

FC99. REVENUE BUDGET 2009/10 – 2010/11

With reference to Minute of Special Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 11 February (Paragraph PR105 refers), there was submitted joint Report (circulated) dated 3 February by the Chief Executive and Director of Finance (a) providing details of the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for the financial year 2009/10, and (b) detailing draft Service Revenue Budgets for 2009/10, proposed Council Tax levels for 2009/10 and summarising Falkirk Council's position in relation to Band D Council Tax levels throughout Scotland.

Councillor Gow seconded by Councillor Patrick moved the recommendations in the report.

By way of an amendment Councillor Alexander, seconded by Councillor Coleman moved:-

“ The SNP Group believe that the financial starting point of the budget process is flawed based on the experience of the last five years.

Council therefore resolves to use £1.04m of reserves from the anticipated improvement in the council's situation as we approach the end of the financial year. This is based on the formula of using 33% of the average difference between the position notified to members at the time of the budget to the actual end of year figures.

With these additional resources the SNP proposes to:-

1. Freeze all School, Nursery Meal and Child Care charges at existing levels to promote the council's healthy affordable option and employment policies. Cost **£340,000**
2. Abolish Meals on Wheels, Lunch Club and Day Care & Housing with care meal charges. Cost **£90,000**
3. Freeze charges for Older People's Homes and short breaks. Cost **£40,000**
4. Provide the communities served by Bo'ness Academy and Graeme High with the same opportunities to use their PFI school as those in the Braes and Larbert High catchment areas thus meeting our equal opportunities responsibilities, cost **£290,000**
5. Provide additional support to local businesses at this time of unprecedented financial downturn and recession. Cost **£100,000**
6. Additional resources for Community Services to be targeted at the regeneration of smaller settlements centres in light of the SNP Government's £60m town centre regeneration fund. Officers are asked to bring forward Development Plans for each of these centres of population not covered by the District Centres Initiative for wider community consultation. Cost **£100,000**
7. Fees for sports centre activities to be frozen (£40k) and a lower fee set for the use of Burial and Cremation (40k value) charges where applicants opt for a “green funeral”. Cost **£80,000**”

In terms of Standing Order 21.4(i), a vote was taken by way of a roll call, there being 30 Members present with Members voting as undernoted:-

For the Motion (17) – Provost Reid; Depute Provost Black; Councillors Blackwood, Buchanan, Goldie, Gow, Lemetti, C MacDonald, Mahoney, C Martin, CR Martin, McLuckie, McNeill, Nicol, Nimmo, Patrick and Waddell.

For the Amendment (13) – Councillors Alexander, Carleschi, Coleman, J Constable, Hughes, Jackson, Kenna, A MacDonald, McNally, Meiklejohn, Oliver, Spears and Thomson.

Accordingly, **AGREED:-**

- (1) that Council accepts the Draft 2009/10 Budget as detailed in the Report;
- (2) that estimated Expenditure for the financial year 2009/10 be set at £347.279m, before ring-fenced Grants of £17.081m, leaving net expenditure of £330.198m;
- (3) that Council levies the following Council Tax for the year 2009/10;
 - (a) A Council Tax to be paid in respect of a chargeable dwelling in Band D of £1,070, representing a nil increase in Council Tax;
 - (b) A Council Tax to be paid in respect of a chargeable dwelling in each of the other valuation bands in accordance with Section 74 (1) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as set out in Paragraph 9.2 of the Report)
- (4) that Council accepts the Indicative Council Tax levels for the financial year 2010/11 at Band D of £1,070 a nil increase as detailed in the Report, representing the best information available at this time, and
- (5) that Chief Officers be instructed to deliver Services within the Revenue Budget allocated to each Service.