

COUNCIL

Tuesday, 1 February 2022

PRESENT – The Mayor, Councillors Ali, Allen, Bartch, Bell, Dr. Chou, Clarke, Cossins, Crudass, Crumbie, Mrs Culley, Curry, Donoghue, Dulston, Durham, Harker, Holroyd, Johnson, Laing, Layton, Lee, Lucas, Marshall, McCollom, McEwan, Mills, Newall, K Nicholson, M Nicholson, Preston, Renton, A J Scott, Mrs H Scott, Snedker, Sowerby, Tait, Tostevin, Wallis and Willis.

APOLOGIES – Councillors Baldwin, Boddy, Haszeldine, Heslop, L Hughes, B Jones, Mrs D Jones, Keir, Lister, Paley and Wright.

47 **MINUTES - TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS COUNCIL HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2021**

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Council held on 25 November 2021.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of this Council held on 25 November 2021, be approved as a correct record.

48 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

49 **SEALING.**

Presented – The Register showing the documents which had been sealed since the last meeting of Council.

50 **ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

Death of Former Mayor and Councillor Jim Ruck – The Mayor reported on the death of Former Mayor and Councillor Jim RUCK, who had recently passed away, and in doing so referred to Former Councillor Ruck's years of service.

As a mark of respect, Members stood and observed a short silence in memory of their former colleague.

New Year's Honours – The Mayor reported that Susan Thorpe, Senior Delivery Lead, Regional Delivery Directorate, Department for Education, was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.) for services to education.

The Mayor also informed Members that Andrew Naylor, Fisheries Enforcement Officer, Environment Agency, became a Medallist of the Order of the British Empire (B.E.M.) for Services to Fisheries Protection.

RESOLVED - That the congratulations of the Council be conveyed to those who had received Awards.

Holocaust Memorial Day 2022 – The Mayor acknowledged Holocaust Memorial Day, which had taken place on Thursday, 27th January 2022, and marked the 77th Anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

The Mayor advised Members that this important anniversary had been commemorated in Darlington at memorial service at the Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, which had been organised by the Celebrating Communities group.

51 QUESTIONS - TO ANSWER QUESTIONS (WHERE APPROPRIATE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN FROM):-

(1) THE PUBLIC;

There was one question, with notice, from a Member of the Public, who received an answer thereon.

(2) MEMBERS TO CABINET/CHAIRS;

There were no questions from Members, where notice had been given, for the Mayor, Members of the Cabinet, or the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees.

(3) MEMBERS TO THE POLICE, CRIME AND VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER FOR DURHAM AND DARLINGTON.

The Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner for Durham and Darlington attended the meeting, addressed Members and answered questions thereon.

52 COUNCIL REPORTS.

(1) COUNCIL TAX CALCULATION OF TAX BASE 2022/23

The Group Director of Operations submitted a report (previously circulated) to determine the Council's tax base for 2022/23.

The submitted report stated that, in accordance with Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the Council had to decide its tax base by 31 January in the year preceding that for which the tax base applies.

RESOLVED - (a) That the report for the calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2022/23 be approved.

(b) That the tax base for the Council and the individual tax base for the parishes, as set out at Appendix 2 of the submitted report, be approved.

REASON - The recommendations are supported to comply with statutory requirements, enabling the Council Tax for 2022/23 to be set by Council in February 2022.

53 CABINET REPORTS.

The Cabinet Members each gave a report (previously circulated) on the main areas of work undertaken under their relevant portfolio during the previous cycle of meetings. Cabinet Members answered questions on their portfolios.

54 MID-YEAR PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2021/22

The Group Director of Operations submitted a report (previously circulated) on the revised Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and to provide a half-yearly review of the Council's borrowing and investment activities.

The submitted report stated that the mandatory Prudential Code, which governs Council borrowing, required Council approval of controls, called Prudential Indicators, relating to capital spending and borrowing. It was reported that the Prudential Indicators were set in three statutory annual reports to Council, and the submitted report followed the Council's approval in February 2021 of the 2021/22 Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy.

The submitted report highlighted that the key objectives of the three annual reports were to ensure that governance of the large amounts of public money under the Council's Treasury Management activities complied with legislation and met the high standards set out in the codes of practice, to ensure that borrowing was affordable, and to report performance of the key activities of borrowing and investments.

The submitted report also outlined revisions to the Prudential Indicators in terms of a reduction to Operational Boundary to £174.081M, and a reduction to the Authorised Limit to £237.156M to allow for any additional cashflow requirement. It was noted that investments included £30M in property funds, which were expected to increase the Council's net return on investments by around £0.700M in future years.

RESOLVED - (a) That the revised Prudential Indicators and limits in Tables 1 to 6, 8, 10 and 12 to 17 of the submitted report be approved.

(b) That the underspend in the Treasury Management Budget (Financing Costs) of £0.243m, shown in Table 11, be noted.

REASONS - (a) In order to comply with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities;

(b) To inform Members of the performance of the Treasury Management function;

(c) To comply with the Local Government Act 2003;

(d) To enable further improvements to be made in the Council's Treasury Management function.

55 SCRUTINY REPORTS - TO CONSIDER SCRUTINY OVERVIEW REPORTS:-

The Scrutiny Committee Chairs each submitted a report (previously circulated) on the main

areas of work undertaken by their relevant Scrutiny Committee during the last cycle of Committee meetings, and responded to any questions thereon.

56 MEMBERSHIP CHANGES - TO CONSIDER ANY MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO COMMITTEES, SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND OTHER BODIES.

Consideration was given to membership changes of the Committees, Subsidiary Bodies and Other Bodies for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2021/22.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Mrs. Culley replace Councillor Mills as Councillor Brian Jones' named substitute on the Police and Crime Panel.