

FC68. Revenue Budget 2020/21 and Medium Term Financial Plan [MTFP]

Council considered a report by the Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate and Housing Services which set out options identified by officers which would enable Council to make selections with a view to achieving a balanced budget for 2020/21. These options had been subject to public consultation. The report set out the Administration's proposals as to how a balanced budget may be achieved.

Councillor Meiklejohn, seconded by Councillor Garner, moved that Council:-

- (1) agrees a balanced budget closing the revised budget gap of £23.7m through the means set out in para 4.3.2 of the report with the savings further identified in para 4.7 of the report onwards and appendices 5 & 6 to the report;
- (2) agrees that should additional revenue grant become available from the Scottish Government Budget a further meeting of the Council is arranged to consider how to deploy the additional resources;
- (3) notes the range of savings options not taken forward in the Administration Budget and in particular the priority given to Children's Services in the selection of savings restricted to less than 1% of the service's budget.
- (4) notes the additional investment proposals of £1.3 at 4.3.4 particularly the retention £0.2m for SFLAs, £0.3m for roads maintenance and the retention of £0.040m for holiday food programmes;
- (5) agrees to raise Council Tax by up to 4.84% and that the additional 1.84% element of the rise be used to fund capital investment;
- (6) agrees the Trust's Business Plan reflecting the revised savings set out in Annex 4, to fund the £50k requested to support Grangemouth Golf Club, a service payment of £10.896m to the Trust and agrees that the Council should meet the cost of compensatory lump sums for proposed voluntary severance arrangements;
- (7) agrees the Integration Joint Board's Business Case and the payment to Integration Joint Board of £68.965m;
- (8) notes the update on the implications for the workforce actions being taken to ensure changes can be implemented through voluntary methods as far as possible;
- (9) delegates authority to the Chief Executive to issue a statutory notice to the Trade Unions in respect of the workforce implications of the Budget proposals, if this is required, to ensure the Council complies with its legal obligations;

- (10) instructs Chief Officers to deliver Services within the Budget allocation for each Service and authorises them to take such actions as may be required within Council policy to give effect to the service delivery proposals adopted to produce the Budget;
- (11) notes that an updated five year Business Plan will be presented to Members in May, and
- (12) notes the commitment to meeting workforce reductions by voluntary methods, and in addition recognise while areas of the Council workforce are reducing as a result of modernising and transforming services, other areas in particular Early Years are increasing resulting in a net impact on jobs of approximately 15 FTEs.

As an amendment in substitution for the motion Councillor Bissett, seconded by Councillor Coombes, moved that Council:-

- (1) agrees a balanced budget closing the gap identified in the report through the means set out in attached gap statement in appendix 1 to this minute, the investment proposals in appendix 2 to this minute and with the savings identified in appendix 3 to this minute;
- (2) notes that this Labour budget rejects proposed reductions such as the withdrawal of free after three in Council car parks, a potential loss of 80 training places in the Employment Training Unit and charging for Brown Bins;
- (3) notes the additional investment proposals including Support for Learning Assistants, support for the Poverty Strategy and the reintroduction of special uplifts, flower bedding and a pest control service and agrees that a report on the pest control service and any proposed charges for it is brought to the Executive;
- (4) agrees an increase in the council tax of 4.84% with the additional funding generated by the 1.84% inflationary increase being applied to support capital investment;
- (5) agrees the business plan incorporating the revised savings proposed by the Trust, the funding for Grangemouth Golf Club of £50k, that the Council covers the compensatory lump sum element of any voluntary service agreed by the Trust and a service payment of £10.896m to the Falkirk Community Trust;
- (6) agrees the Integration Joint Board's Business Case and the payment of £68.965m to the Integration Joint Board;
- (7) agrees that if any additional revenue funding becomes available from the Scottish Government Budget that this is allocated to reserves;
- (8) agrees that officers are instructed to undertake a process of zero based budgeting in advance of the budget process next year and (i) the process is presented for agreement at the May meeting of

Council and (ii) the outcome of this process be presented to a Budget Working Group following the summer recess, and

- (9) notes the update on the implications for the workforce actions being taken to ensure changes can be implemented through voluntary methods as far as possible;
- (10) delegates authority to the Chief Executive to issue a statutory notice to the Trade Unions in respect of the workforce implications of the Budget proposals, if this is required, to ensure the Council complies with its legal obligations;
- (11) instructs Chief Officers to deliver Services within the Budget allocation for each Service and authorises them to take such actions as may be required within Council policy to give effect to the service delivery proposals adopted to produce the Budget, and
- (12) notes that an updated five year Business Plan will be presented to Members in May.

Council adjourned at 10.30am and reconvened at 11.50am with all members present as per the sederunt.

Following discussion Council then adjourned at 1.00pm and reconvened at 1.50pm with all members present as per the sederunt.

In terms of Standing order 22.1, the vote was taken by roll call, there being 30 members present with voting as undernoted:-

For the motion (13) – Depute Provost Ritchie; and Councillors Alexander, Balfour, Binnie, Bouse, Coleman, Collie, Garner, Hughes, McCue, Meiklejohn, Murtagh and Spears.

For the amendment (17) – Provost Buchanan; and Councillors Aitchison, Bissett, Black, Blackwood, Coombes, Flynn, Goldie, Grant, Harris, Kerr, McLuckie, Munro, Nicol, Nimmo, Patrick and Reid.

Decision

Council agreed the amendment.