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Parish of Feckenham £	All other parts of the Council's area £
A	6/9	209.98	174.50
B	7/9	244.97	203.58
C	8/9	279.98	232.67
D	1	314.97	261.75
E	11/9	384.97	319.92
F	13/9	454.95	378.08
G	15/9	524.95	436.25
H	18/9	629.94	523.50

- 3) it be noted that for the year 2023/24, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwelling in the Council's area as indicated below:

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	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	977.19	1,140.05	1,302.92	1,465.78	1,791.51	2,117.24	2,442.97	2,931.56
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	176.33	205.72	235.11	264.50	323.28	382.06	440.83	529.00
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	62.93	73.42	83.91	94.40	115.38	136.36	157.33	188.80

- 4) that having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 1.2.2(h) and 1.2.3 above, that Redditch Borough Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2023/24. for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings:

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Parish of Feckenham £	All other parts of the Council's area £
A	6/9	1,426.43	1,390.95
B	7/9	1,664.16	1,622.77
C	8/9	1,901.92	1,854.61
D	1	2,139.65	2,086.43
E	11/9	2,615.14	2,550.09
F	13/9	3,090.61	3,013.74
G	15/9	3,566.08	3,477.38
H	18/9	4,279.30	4,172.86

- 5) that the Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments under Section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund by ten equal instalments between April 2023 to March 2024 as detailed below:

	Precept	Deficit on Collection Fund	Total to pay
	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	38,557,255.00	(999,626.00)	37,557,629.00
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	6,957,656.63	(178,673.00)	6,778,983.63
Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority	2,483,282.63	(63,980.00)	2,419,302.63

- 6) that the Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make transfers under Section 97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund to the General Fund the sum of £6,723,433 being the Council's own demand on the Collection Fund (£6,885,318) and Parish Precept (£20,000) and the distribution of the deficit on the Collection Fund (-£181,885);
- 7) that the Interim Director of Finance be authorised to make payments from the General Fund to Feckenham Parish Council the sums listed above (£20,000) by instalment after 1 April 2023 in respect of the precept levied on the Council;
- 8) that the above resolutions to be signed by the Chief Executive for use in legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the recovery of unpaid Council Taxes; and
- 9) notices of the making of the said Council Taxes signed by the Chief Executive are given by advertisement in the local press under Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

133. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members were advised that there were no minutes from meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration on this occasion.

134. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.

The Executive Committee was informed that there were no referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or any of the Executive Advisory Panels on this occasion.

135. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

The following verbal updates were provided in respect of the work of Executive Advisory Panels and other bodies:

- a) Climate Change Cross Party Working Group – Chair, Councillor Anthony Lovell

Councillor Lovell advised that a meeting of the group was due to take place in March 2023.

- b) Constitutional Review Working Party – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

The Executive Committee was informed that the following meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party was due to take place in the new municipal year.

- c) Corporate Steering Board – Council Representative, Councillor Nyear Nazir

Councillor Nazir confirmed that there were no updates to provide on this occasion.

- d) Member Support Steering Group – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

Councillor Dormer explained that there was due to be a meeting of the Member Support Steering Group on 22nd March 2023.

- e) Planning Advisory Panel – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

Members were informed that a meeting of the Planning Advisory Panel was scheduled to take place on 28th February 2023.

The Meeting commenced at 5.30 pm
and closed at 5.48 pm