

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

20 February 2025 AT 6.30 pm

PRESENT: CLLR R WEBBER-JONES - MAYOR
CLLR REH FLEMMING – DEPUTY MAYOR

Cllr CM Allen, Cllr RG Allen, Cllr MC Bools, Cllr SL Bray,
Cllr MB Cartwright, Cllr MA Cook, Cllr DS Cope, Cllr MJ Crooks,
Cllr WJ Crooks, Cllr C Gibbens, Cllr SM Gibbens,
Cllr DT Glenville, Cllr CE Green, Cllr C Harris, Cllr L Hodgkins,
Cllr C Lambert, Cllr KWP Lynch, Cllr J Moore, Cllr LJ Mullaney,
Cllr MT Mullaney, Cllr LJP O'Shea, Cllr A Pendlebury,
Cllr M Simmons, Cllr P Stead-Davis, Cllr BE Sutton,
Cllr BR Walker, Cllr A Weightman and Cllr P Williams

Officers in attendance: Bill Cullen, Julie Kenny, Rebecca Owen, Sharon Stacey and Ashley Wilson

382. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Boothby, Hollick, Smith and Surtees.

383. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bools and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January be approved.

384. **Declarations of interest**

Councillor Stead-Davis declared a registrable interest in the housing revenue account budget as a council tenant.

385. **Mayor's Communications**

The Mayor updated on events he and the Deputy Mayor had attended.

386. **Leader of the Council's Position Statement**

In presenting his position statement, the Leader referred to:

- The third anniversary of the war in Ukraine
- Devolution and local government reorganisation, announcing the joint Leicestershire districts and Rutland County Council position
- Hinckley town centre performance
- Hinckley Leisure Centre solar panel project
- Events
- Tourism success
- The successful sports awards.

387. Minutes of the Scrutiny Commission

The chair of the Scrutiny Commission presented the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January for information.

388. Pay policy statement 2025/26

Council received the pay policy statement for 2025/26. It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bools and

RESOLVED –

- (i) The continuing positive reduction in the pay gap between the top and median average earner be noted;
- (ii) The slight increase in the gender pay gap be noted;
- (iii) The pay policy statement for 2025/26 be approved.

389. Budget 2025/26

Consideration was given to the medium term financial strategy, the general fund budget for 2025/26, the calculation of council tax for 2025/26, the housing revenue account budget for 2025/26, proposed fees and charges for 2025/26, the capital programme for 2024/25 to 2027/28 and capital strategy and the treasury management strategy and prudential indicators for 2024/25 to 2027/28.

During discussion, reference was made to the anticipated support for the increase in national insurance contributions, the business rates reset which had been awaited for several years, the likely financial impact of local government reorganisation and status of the crematorium.

It was moved by Councillor Lynch and seconded by Councillor Bray that the budget reports be approved.

(a) Medium term financial strategy

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting on this motion was recorded.

Councillors Bools, Bray, Cartwright, Cope, J Crooks, W Crooks, Flemming, C Gibbens, S Gibbens, Glenville, Green, Hodgkins, Lambert, Lynch, Moore, Linda Mullaney, Michael Mullaney, Pendlebury, Stead-Davis, Walker, Webber-Jones, Weightman and Williams voted FOR the motion (23);

Councillors C Allen and R Allen voted AGAINST the motion (2);

Councillors Cook, Harris, O'Shea, Simmons and Sutton abstained from voting.

The motion was therefore declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) The update to the medium term financial strategy for 2024/25 to 2027/28, in particular the level of savings and new income required between 202/27 and 2027/28, be noted;
- (ii) The use of earmarked reserves required over the life of the medium term financial strategy to support the general fund position be approved.

(b) General fund budget 2025/26

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting on this motion was recorded.

Councillors Bools, Bray, Cartwright, Cope, J Crooks, W Crooks, Flemming, C Gibbens, S Gibbens, Glenville, Green, Hodgkins, Lambert, Lynch, Moore, Linda Mullaney, Michael Mullaney, Pendlebury, Stead-Davis, Walker, Webber-Jones, Weightman and Williams voted FOR the motion (23);

Councillors C Allen and R Allen voted AGAINST the motion (2);

Councillors Cook, Harris, O'Shea, Simmons and Sutton abstained from voting.

The motion was therefore declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) The general fund budget for 2024/25 and 2025/26 be approved;
- (ii) The special expenses area budget for 2024/25 and 2025/26 be approved;
- (iii) The proposed movement in general fund balances and earmarked reserves for 2024/25 and 2025/26 be approved;
- (iv) The supplementary budget for licence costs be approved.

(c) Calculation of council tax for 2025/26

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting on this motion was recorded.

Councillors Bools, Bray, Cartwright, Cope, J Crooks, W Crooks, Flemming, C Gibbens, S Gibbens, Glenville, Green, Hodgkins, Lambert, Lynch, Moore, Linda Mullaney, Michael Mullaney, Pendlebury, Stead-Davis, Walker, Webber-Jones, Weightman and Williams voted FOR the motion (23);

Councillors C Allen and R Allen voted AGAINST the motion (2);

Councillors Cook, Harris, O'Shea, Simmons and Sutton abstained from voting.

The motion was therefore declared CARRIED and it was

RESOLVED – the following be approved for 2025/26 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

- (i) £65,944,419, being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act (gross expenditure on general fund services, special expenses and parish precepts);
- (ii) £56,482,610, being the aggregate amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act (gross income including external financing and the use of reserves);
- (iii) £9,461,809, being the amount by which the aggregate at (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (ii) above calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year (amount to be funded from council tax, including special expenses and parish precepts);
- (iv) £159.87, being the amount calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31(B) of the Act as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average local council tax, not including parish precepts);
- (v) A band D council tax for borough wide services excluding special expenses and parish council precepts of £140.50 (Section 34(2));
- (vi) An average band D council tax relating to borough wide services and an average of special expenses and parish council services of £235.77 (Section 31B);
- (vii) The council tax outlined at appendix B to the report being the council tax for the borough of Hinckley & Bosworth divided by the tax base, including amounts for Leicestershire County Council, the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire & Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Combined Fire Authority and for each area and valuation (council tax band charges for each parish and special expense area) (Section 34(3)).

(d) Housing revenue account budget 2025/26

RESOLVED –

- (i) The revised housing revenue and housing repairs account budgets for 2024/25 be approved;
- (ii) The housing revenue and housing repairs account budgets for 2025/26 be approved;
- (iii) The proposed movement in reserves be approved.

(e) Fees and charges 2025/26

RESOLVED – the fees and charges for 2025/26 be approved.

(f) Capital programme 2024/25 to 2027/28 and capital strategy

RESOLVED –

- (i) The capital strategy be approved;
- (ii) The proposed capital programme for 2024/25 to 2027/28 be approved;
- (iii) The growth bids detailed in the report be approved.

(g) Treasury management strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28 and prudential indicators 2024/25 to 2027/28

RESOLVED –

- (i) The prudential indicators and limits for 2024/25 to 2027/28, including the authorised limit prudential indicator, be approved;
- (ii) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) statement contained in the report which sets out the Council's policy on MRP be approved;
- (iii) The treasury management and prudential indicators 2024/25 to 2027/28 report be approved.

390. Motions received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17

Councillor O'Shea, seconded by Councillor Cartwright, proposed the following motion:

"The proposal to close the sorting office at Groby and Ratby local post offices is a matter of grave concern for both the business owners and the wider community. Once implemented, this will have far-reaching detrimental effects that cannot be undone.

The sorting office at Groby post office currently contributes a substantial 33% to the overall profitability of the business. The sorting office at Ratby post office contributes a substantial amount of money to their own profitability of the business. This significant portion of revenue is vital for the financial health and sustainability of the post office. The loss of such a considerable revenue stream could ultimately lead to the closure of the post office branch itself.

Beyond the financial implications for the business, the closure of the sorting office would have a profound impact on our local community. The post office is more than just a place for sending and receiving mail; it is a hub of activity and a cornerstone of community interaction for both Groby and Ratby. Groby and Ratby post offices are also the only remaining financial services / banking / cash handling providers in their respective villages. If they were to close or reduce the trading hours this would have a huge knock-on impact for the community and local businesses.

For many residents, especially the elderly and those without access to digital services, the post office provides essential services. It acts as a point of social contact and support, fostering a sense of community.

All the post men and women who sort and deliver the mail have been told is that they will have to collect their delivery rounds from Meridian Royal Mail offices from when the changes happen in any event by 1 June 2025.

With the uncertainty of the future of the post office and the staff who have given loyal service often over many, many years, we ask the Chief Executive to write to Royal Mail seeking a review of the changes about to happen and clarifying at the same time the impact of such changes on the post office employees that will be affected as well as the residents we represent who may well have to collect failed Royal Mail deliveries from Meridian rather than their local post office.”

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was CARRIED and it was unanimously

RESOLVED – the Chief Executive writes to Royal Mail seeking a review of the changes and clarifying the impact of such changes on the post office employees and residents.

(The Meeting closed at 7.42 pm)

MAYOR