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## **Decisions of the Cabinet**

25 February 2014

Members Present:-

Councillor Richard Cornelius (Chairman)  
Councillor Daniel Thomas (Vice-Chairman)

|                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Councillor Dean Cohen      | Councillor Sachin Rajput      |
| Councillor Tom Davey       | Councillor Robert Rams        |
| Councillor Helena Hart     | Councillor Joanna Tambourides |
| Councillor David Longstaff | Councillor Reuben Thompstone  |

### **1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED-

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2013 be agreed as a correct record.

### **2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS**

There were none.

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Councillor Joanna Tambourides declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 7 as a trustee of MIND in Barnet and Friend in Need.

### **4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Details are appended of the questions asked of, and the answers given by, the Chairman. Verbal responses were given to supplementary questions at the meeting.

### **5. YOUR CHOICE BARNET TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

Prior to this item, a public comment was received from Ms Janet Leifer, and a petition was presented which would be handled in line with the Council's Constitution.

Cabinet received a presentation from Councillor Maureen Braun, Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, and considered the recommendations made in their report.

**RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet:

- i) support recommendations 1 and 2 of the Task and Finish Group;
- ii) support recommendation 3 of the Task and Finish Group and agree that the Council as well as Your Choice Barnet could explore such alternative funding models;
- iii) is of the opinion that recommendation 4 be revisited at a future date pending the Barnet Group's review of its structure, and implementation of the Council's new governance arrangements.

## **6. EARLY YEARS PROVISION TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

Cabinet received a presentation from Councillor Brian Gordon, Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, and considered the recommendations.

### **RESOLVED:**

That Cabinet support each of the recommendations which will inform the presentation of an Early Years Strategy to Cabinet.

## **7. BUSINESS PLANNING 2014/15-2015/16**

It was noted that at Para 9.6.2, the words 'the 2013/14 taxbase to be 125,294', should state: 'the 2014/15 taxbase to be 128,463.'

For the reasons set out in the Cabinet Members report,

### **RESOLVED:**

#### **Corporate Plan**

- 1.1 That Cabinet note the council's Corporate Plan included at Appendix A. This sets out the council's priorities for the forthcoming year.

#### **Consultation**

- 1.2 That Cabinet consider the consultation outcomes when making their decisions. The outcome of consultation is set out in Appendix B;

#### **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

- 1.3 That Cabinet approve the MTFS attached at Appendix C. The MTFS sets out all of the budget changes over the period from 2014/15 to 2015/16, including assumptions around inflation, changes to levies, pressures, savings and grant funding. It is the model around which the council's financial strategy is based;

#### **Detailed Revenue Budgets, Savings and Pressures**

- 1.4 That Cabinet recommend to Council for approval the estimates for income and expenditure, savings, pressures and council tax schedules as set out in Appendix D.

That Cabinet note that budget has been prepared on the basis of a 1% reduction in council tax for 2014/15 and a council tax freeze in 2015/16.

Overall the 2014/15 budget requirement totals £260,575,218.

- 1.5 That Cabinet note that the Chief Finance Officer under his delegated powers has calculated the amount of 128,463 (band D equivalents) as the council tax base for the year 2014/15 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B (3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")];
- 1.6 That Cabinet note that the council tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2014/15 (excluding precepts) is £141,575,218.
- 1.7 That Cabinet recommend to Council for approval the following amounts be now calculated for the year 2014/15 in accordance with Sections 31, 34, 35 and 36 of the Act:
  - (a) £949,451,502 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in the Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by precepting authorities.
  - (b) £807,876,284 being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
  - (c) £141,575,218 being the amount by which the aggregate at 1.7(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 1.7 (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act).
  - (d) £1,102.07 being the amount at 1.7(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (Item 1.6 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (excluding precepts).
  - (e) The Chief Finance Officer has determined that the Council's basic amount of council tax for 2014/15 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Local Government Act 1992.
  - (f) £1,102.07 being the amount at 1.6 above divided by the amount at 1.5 above, calculated by the council, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year 2014/15;

London Borough of Barnet Valuation Bands (£)

| A      | B      | C      | D               | E        | F        | G        | H        |
|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 734.71 | 857.16 | 979.62 | <u>1,102.07</u> | 1,346.97 | 1,591.88 | 1,836.78 | 2,204.14 |

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 1.7(d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- 1.8 That Cabinet note that for the year 2014/15 the Greater London Authority has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

### Greater London Authority Valuation Bands (£)

| A      | B      | C      | D            | E      | F      | G      | H     |
|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| 199.33 | 232.56 | 265.78 | <u>299.0</u> | 365.45 | 431.89 | 498.34 | 598.0 |

- 1.9 That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 1.7(d) and 1.8 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2014/15 for each of the categories dwellings shown below:

### Council Tax for Area (£)

| A      | B        | C        | D               | E        | F        | G        | H        |
|--------|----------|----------|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 934.04 | 1,089.72 | 1,245.40 | <u>1,401.07</u> | 1,712.42 | 2,023.77 | 2,335.12 | 2,802.14 |

- 1.10 That Cabinet recommend to Council that in accordance with Section 38(2) of the Act the Chief Executive be instructed to place a notice in the local press of the amounts set under recommendation 1.9 above pursuant to Section 30 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 within a period of 21 days following the Council's decision.

### Council Tax Support Scheme

- 1.11 That Cabinet recommend to Council for approval the Barnet Council Tax Support Scheme, adopted in January 2013, remain unchanged except for uprating in line with Department for Work and Pension changes for housing benefit.
- 1.12 That Cabinet note that the working age non-dependent (ND) charges be uprated as set out in paragraph 9.6.9.
- 1.13 That Cabinet note the technical changes to the scheme.

### Capital

- 1.14 That Cabinet recommend to Council for approval the capital programme as set out in Appendix E, and that the Chief Officers be authorised to take all necessary actions for implementation.
- 1.15 That Cabinet recommend to Council that the Chief Finance Officer be authorised to adjust capital project budgets in 2014/15 throughout the capital programme after the 2013/14 accounts are closed and the amounts of slippage and budget carry forward required are known.
- 1.16 That where slippage results in the loss of external funding and a new pressure being placed on prudential borrowing, Directors must report to Cabinet on options for offsetting this impact by adjusting other capital projects.

### Treasury management, Capital Prudential Code and Borrowing Limits

- 1.17 That Cabinet recommend to Council for approval the Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix F.
- 1.18 That Cabinet note the full set of Prudential Indicators set out in Appendix F and authorise the Chief Finance Officer to raise loans, as required, up to such

borrowing limits as the Council may from time to time determine and to finance capital expenditure from financing and operating leases.

#### **Housing Revenue Account**

- 1.19 That Cabinet approve the following:
- (a) The proposed rent increase of 2.5% for council dwellings as set out in paragraph 9.9.4 to take effect from 1 April 2014;
  - (b) The proposed increases to service charges for council dwellings as set out in paragraph 9.9.6 to take effect from 1 April 2014;
  - (c) The proposed rent increase of 3.2% for council garages as set out in paragraph 9.9.9 to take effect from 1 April 2014;
  - (d) The proposed reduction in rents for buyback properties as set out in paragraph 9.9.10 to take effect from 1 April 2014.
- 1.20 That Cabinet approve the Housing Revenue Account estimates for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix G.

#### **Equality Impact Assessments**

- 1.21 That Cabinet consider the Equality Impact Assessments included in Appendix H. A summary is set out in paragraph 5 of this report. The appendix provides the cumulative impact and individual delivery unit assessments where significant changes to service delivery are proposed.
- 1.22 That Cabinet recommend to Council to consider the Equality Impact Assessments at Appendix H.

#### **Reserves and Balances Policy**

- 1.23 That Cabinet recommend to Council to approve the Reserves and Balances Policy as set out in Appendix I and the Chief Finance Officer's assessment of adequacy of reserves in section 9.10. This states that the minimum level of General Fund balances should be £15m after taking account of all matters set out in the Chief Finance Officer's report on reserves and balances.

#### **Corporate Risk Register**

- 1.24 That Cabinet recommend to Council to note the Corporate Risk Register as set out in Appendix J.
- 1.25 That Cabinet note that the Local Government Finance Settlement has confirmed that government austerity measures will continue into 2015/16 and beyond meaning further cuts to government funding. This, alongside rises in the boroughs population and demand for services, provides new challenges for longer term financial planning which is being addressed through the council's Priorities and Spending Review.

### **8. ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

There were none.

The meeting finished at 8.09 pm