

**MINUTES
OF A
MEETING OF THE ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL
HELD IN THE ARUN CIVIC CENTRE**

ON 20 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 6.00 PM

Present: Councillors Gammon (Chairman), Dillon (Vice-Chair), Ambler, Blampied, Bower, Mrs Bence, T Bence, Mrs Bower, Brooks, Mrs Brown, Bicknell, Chapman, Charles, Cooper, Clayden, Mrs Daniells, Dingemans, Edwards, Elkins, English, Mrs Hall, Haymes, Hitchins, Mrs Madeley, Northeast, Mrs Oakley, Oliver-Redgate, Patel, Mrs Rapnik, Mrs Porter, Purchase, Reynolds, Mrs Stainton, Warren, Dr Walsh, Wells, Wensley, Wheal and Wotherspoon

[Note: Councillor Blampied was absent from the meeting during consideration of the matters referred to in Minute 420 [Part].

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Ballard, Councillor Buckland, Councillor Cates, Councillor Dendle, Councillor Mrs Harrison-Horn, Councillor Hughes, Councillor Mrs Neno, Councillor Oppler, Councillor Mrs Pendleton, Councillor Miss Rhodes, Councillor Stanley and Councillor Tyler

412. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Councillors, members of the public, press and officers to the meeting.

413. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Northeast declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 8 – Council Budget – 2019/20 in relation to mention of the Keystone Centre in Littlehampton and the joint project between Arun District Council and Littlehampton Town Council in his capacity as Chairman of the Management Committee and also a Trustee. Councillor Northeast confirmed that this did not preclude him from taking part in the debate on this item; however he would not take part in the voting on the Council's Budget.

Councillors Dr Walsh, Purchase, Gammon and Warren all declared their Personal Interests in Agenda Item 8 – Council Budget 2019/20 in relation to mention of the Keystone Centre in Littlehampton and the joint project between Arun District Council and Littlehampton Town Council as Members of Littlehampton Town Council.

414. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman invited questions from members of the public who had submitted their questions in advance of the meeting in accordance with the rules of the Council's Constitution.

Full Council - 20.02.19

The Chairman announced that two questions had been received. The questioner asked the Cabinet Member for Planning, Councillor Charles, why there had been so many examples recently of planning application notices being put up as a loose piece of paper attached to lamp posts or other structures with a bit of string?

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Councillor Charles, responded stating that Planning Officers erected site notices where it was most practicable to do so and relative to the application site. These notices used special paper which was waterproof and smudge proof. Councillor Charles invited the questioner to raise any specific examples where there had been issues with this and he asked the questioner to do this by contacting the Area Team Leaders who would look into the examples provided.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown, was asked why February's meeting of the Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee had been cancelled and that it appeared that there would be no further meeting scheduled in the remaining life of the Council.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown, responded by confirming that the Chairman of the Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee had decided to cancel the January meeting of the Sub-Committee as there had been no reports to discuss. An updated Position Statement had been sent to all Members of the Sub-Committee to keep them updated in terms of project progress. The next meeting of the Sub-Committee would be held in June 2019.

The Chairman then invited supplementary questions.

The questioner asked a supplementary question in relation to the first question stating that at meetings of Littlehampton Town Council's Planning Committee, complaints had been made by those in attendance that they were not aware of planning applications because the associated planning application notices had either been ripped down; were out of view or had been destroyed by weather or not put up until too near the end of the consultation period deadline leaving insufficient time for those affected to respond.

Specific reference was made to the application for the Drug and Rehabilitation Unit in Littlehampton where it was claimed that the planning application notice had only been erected days before representations had been due. Those affected by this application had not been aware of the notice until after the deadline for representations had expired. The questioner stated that securing a piece of paper to a lamppost was not a sufficient way of conducting consultation and so he asked the Council if it could write to neighbours in the vicinity of applications in the future.

Councillor Charles responded confirming that he had liaised with Planning Officers and could confirm that no complaints had been submitted in relation to this matter.

The questioner then asked a supplementary question relating to the second question presented to the Leader of the Council. He confirmed that he had found the response provided incredible as the Littlehampton Regeneration Sub-Committee was the only Committee that the Council had that dealt with Littlehampton and regeneration. He could not believe that this Sub-Committee had no business to discuss and that it would not now meet for

6 months and at a time when shops were closing and anti-social behaviour issues were still not being resolved. He asked if the Position Statement circulated to Members of that Sub-Committee could be put into the public domain so that members of the public could be updated too.

Councillor Mrs Brown responded stating that she would check to see if the Position Statement could be released to the public and that she would confirm this to the questioner outside of the meeting.

The Chairman then drew Public Question Time to a close.

415. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS WITH PECUNIARY/PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

There were no Questions from Members with prejudicial/pecuniary interests.

416. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 January 2018 were approved by the Council as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

417. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman confirmed that the number of engagements he and his Vice-Chairman had attended since the Christmas period had reduced; however, he hoped to be able to provide more details for the next meeting of the Council on 13 March 2019.

418. URGENT MATTERS

There were no items for this meeting.

419. BUDGET 2019/20

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mrs Brown, presented her Budget Statement, **a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.**

An extract from the Minutes from the meeting of Cabinet [Minute 397] held on 11 February 2019; and Appendix 4 setting out the statutory resolutions that the Council was also required to consider, were tabled at the meeting.

The Leader opened her statement by advising Members that this Budget had been prepared against the continuing uncertainty over Local Government funding.

Full Council - 20.02.19

Despite this, the Council had been able to produce a balanced Budget requiring no contribution from the Council's balances. Councillor Mrs Brown saw this as a significant achievement and one that the Council should be justifiably proud of.

Councillor Mrs Brown then provided some background to the ongoing changes in Central Government funding as it had been extensively reported that local government funding was under severe pressure due to this. Councillor Mrs Brown covered the following points:

- Central Government had indicated that it may significantly reduce the amount the Council would receive from one of its major funding sources, the New Homes Bonus. However, due to extensive lobbying by the District Councils Network (DCN), it was pleasing to be able to report that the Government had accepted the Council's arguments and had decided not to increase the baseline from 0.4%. In the longer term, it was hoped that Government would completely remove the baseline from the distribution methodology for NHB so that the Council could continue to encourage the level of housing growth required for the future.
- The major funding source from Central Government would be the retention of business rates. Any increases were dependent upon growth within the District. There was a significant transfer of risk from central to local government as the Council was now responsible for the appeals against valuations. Any increases were dependent upon growth within the District. Due to the Council's focus on economic development, the Council had been particularly successful in attracting many new business start-ups to the District. Subsequently, this had partly offset the reductions that were occurring in other funding sources and continued to act as a buffer against some of this uncertainty. The Government had announced a full or partial reset from 2020/21 which might effectively wipe out some or all of this growth.
- The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) from Central Government had continued to deteriorate and so the DCN had long highlighted the unfairness of negative RSG which had been planned to be introduced for 2019/20. The Government had since decided to cancel this approach providing the Council with a windfall of £430k for 2019/20.
- Given these severe risks, it was vitally important for the Council to mitigate against them so that it could continue to prudently plan for the future. It was therefore important to hold a reasonable level in the Council's General Fund reserve. Thanks to this balanced budget, it was forecast that the Council's General Fund Balance at the end of 2019/20 would remain at approximately £7.5m.

Despite all these factors, Councillor Mrs Brown outlined that she was delighted to be able to present a balanced Budget and she outlined that all Councils were permitted to increase Council Tax by a minimum of either £5 per year or 3%. It was therefore proposed to increase this Council's Council Tax by marginally less than 3% which equated to £5.22 per year for a Band D property.

In proposing this increase, Councillor Mrs Brown reminded Members that Local Government had 137 different lines of business and that District Councils were responsible for 86 of these. With the proposed increase this year she emphasised that the Budget would continue to deliver the Council's share of essential services that residents wanted such as planning, housing, parks and gardens, car parks, tourism, leisure, recycling and the weekly refuse collection for just under £3.50 a week.

Further areas highlighted were:

- the construction of the new Littlehampton Leisure Centre [Littlehampton Wave] was being successfully financed from the Council's own resources without borrowing a penny for this major project. This facility which would be open for the Summer and would be enjoyed by the community and there would be no debt burdening future generations.
- In addition to this, it had already proved to be a sound investment as due to the new Centre, the Council had moved from paying the previous provider approximately £600k to now receiving over £600k from the new Contractor – so providing excellent returns on the Council's investment.
- As part of the Council's Property Investment Strategy, the Council has purchased the Arcade in Bognor Regis at the end of 2017. This had proved to be a wise financially sound decision as the retail units were nearly all let providing a regular income stream to the Council and a new vibrancy and vitality to the Town Centre due to the new range of businesses and restaurants in the Arcade.
- The Council was continuing to look for efficiencies and was fully embracing the digital agenda providing more benefits for its customers. Examples provided were the substantial investment in the new Revenues and Benefits system; and the improved service to Members in the form of ModernGov. The Council was also an active partner in the gigabyte project which would future proof broadband provision across the District.
- There was continued investment in the capital programme

Moving onto the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), Councillor Mrs Brown was delighted to report that the Council had recently refreshed its HRA Business Plan containing ambitions to acquire and build more new units for those in the District that needed them the most. In addition to this, the Council had also completed a condition survey of all of its housing stock and would be making a substantial investment in its current stock so that tenants would enjoy a significant improvement in their standard of housing.

These would help provide quality, affordable homes for local people. In addition to this, the Council had approved its HRA Business Plan allowing for the provision of 250 additional homes over a ten year period.

The final part of the Budget concerned the capital programme. Although this had been dominated by the construction of the new Littlehampton Wave, Councillor Mrs Brown outlined that it was pleasing that the Council had committed to other significant schemes as well. Firstly, the Council was committed to the construction

Full Council - 20.02.19

of the new Pavilion Park in Bognor Regis which would transform the Hothamton car park into a modern, multi-use park to suit all age groups, forming part of the regeneration of the Town. Smaller projects had successfully been delivered in Bognor Regis such as the Beach on the Beach sand play area; the Play on the Beach area and the investment put into the popular Hotham Park including the creation of a new Café. Councillor Mrs Brown was also delighted to announce that the Council had received £50k from the Coastal Revival Fund to renovate the bandstand in Bognor Regis. A further exciting initiative to announce was that the Council was making a substantial contribution, in partnership with Littlehampton Town council, towards the construction of a new youth facility in Wick opposite the existing Keystone Centre site.

The 2019/20 programme also included the essential core programme of Disabled Facilities Grants and well as investment in infrastructure in areas such as public conveniences and play areas.

In conclusion and on behalf of the Council, the Leader thanked Arun's conscientious, hardworking staff for not only helping to prepare this Budget but, also, for all that they did on a day to day basis to make the District a great place to live, work and visit. She particularly thanked the Group Head of Corporate Support and his small team for their sound advice and recommendations in the Budget report.

Councillor Mrs Brown then formally proposed an amendment which was that the recommendations as originally set out on pages 19 and 20 of the report, from the Group Head of Corporate Support, would supersede the minuted recommendations from the Cabinet meeting held on 11 February 2019 [Minute 397], as tabled at the meeting, as these included Recommendation (8) on page 20 of the agenda [the statutory resolutions at Appendix 4] and the further recommendations 1 and 2 on page 20 of the agenda. Councillor Wensley formally seconded the proposals and this amendment.

Councillor Purchase, as Leader of the Opposition, then responded to the Budget Statement by thanking the Leader of the Council for her speech and the Group Head of Corporate Support and his team for the ongoing work they did in safeguarding the Council's financial position. Councillor Purchase referred to the volatile nature of funding from Central Government and the difficult challenges lying ahead with Brexit and the potential for another General Election to be called. He confirmed that his Group had been pleased to see that all staff would receive a 2% pay award following years of pay freezes and effective cuts. He reconfirmed his Groups' view on how staff pay should be linked to the Chief Executive's pay.

Although there were elements of the Budget that he could praise, Councillor Purchase confirmed that he needed to highlight a number of disappointments. The first was that the establishment of the Council's Property Company had been nothing other than an inactive disappointment and at a time when the Council needed to utilise its resources more effectively. Councillor Purchase stated that his Group shared with the Leader of the Council disappointment over West Sussex County Council's decision to reduce recycling credits. He referred to the Leader of the Council's statement that she would not be happy to lower the level of General Fund reserves at £7.5m. Although he

agreed that they should not be significantly drained, he felt strongly that a sum be earmarked to push forward regeneration growth and to allow community projects to proceed at a time when the District's two main towns were in major need of help. He referred to the fact that an old Audit Commission regime recommended that this Council should not have reserves in excess of £4m. He therefore confirmed his view that the Council was sitting on a huge amount of reserves and he failed to see any arguments against these being better utilised to make a real difference in the District. The Littlehampton Wave was massively welcomed; however, Councillor Purchase held different views in terms of how the Pavilion Park project was being progressed. This was because there was a clear majority of residents who were against the proposals.

Returning to the levels the Council held as balances, Councillor Purchase stated that the Council should be using these to influence local economies and to innovate and look at the needs of communities. In view of this, Councillor Purchase confirmed that he wished to make three amendments to the proposed Budget.

The first two amendments were to Recommendation (1) the General Fund Revenue budget. Councillor Purchase confirmed that he wished to add the following wording – as set out below – the additions are set out in **bold**.

(1) The General Fund Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix 1 is approved, **subject to the following additions:**

1. Councillors Devolved Ward Community Budget Scheme

Set aside £108,000 for set up of a new, Councillors devolved Ward Budget Scheme (equivalent to £2,000 per annum, per Member), subject to final detail agreement on the scheme being agreed by Full Council at a later date in 2019, following assessment of how such Community Schemes work in other similar authorities and how it could be adapted to Arun.

Funded by: additional yearly draw-down of General Fund Balances of £108,000.

2. Apprenticeship Schemes at Arun District Council

This Council notes the success of the Government-backed Apprenticeship scheme, giving young people in particular the opportunity to get real work place experience, underpinned by the support of accredited training schemes. The Council therefore agrees to trial employing *up to 6* apprentices under the scheme in 2019/20 and to that end agrees to set aside £120,000 to fund the scheme.

Funded by: additional yearly draw-down of General Fund Balances of £120,000.

In formally proposing the first two elements to his amendment, Councillor Purchase outlined that for the Community Budget Scheme it would be necessary to ensure that

Full Council - 20.02.19

approval of these schemes be subject to strong scrutiny and he explained that many other District & Borough Councils successfully operated these schemes which were used for projects to enhance community facilities or work to enhance environments in Members' Wards. The purpose of this was to also give Members influence to make a real difference in their communities and as it was Members who held local knowledge and were the right tier of authority to properly roll out such proposals.

Councillor Purchase explained the second part of the amendment which was to enhance apprenticeships within Arun. He referred to the Government backed scheme which had been introduced in 2010 and that he had seen how positive this could be, not just for the benefit of young people but also to really develop and provide people with more opportunities. He appreciated that an apprenticeship scheme was already in place in Planning and elsewhere but felt that the Council could do so much more. He proposed that the Council should introduce a trial employing up to six people in the coming year. From this it was hoped that other organisations in the District would be encouraged to operate similar schemes.

Councillor Purchase then proposed the third element to his amendment which related to Recommendation 7 – the Capital Budget. Councillor Purchase outlined that the aim of this amendment was to renew the District's Towns, particularly Littlehampton and Bognor Regis as both had huge problems in terms of pushing forward regeneration. Councillor Purchase confirmed that he wished to add the following wording – as set out below – the additions are set out in **bold**.

(7) The Capital Budget as set out in Appendix 3 is approve, **subject to the following addition:**

1. Renewing our Towns

This Council recognises that meaningful regeneration in Littlehampton and Bognor Regis has stalled, and our town centres are badly affected as a result. This Council therefore agrees to set aside and earmark £2,500,000 for one-of capital and match-funded capital schemes in Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, subject to agreement by Cabinet as to specific items of spend over the coming financial year.

Funded by: one-off draw-down of Council General Fund of £2,500,000.

These amendments were then duly seconded by Councillor Dr Walsh.

The Chairman then invited debate on the amendment. This saw many Members speaking against all three elements of it. This was because they had no evidence before them to convince them that any of the three separate schemes would work. The point was made that if the amendments had been raised at the meeting of the Overview Select Committee on 29 January 2019 or Cabinet on 11 February 2019, where the Budget had been discussed, then there could have been the opportunity to have

debated them thoroughly in advance of this meeting and the opportunity to request more detailed information.

Comments were also made about the Council's balances with many Councillors disagreeing with Councillor Purchase's view that the current level of £7.5m was excessive. It was felt that in such uncertain times it would not be sensible to erode balances to below this level. Balances were needed to assist the Council with the uncertain times ahead and in view of the considerable risks that had been identified by the Leader of the Council when presenting her statement. It was also pointed out that the Council used its reserves well and reference was made to the construction of the new Littlehampton Wave which was being financed from the Council's own resources without needing to borrow any funds to complete the project.

With regard to the second element of the amendment to introduce apprenticeships, it was pointed out that the Council currently had more than six apprenticeship roles in place and these had been running for some time. Looking at the Ward Community Scheme, the point was made that some Councillors were already, to an extent, doing this. If they saw the case for a scheme to be developed, then they would liaise with the appropriate Town or Parish Council and Officers within Arun to see if the scheme could be supported and if the required funding could be sought. Concern was expressed as to how this scheme would actually operate in the event of multiple opportunities for schemes being identified and how difficult it could be to choose which scheme should be funded, especially in multi-Member Wards.

Those supporting the amendment accepted the difficult national position that the Council was in financially, more needed to be done to support the District's Towns. The three proposals put forward all had the opportunity to assist the community. It was highlighted that if the schemes had been suggested in previous meetings held to scrutinise the Budget, they still would not have been accepted as sound ideas.

In response, debate then focused on the issue of poor Councillor attendance by some Councillors at meetings and the comments made by the Opposition over the lack of progressing regeneration in the District's Towns, which could not be accepted.

Councillor Dr Walsh then spoke, as seconder to the amendment, and the issue of Councillor absentees at Committee meetings was again raised. He confirmed that he wholeheartedly agreed with the Leader of the Council's concerns over the County Council's decision to slash its housing support grant from £6 to £2m to homeless charities and its more recent decision to reduce recycling credits. Councillor Dr Walsh outlined other concerns in terms of the levels of investment for the District's Town Centres and he criticised the Council for investing more into Bognor Regis than Littlehampton. He appreciated that bids had been made previously to the Coastal Community Fund for schemes in Littlehampton but these had been unsuccessful. He felt that the Council needed to use some of its reserves to inject funding into its Towns and smaller communities. The amendments put forward would work well in overcoming this problem.

Full Council - 20.02.19

Councillor Purchase, as the proposer to the amendment, referred to the comments made. He reinforced his view that all Councillors had good ideas and that as local Ward Councillors they should have more ability for decision making on this Council. He referred to the 2020 Vision Programme and the resulting cuts. The Council was now hoarding reserves and he had submitted a strong case to spend an element of these reserves for the good of the community. The District's Town Centres all had huge problems such as increasing crime levels; slow progression of regeneration and an ailing High Street. An element of the Council's reserves should be spent supporting regeneration and improving communities.

The Group Head of Council Advice & Monitoring Officer outlined that in line with the Council's constitution a recorded vote was required when voting on this amendment.

Those voting for the amendment were Councillors Purchase, Stanley, Dr Walsh and Wells (4). Those voting against were Councillors Ambler, Mrs Bence, T Bence, Bicknell, Blampied, Mrs Bower, R Bower, Mrs Brown, Chapman, Charles, Clayden, Cooper, Mrs Daniells, Dillon, Dingemans, Edwards, Elkins, English, Mrs Hall, Haymes, Hitchins, Mrs Madeley, Mrs Oakley, Oliver-Redgate, Patel, Mrs Porter, Mrs Rapnik, Reynolds, Mrs Stainton, Warren, Wheal, Wensley and Wotherspoon (33). Councillors Brooks, Gammon and Northeast abstained from voting (3).

The amendment was declared LOST.

Returning to the substantive recommendations, Councillor Brooks, on behalf of the Independent Group, confirmed his support for the Budget and his Group's appreciation for the work undertaken by the Group Head of Corporate Support and his team in preparing it. Although he accepted comments made by the Leader of the Council, in presenting her Statement, he wished to add his view, from discussion held earlier, that the Cabinet system in Arun did not work and that the decision making process in Arun should return to the old Committee system as this allowed all Members the opportunity to provide input at an earlier stage. He appreciated that there were uncertain times ahead for the Council and the many unknowns to consider for this Budget. He also welcomed the 2% pay increase for all staff however wished to raise his concern that the Council had lost many experienced staff as a result of the 2020 Vision programme. He outlined that the Council was now having to rerecruit and was paying the price of letting too many staff go. As a result he felt that the 2020 Vision programme needed to be reviewed to avoid the over use of consultants and any further outsourcing. On the HRA Budget he referred to the expected bill of £3m to address the condition of the Council's housing stock and asked how it had been allowed to get to this point. He also held similar concerns to those already expressed over levels of homelessness which he appreciated was a national problem.

Finally, Councillor Brooks welcomed the role that the Council was playing in the gigabyte project stating that he hoped that the Council would maintain its involvement allowing this to reach as many businesses as it could. Commenting on the level of reserves that the Council should hold, Councillor Brooks felt that an element could be

prudently used to support services such as Economic Regeneration. This was because the support for tourism was reducing year on year. Arun as a District still relied heavily on tourism to keep visitors and to encourage them to the area. The Council needed attractions and was losing facilities such as the Look & Sea Centre. He felt that there was no commitment to encourage regeneration plans or plans to encourage families with disabled members to access the beach in Bognor Regis.

Debate on the substantive recommendations commenced.

Firstly, Councillor Bence requested that his apologies to Councillor Purchase for some of the comments he had made earlier be recorded.

The majority of Councillors applauded the Budget stating that it would deliver exactly what the Council had said it would deliver and that the Council could continue to invest in the District in a continuing capital programme. The construction of the new Littlehampton Wave was cited as a prime example and especially as this was being self-financed by the Council.

The completion of new homes was also earmarked as a success story and it was hoped that the revised HRA Business Plan would allow the Council to provide more housing for those that really needed it. The national homelessness crisis was highlighted as a continuing major concern with levels of homelessness in the District increasing year on year. A point was made that the Council needed to think very carefully about who it sold its land too. It was pointed out that land such as Daiseyfields and Lyminster Road should be used for social housing; starter homes for young families and retirement homes for the elderly.

Further discussion took place on the HRA Budget and its commitment to enhance the condition of its housing stock. Further monies had been earmarked to improve bathrooms, cloakrooms, bin stores and as a result of the Stock Condition Report, the Council was now able to make an informed judgement as to what was needed out of this budget. Looking at temporary accommodation, new properties had been acquired in Wick, Littlehampton housing families in superb quality accommodation. Liaisons were progressing well with Stonepillow and Turning the Tide to tackle the growing and painful issue of homelessness.

Councillor Wensley, as seconder to the substantive recommendations, outlined that the Budget demonstrated that due to sound financial responsibility and despite challenging financial times, the Council continued to deliver good quality services to its residents, businesses, tenants and visitors for a very small cost. He praised the Council's small finance team for the sound position that the Council found itself in, despite the significant risks that the Leader of the Council had highlighted earlier in her Budget Statement.

Councillor Wensley stated that he was delighted that the construction of the new Wave Leisure Centre was virtually complete and like many other Councillors he was very much looking forward to using the high-quality facilities. He also referred to the number of exciting capital schemes and that almost £400k of business-critical IT

Full Council - 20.02.19

investment would be taking place as a result of the recently adopted IT Strategy. This confirmed the Council's commitment to a digital future. The ModernGov software would be replacing the ageing system used by Committee Services providing a purpose-built system that would replace the current manual process. From the beginning of the new Municipal Year, Councillors would be able to access digitally Committee information which they would be able to annotate and share.

Councillor Wensley then referred to the growing national problem of homelessness, especially following the Homelessness Reduction Act. This Budget showed that Arun was not immune to this and Councillors were reminded that last year the Council purchased 10 units of temporary accommodation in Wick, Littlehampton to provide more suitable accommodation for homeless families. The Council fully intended to purchase additional units. In addition to this, the HRA Business Plan outlined the Council's ambition to acquire new units to add to its stock to provide a more permanent solution to the growing social issue of homelessness. The Council's Housing Fraud Investigator continued to provide excellent results with 15 properties being recovered in the last year offered to those in real need. Councillor Wensley stated that it was important to state that the Council was fully aware that quality housing was a fundamental need and that it would continue to make every effort to address this need. The Leader of the Council had already identified the number of financial challenges ahead. The actions of the County Council in significantly reducing the previously agreed recycling credits and making even larger cuts to its level of housing support would place even further pressure on this Council. However, the Council had already successfully accepted the challenge to make savings through efficiencies. The Council's General Fund balances were the most effective mitigation against the threat of these potential reductions. The Budget proposed the maintenance of these balances and was the correct way forward to ensure that the Council could address the financial challenges ahead.

Finally, Councillor Wensley outlined that the proposed Arun element of Council Tax increase of just 10p per week for a Band D property represented excellent value for money, considering the wide range of services provided. What was proposed was a sound and financially responsible Budget and he urged Members to support it.

Councillor Mrs Brown, as proposer to the substantive recommendations, added to the points made by Councillor Wensley by reminding Members that the Council was facing very uncertain times. This Budget would ensure that the Council would be able to deliver essential front lines services and also a capital programme all at an additional cost of 10p per week. In summing up, Councillor Mrs Brown thanked everyone for their contribution in compiling and debating the Budget and she urged Members to support it.

The Group Head of Council Advise & Monitoring Officer outlined that in line with the Council's Constitution a recorded vote was required when voting on this amendment.

Those voting for the substantive recommendations were Councillors

Ambler, Mrs Bence, T Bence, Bicknell, Mrs Bower, R Bower, Brooks, Mrs Brown, Chapman, Charles, Clayden, Cooper, Mrs Daniells, Dillon, Dingemans, Edwards, Elkins, English, Mrs Hall, Haymes, Hitchins, Mrs Madeley, Mrs Oakley, Oliver-Redgate, Patel, Mrs Porter, Mrs Rapnik, Reynolds, Mrs Stainton, Warren, Wheal, Wensley and Wotherspoon (33). Councillors Gammon, Purchase. Stanley, Dr Walsh and Wells abstained from voting (5).

The Council therefore

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The General Fund Revenue Budget as set out in the revised Appendix 1 is approved;
- (2) Arun's Band D Council Tax for 2019/20 is set at £181.62, an increase of 2.96%
- (3) Arun's Council Tax Requirement for 2019/20, based on a Band D Council Tax of £181.62, is set at £11,129,855 plus parish precepts as demanded, to be transferred to the General Fund in accordance with statutory requirements;
- (4) The HRA budget as set out in Appendix 2 is approved;
- (5) HRA rents for 2019/20 are set at 1% below the current year's level in accordance with the provisions of the Welfare Reform and Work Act;
- (6) HRA garage rents are increased by 5% to give a standard charge of £11.72 per week (excluding VAT) and heating and water/sewerage charges increased on a scheme by scheme basis, with a view a view to balancing costs with income;
- (7) The Capital Budget as set out in Appendix 3 is approved;
- (8) The statutory resolutions required by the Council in agreeing its budget for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix 4, are approved;
- (9) It be noted that the Group Head of Corporate Support, in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Support, has approved i) a Council Tax base of 61,281 for 2019/20 and ii) the submission of the Council's NNDR1 return (the estimate of the Council's Business Rate income for 2019/20) to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The NNDR1 return reflects the changes made in the recent Autumn Budget;
- (10) It be noted that in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance (New Parishes) (England) Regulations 2008 a precept has been anticipated for the new Parish of Barnham and

Full Council - 20.02.19

Eastergate and that the amount anticipated is equal to that specific in the establishment order. (The new Parish of Barnham and Eastergate cannot request more than the sum anticipated.)

(11) For 2019/20 any expenses incurred by the Authority in performing in part of its area a function performed elsewhere in its area by a Parish/Town Council or the Chairman of a Parish Meeting shall not be treated as special expenses for the purposes of Section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

(The meeting concluded at 8.18 pm)