

## **BUDGET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Scrutiny Committee of Bolsover District Council held as a Virtual Meeting on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 10:00 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Members:-

Councillor Jen Wilson in the Chair

Councillors Rose Bowler (Vice-Chair), Derek Adams, Allan Bailey, Jane Bryson, Dexter Bullock, Anne Clarke, Jim Clifton, Tricia Clough, Paul Cooper, David Dixon, Maxine Dixon, David Downes, Ray Heffer, Natalie Hoy, Andrew Joesbury, Chris Kane, Tom Kirkham, Tom Munro, Evonne Parkin, Graham Parkin, Peter Roberts, Janet Tait and Rita Turner.

Also in attendance at the meeting was Councillor Clive Moesby (Portfolio Holder for Finance & Community Safety), Councillor Mary Dooley (Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Leisure), Stephen Kitching (Arlingclose Consultancy Director) and Paul Roberts (Arlingclose Assistant Client Director).

Officers:- Theresa Fletcher (Head of Finance & Resources and Section 151 Officer), Claire Bamford (Principal Accountant), Joanne Wilson (Scrutiny & Elections Officer), Amy Bryan (Senior Governance Officer) and Tom Scott (Governance Officer).

The Arlingclose Consultancy Director and the Arlingclose Assistant Client Director joined the meeting during Minute No. BUD023-20/21.

The Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Leisure left the meeting at the beginning of Minute No. BUD025-20/21, and Councillor Ray Heffer left the meeting during Minute No. BUD027-20/21.

### **BUD019-20/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

### **BUD020-20/21 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

### **BUD021-20/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Graham Parkin declared for transparency that he held shares in Lloyds Bank.

Councillor Natalie Hoy wished to record that she was no longer employed by a company within Bolsover District as stated on her Register of Interests.

## **BUDGET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **BUD022-20/21 MINUTES**

Moved by Councillor Jen Wilson and seconded by Councillor Rose Bowler.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of a Budget Scrutiny Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 be approved as a correct record.

### **BUD023-20/21 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2021/22 TO 2024/25**

The Section 151 Officer presented a report and gave a presentation on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25.

The purpose of the report was to enable the Budget Scrutiny Committee to consider the proposed budget for 2021/22 for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan covering the years 2021/22 to 2024/25, prior to the report being taken to Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Community Safety thanked the Section 151 Officer for her presentation and referred to the table at 1.9 of the report which set out forecasts for budget shortfalls over the next few years. He stated the importance of using savings and putting them into reserves to cover upcoming shortfalls, particularly the one forecast for 2024/25 of £1,569,000.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Community Safety also provided some more detail of the Coronavirus pressures mentioned in the report, stating that the Council had received almost £1.5m from the Government and had been able to recoup some of the lost income through the income compensation scheme. He added that the Council had passed on £0.448m in financial assistance to Parish Councils who had also been under pressure during the pandemic.

*The Arlingclose Consultancy Director and the Arlingclose Assistant Client Director joined the meeting during this point.*

Councillor Janet Tait asked if the total income figure for the HRA included rent collected from future properties. The Section 151 Officer explained that this was not included in the figure, because the income for rent on a property could not be estimated until said property had been built.

Moved by Councillor Jen Wilson and seconded by Councillor Ray Heffer

**RESOLVED** that Budget Scrutiny Committee notes the report.

(Section 151 Officer)

### **BUD024-20/21 TREASURY STRATEGY REPORTS 2021/22 - 2024/25**

The Principal Accountant presented a report and gave a presentation on the Treasury Strategy Reports 2021/22 - 2024/25. The purpose of the report was to enable Budget Scrutiny Committee to consider the three attached treasury strategies (Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Strategy and Corporate Investment Strategy) prior to them being taken to Council for approval.

## **BUDGET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The recommendation in the report was moved by Councillor Jen Wilson and seconded by Councillor Ray Heffer.

**RESOLVED** that the Budget Scrutiny Committee notes this report and the attached strategies (Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Strategy and Corporate Investment Strategy) with no comments.

(Section 151 Officer)

*The Portfolio Holder for Partnerships and Leisure left the meeting at this point.*

### **BUD025-20/21 BUDGET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21**

Committee considered their Work Programme for 2020/21.

Members had no questions relating to the Work Programme.

Moved by Councillor Jen Wilson and seconded by Councillor Ray Heffer

**RESOLVED** that the Budget Scrutiny Committee notes their Work Programme 2020/21.

(Scrutiny & Elections Officer)

### **BUD026-20/21 UPDATE FROM SCRUTINY CHAIRS**

#### Chair of Customer Service & Transformation Scrutiny:

- Since this Committee last met, the Customer Service & Transformation Scrutiny Committee has held one public meeting, one informal meeting and were due to have an informal meeting this week.
- Members considered the Q1/Q2 Customer Standards and Complaints report from Ann Bedford, Q2 Performance and the final Post-scrutiny Monitoring report on the Review of Delivery of Environmental Health.
- Members are continuing with their Review of IT Services & Support and are due to hold the third meeting this week.
- Further work is taking place in relation to both of the reviews of the Committee from 2019/20 on Review of Re-letting of Council Properties and the Review of New Bolsover due to the impact of Covid-19 on completion of works on site.
- The Committee is currently liaising with the Customer Standards & Complaints Officer in relation to the Review of New Bolsover due to current work with the Ombudsman.

#### Chair of Healthy, Safe, Clean & Green Communities Scrutiny:

- Since Budget Scrutiny last met the Committee has held one formal meeting in December, including an Informal meeting to consider review work.
- Members considered Q2 Performance; a monitoring update on the Health & Wellbeing (HWB) Strategy and further detail/discussion on the impact of Covid 19 on HWB and staff welfare. In the Informal meeting Members discussed suggested topics for new reviews and agreed for two scopes to be produced, one in relation to the Council's Policy on Sky Lanterns and Helium Balloons and one in relation to the Council's Policy on Fireworks.

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- As noted previously, the review from 2019/20 in relation to Children in care and Care leavers is still progressing but has been impacted by the pandemic and the need to focus on the more immediate impact of Covid-19.

### Chair of Growth Scrutiny:

- Since the last meeting of Budget Scrutiny, the Growth Committee have held one formal meeting and two Informal meetings.
- Members considered Q2 Performance; further evidence in relation to their Review of the relationship with Robert Woodhead Ltd.; and a briefing on the consultation draft of the proposed Housing Strategy.
- Members have recently considered an initial draft of the new Business Growth Strategy and are awaiting the final version within the next couple of months for final scrutiny and submission to Executive and Council.
- Within the Informal meetings Members have been continuing review work looking at the Council's relationship with Robert Woodhead Ltd. and the schemes being delivered jointly. Members are now nearing the end of evidence gathering for this work and are beginning to formulate recommendations.

### **BUD027-20/21      EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

Councillor Jen Wilson moved and Councillor Ray Heffer seconded that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

*Councillor Ray Heffer left the meeting at this point.*

**RESOLVED** that the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following items of business.

### **BUD028-20/21      ARLINGCLOSE TREASURY MANAGEMENT BRIEFING**

The Chair reminded Members that the Treasury Management Briefing presentation by Arlingclose had been circulated to them as part of a supplementary agenda.

The Chair welcomed Stephen Kitching (Consultancy Director) and Paul Roberts (Assistant Client Director) to the meeting from Arlingclose treasury advisory company. Both gave the Committee a presentation with advice on how to manage the Council's treasury.

The presentation also informed the Committee of Members' roles in financial management.

**RESOLVED** that the presentation be noted.

The meeting concluded at 1200 hours.