

COUNCIL

A meeting of the Council was held on Wednesday 18 January 2023.

- PRESENT:** Councillors J Hobson, A Bell (Vice-Chair), I Blades, D Branson, C Cooke, B Cooper, D Coupe, D Davison, S Dean, C Dodds, T Furness, TA Grainge, A Hellaoui, S Hill, C Hobson, B Hubbard, N Hussain, D Jones, L Mason, T Mawston, D McCabe, M Nugent, J Platt, E Polano, J Rathmell, J Rostron, R Sands, M Smiles, M Storey, P Storey, J Thompson, Z Uddin, J Walker and S Walker
- OFFICERS:** S Bonner, B Carr, G Field, A Pain, T Parkinson and A M Wilson
- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Councillors R Arundale, N Gascoigne, T Higgins, A High, L Lewis, C McIntyre, J McTigue, A Preston (The Mayor), G Purvis, D Rooney, M Saunders, G Wilson and C Wright

22/65 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

22/66 **MINUTES - COUNCIL - 30 NOVEMBER 2022**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 30 November 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

Page 3, Fourth line of paragraph 1 should read:

The Captain Cook Birthplace Trust had started work on the visit over 3 years ago.

22/67 **ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chair of the Council announced with sadness, the death of Thomas Wilkinson former Councillor for Park Ward 1957 – 1964. He requested members to join him in a minutes' silence as a mark of respect.

Councillor Davison paid tribute to Thomas Wilkinson.

22/68 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY).**

There were no valid questions submitted from members of the public, within the required timescale for this meeting.

22/69 **MAYOR'S STATEMENT AND REPORT**

The Chair advised that as the Mayor had submitted apologies, there was no report from the Mayor for this meeting.

22/70 **EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORTS**

The Chair invited Members to raise items for general discussion arising from the Information Booklet of Executive Member reports which detailed activities carried out within the respective Executive Member portfolios (Section 1), Executive decisions taken (Section 2) or to be taken where known, prior to and following the meeting (Sections 3 and 4).

Question in relation to report of Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Children's Services

Councillor C Hobson in relation to why the opening of Outwood Riverside new school had been put back and whether this would affect pupils and availability of places.

The Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Children's Services advised that the new school

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was supposed to have been completed this year, however the opening date had been put back to May 2025. The building of the school was a project between the Department for Education and the contractor. Because of delays, the Department for Education had decided to engage a different contractor. Work would commence on the design of the new school in February 2023.

The Outwood Riverside school would remain in its temporary accommodation in Russell Street until 2025 but they would be taking on an additional 120 pupils. The DFE had also agreed to provide extra funding to build further temporary accommodation for the year after to ensure that there were enough places for all the children.

Questions in relation to report of Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health, Public Protection and Digital Inclusion

Councillor Blades in relation to Support for Hospital Discharge over the Christmas and New Year Period and minimising delays.

In response to the question from Councillor Blades, the Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health, Public Protection and Digital Inclusion advised that at a recent meeting held the day before it had been advised that the reasons for issues at the hospitals over Christmas time had been put down to the increase in cases of covid, flu and other reasons.

The Executive Member thanked the Council's Social Services department and the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration who had worked hard over the Christmas period. The Managing Director of James Cook University Hospital (JCUH) had thanked the Council's Social Services department for facilitating the support for hospital discharge.

The crisis at the moment in hospitals was being caused by cases of covid and the pandemic and although figures were reducing, it was anticipated that they would rise in the future. The Executive Member advised that he accepted the points raised by Councillor Blades and he would raise them with the appropriate people.

Councillor Branson in relation to Support for Hospital Discharge over the Christmas and New Year Period and the fact that the country was spending 20% less per capita than other European countries despite the fact that the country had an expanding older population.

The Executive Member advised that many problems faced by the hospital were caused by PFI as it was costing £17m per quarter. This money should be directed at spending more money on funding doctors and nurses.

Question in relation to report of Executive Member for Culture and Communities

Councillor Cooke in relation to the Dorman Museum and Teesside Archives

Councillor Cooke thanked Councillor P Storey and the staff of the Dorman Museum and Teesside Archives on the success of the Festive market. Councillor Cooke urged Executive Members to become involved in future community events.

The Executive Member thanked the councillors for their work on the Festive market.

Question in relation to report of Executive Member for Environment

Councillor Thompson in relation to Area Care

In response to the question from Councillor Thompson, the Executive Member for Environment advised that he could not provide any figures in relation to the number of new trees that had been lost and the cost to the council. He advised that the vast majority of trees that had recently been planted had been 50% funded by the Forestry Commission and over 550 trees had been planted in the last 6 months.

Question in relation to report of Executive Member for Finance and Governance

Councillor Blades in relation to Council Tax

In response to the question from Councillor Blades, the Executive Member for Finance and Governance advised that Council Tax in principle, was arguably regressive. The Executive Member explained that Council Tax itself did not pay for the full scope of council services, they were paid for by a combination of Council Tax and central government funding.

The Executive Member stated that he would welcome feedback from members with regard to their views on what would be the right level of increase of Council Tax given the current budget situation of the Council.

Questions in relation to report of Executive Member for Neighbourhood Safety

Councillor Furness in relation to Fly tipping

In response to the question from Councillor Furness with regard to budget cuts affecting the Neighbourhood Safety Team, the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Safety advised that he agreed with the concerns of the councillor regarding Street Wardens and Area Care. The Executive Member stated that the team were doing a great job and in his view the service was needed.

Councillor Blades in relation to Town Centre ASB & Crime Action Plan

In response to the question from Councillor Blades in relation to the number of Street Wardens, the locality of their work and the nature of their work, the Executive Member for Neighbourhood Safety advised that some Street Wardens had left the job because of concerns regarding job security. Street Wardens were based in the town centre and some of the other Wards but there was not as many Street Wardens as there used to be. The Executive Member stated that the town did need Street Wardens, so if members were able to propose any alternative to the proposed cuts, he would be grateful if they would put them forward. The Executive Member advised that he would forward the current number of Street Wardens in due course.

Question in relation to report of Executive Member for Regeneration

Councillor Branson in relation to market the premium housing sites at Nunthorpe Grange and Newham Hall

In response to the question from Councillor Branson in relation to the Council's proposed plans in relation to the provision of infrastructure, transport and facilities following the increase in the number of houses, the Executive Member for Regeneration advised the position so far in respect of Newham Hall, was that the Council was working with Homes England to bring the site forward as it was too big for the Council to complete on its own. The site was likely to come forward for approval in the summer. The site would accommodate one thousand new homes. Infrastructure and facilities would be provided but that would be discussed at a later date.

In terms of Nunthorpe Grange, the Executive Member advised that there was currently no activity to bring forward the site in relation to this site at the current time. Once the application had been determined by the Planning and Development Committee. The Executive Member advised that the Council would be interested in working with anyone interested in developing community facilities once the houses were built.

Question in relation to report of Executive Member for Young Adults and Democratic Engagement

Councillor M Storey in relation to The Times Ahead.

In response to the question from Councillor M Storey in relation to the times ahead, the Executive Member for Young Adults and Democratic Engagement advised that in terms of the Elections Bill, the Council was looking to encourage participation in council elections by providing better voter education by making it more accessible and promoting voter registration. This had already been promoted as part of the annual canvass.

The Council also aimed to encourage citizens to become more involved by encouraging them

to ask questions or take part in public consultations and this could be promoted through the use of Facebook or Instagram.

The Executive Member also stated that he was looking at ways to make the Executive accountable to the public rather than just the politicians. He also stated that the Council needed to foster a culture of engagement and make greater use of community service projects. The Executive Member made reference to the various litter picking projects throughout the town and the use of community gardens because research had showed that those residents who had a stake in the area were more likely to vote in elections.

The Executive Member advised that part of his portfolio involved youth engagement and he had been talking to children about the benefits of joining a school council, speaking about mental health and environmental issues.

The Executive Member advised that he had visited schools to talk about involvement in politics and what it entailed. The Executive Member also relayed any feedback on issues raised by the children to the various Council departments.

Reference was also made to the changes in the voting systems for the Mayoral and the Police and Crime Commissioner elections. The elections would in future be decided by the first past the post system rather than the supplementary vote system.

The Executive Member advised that the Council needed to increase the use of social media tools to highlight any changes to election procedures. He highlighted that the Government was launching a Note to Self to promote the fact that electors would in future need to produce photographic voter ID before being able to vote in future elections and this was being actively promoted by the Council.

22/71

REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

The Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board presented a report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the current position regarding progress made by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and each of the individual Scrutiny Panels.

The Chair invited members to note the report.

ORDERED that the report be noted.

22/72

CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE FOR 2023/24

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and the Director of Finance submitted a report, the purpose of which was to set the council tax base for the financial year 2023/24 by the statutory deadline of 31 January 2023.

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance presented the report.

The Chair invited the Deputy Monitoring Officer to conduct a recorded vote.

Prior to the vote, the Deputy Monitoring Officer reminded Members that in accordance with Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, any member that was more than 2 months in arrears with their Council Tax account, must declare an interest and must not take part in the vote.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer noted that no declarations of interest had been declared and proceeded to conduct a recorded vote.

The result of the vote was as follows:

Votes For: (34)

Councillors Bell, Blades, Branson, Cooke, Cooper, Coupe, Davison, Dean, Dodds, Furness, Grainge, Hellaoui, Hill, C Hobson, J Hobson, Hubbard, Hussain, Jones, Mason, Mawston, McCabe, Nugent, Platt, Polano, Rathmell, Rostron, Sands, Smiles, M Storey, P Storey,

Thompson, Uddin, J A Walker, S Walker

Against: (0)

Abstentions: (0)

Following the recorded vote, it was **ORDERED** as follows:

That Council:

- Notes the contents of the report.
- Approves the council tax base for 2023/24 as 35,749.
- Approves 2,269 and 1,319 as the council tax bases for the parishes of Nunthorpe and Stainton & Thornton respectively for 2023/24.
- Following approval, agrees to notify the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Cleveland Fire Authority, and the Parish Councils of the 2023/24 council tax base.

22/73 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/2023 MID YEAR UPDATE

The Executive Member for Finance & Governance and the Director of Finance (S151 Officer) submitted a report, the purpose of which was to consider the current position on the Council's Capital Strategy for 2022/23 and approve the change being proposed on Minimum Revenue Provision for 2022/23 which was approved by Executive on 6 December 2022.

The Executive Member for Finance and Governance presented the report and responded to a query from Councillor Hellaoui.

The Chair invited the Deputy Monitoring Officer to conduct a vote.

Following the vote, it was **ORDERED** as follows:

That the Council:

- Note the current position on the capital strategy for 2022/23.
- Approve the change being proposed on Minimum Revenue Provision for 2022/23.

22/74 URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

22/75 MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

There were no Members Questions submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

22/76 NOTICE OF MOTIONS

There were no Notice of Motions submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

22/77 NOTICE OF URGENT MOTIONS (IF ANY)

There were no Notice of Urgent Motions submitted within the specified deadlines for this meeting.

22/78 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND PROGRESS UPDATE

The Mayor and the Chief Executive submitted a report, the purpose of which was to present the work of the Corporate Governance Improvement Board.

The Board was given the mandate to develop and agree a detailed improvement plan to drive the Council's response to the issues identified by the Council's external auditors EY and further investigated by CIPFA.

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In the absence of the Mayor, the Executive Member for Finance and Governance presented the report.

ORDERED that Council note the progress made to date and the revised improvement plan.