

DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL (BUDGET)

MINUTES of the proceedings of the meeting of the General Assembly of the Council (Budget) held on Monday 28 February 2022.

PRESENT:

The Mayor

Councillor R M Currans

The Deputy Mayor

Councillor P Cutler

Councillor A E D Barham
Councillor S H Brown
Councillor S P Butterfill
Councillor L A Canham
Councillor M J Davis
Councillor L H K Edie
Councillor B Garden
Councillor S N Gosine
Councillor K J Grehan
Councillor D A Hammock
Councillor P M Harman
Councillor G R Holt
Councillor D E Hunnisett
Councillor R A S Jones
Councillor M B Kelly
Councillor J A Kite, MBE
Councillor A R Lloyd

Councillor D J Mote
Councillor E H Ben Moussa
Councillor D T Nicklen
Councillor V Oguntope
Councillor T Oliver
Councillor Mrs J A Ozog
Councillor E E Palmer
Councillor R S L Perfitt
Councillor M I Peters
Councillor D J Reynolds
Councillor A S Sandhu, MBE
Councillor C J Shippam
Councillor K Stealey
Councillor Mrs R F Storey
Councillor D Swinerd
Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow
Councillor R J Wells

ABSENT:

Councillor J Burrell
Councillor D Butler-Ruhle
Councillor A Gaskin
Councillor R Gosine
Councillor T A Maddison
Councillor A J Oakley-Dow

1. PRAYERS: REVEREND KENNETH CLARK

The Mayor's Chaplain led the Council in prayer. Special mention was made of the current invasion of Ukraine and a minute's silence was also held in respect of the late former Councillor, Mayor, Alderman and Deputy Lord Lieutenant, Ivor Jones.

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Burrell, Butler-Rhule, R Gosine, Maddison and Oakley-Dow.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chief Officer & Director of Corporate Services declared a personal interest on behalf of all Officers present at the meeting in staffing matters referred to in Agenda item 10, Revenue and Capital Budgets 2022/23.

The Chief Officer & Director of Corporate Services in the exercise of her delegated authority, in consultation with the Deputy Monitoring Officer, granted a dispensation to all Councillors to speak and vote on Agenda item 10, Revenue and Capital Budgets 2022/23, in respect of their receipt of Members' Allowances paid by the Council on the ground that, without the dispensation, the number of persons prohibited from participating in the discussion and voting on Members' Allowances would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of business (see agenda item 10).

Councillor L A Canham declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 10 as she is a trustee of the Mary's Child charity, Greenhithe which receives grants/funding from the Council.

Councillor R M Currans declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 10 as she is a trustee of Home-Start and a trustee of the Dartford Almshouse charity which receive grants/funding from the Council.

Councillor D E Hunnisett declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 10 as he is a trustee of the Dartford Almshouse charity which receive grants/funding from the Council.

Councillor J A Kite MBE declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 10 as he is a director of Dartford Football Club which receives grant funding from the Council.

Councillor D J Mote declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 10 as he is a trustee of the Greenhithe Community Association which is a tenant of the Council, a trustee of 'Mary's Child' and of 'We are Beams', Chairman of Stone (Dartford) Scout Group and Treasurer of the Greenhithe branch of the Royal British Legion, all of which receive grants/funding from the Council. He also declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Appendices H(i),(ii) and (iii) of Agenda item 10 as his wife is an employee of Darenth Parish Council

Councillor D J Reynolds declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda item 10 as his partner is an employee of Dartford Borough Council.

Councillor A S Sandhu MBE declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda item 10 as he is a trustee of the Kent People's Trust and of the Kent Cohesion

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Council, and as Vice-President of Dartford Valley Rugby Football Club as they receive grants/funding from the Council.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor congratulated Councillors Holt and Stealey on their recent election and welcomed them to their first Council meeting.

The Mayor offered her condolences to the family of the late Ivor Jones and said that, whilst she hadn't known him personally, she had heard many good things about him and his work in the community.

Finally, the Mayor reminded Members of the details of her forthcoming charity dinner dance.

5. URGENT ITEMS

The Leader of the Council welcomed Councillors George Holt and Kyle Stealey following their election to the Council for Wilmington, Sutton-at-Hone & Hawley ward and Maypole & Leighton's Cross ward respectively. He also congratulated Councillor Avtar Sandhu on his election to Kent County Council following the death of the late Councillor Ann Allen.

He also informed the Council that Councillors Romana Gosine and Adrian Oakley-Dow had ended their membership of the Labour and Co-Operative Group and would continue to sit as independent members. He wished them well and noted that this would result in a change in political proportionality in due course which would be implemented at the Annual Council meeting.

6. INTERIM REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2022

The General Assembly of the Assembly considered a report which detailed the review of current polling arrangements that had carried out and the proposed timetable for public consultation as part of the interim review of Polling Districts and Polling Places for 2022. The report also detailed arrangements for conducting the Stone Neighbourhood Plan referendum including the need to create a new temporary polling district to enable the referendum to be held.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Electoral Provisions Sub-committee comments on the interim review of polling districts and polling places 2022, as referred to in the report, be noted;
2. That a public consultation on the interim polling district and polling places, be conducted in accordance with the revised timetable, at Appendix A to the report;

3. That a new small unconnected polling district (SHO1b) covering Stone Parish Council properties which are no longer parished, but would be eligible to vote in the [Stone] Neighbourhood Planning Referendum, be created, to enable the Referendum to be conducted, in accordance with Appendix B to the report;
4. That the Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services be granted delegated authority to republish the Register of Electors, so that the [Stone] Neighbourhood Planning Referendum can be held before the conclusion of the Register of Electors review in December 2022; and
5. That the Polling Districts and Polling Places Current Arrangements and Observations at Appendix C to the report, be considered.

7. CORPORATE PLAN 2021-2023

The General Assembly of the Council considered a revised Corporate Plan for 2021-23. The new Plan covered a two year period, rather than the normal three years, so that the Council could assess the effects of Covid and Brexit before looking to a longer planning time-frame. The Corporate Plan set out the vision and priority themes for the Council and the Borough as a whole and provided a focus for the work of the Council from 2021 to 2023 building on the key themes set out in the 2017-2020 Corporate Plan, with some minor adjustments. Housing now stood on its own, whilst Safer Communities had become Safer and Cohesive Communities. There were also two new sub-themes under the Economic Development and Regeneration theme, namely "Making the Place" which focussed on how physical development and regeneration could benefit the Borough and "Economic Prosperity" which looked at employment and economic development. The Plan's aims and objectives were supported by a series of actions and by a set of performance indicators for each theme, some of which were service-related whilst others were 'Borough-wide indicators not directly related to services delivered directly by the Council. The new Corporate Plan had been endorsed by the Policy Overview Committee and the Cabinet.

A Member commented that she felt that too much emphasis was placed on events taking place in the town centre under the theme of Safe and Cohesive Communities (page 46 of the agenda) and felt that this should be broadened to include events across the entire borough. She also felt that events should be made more inclusive for people of all abilities, including children that were neuro-diverse. The Leader of the Council said this merely reflected the fact that many key events took place in the town centre but that the Council delivered events and encouraged cohesion across the whole of the local community, including many events organised locally in smaller venues. This would also be apparent from the many events being planned to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee and from events such as music days being held in churches across the borough. He stressed the Council's commitment to inclusivity and that nobody would be left behind. However he would be happy to amend the Corporate Plan to make both these matters more apparent.

The Member also felt that the strategic objective for Housing, 'H2 – to increase the supply of high quality affordable homes' should reference the Council's target that 35% of new homes should be affordable. The Leader of

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the Council explained that the Corporate Plan was an overarching strategy and that it was not appropriate to include the target in this document as it was included in policies which supported the Corporate Plan. He also reminded Members of the Council's strong commitment to delivering as many affordable houses as possible for local people and of the Council's outstanding record of delivery and wish to foster a diverse and thriving community. However he also pointed-out the realities of development which sometimes meant that the target for affordable housing could not be met without making development unaffordable.

RESOLVED:

That the General Assembly of the Council approve the Corporate Plan 2021-2023, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

8. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITOR 2023/24 ONWARDS

The General Assembly of the Council considered a report which set out proposals for the Council to appoint an external auditor for the financial year 2023/24 onwards, following the end of the current contract with Grant Thornton. The existing appointment had been made by the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) body under a national collective arrangement for the appointment of external auditors, and it was recommended that the Council should continue to opt-in to the national scheme for the appointment of its external auditor from 2023/24 to 2027/28 as it was considered that the sector-wide procurement by PSAA was likely to produce better outcomes and be less burdensome than undertaking a local procurement.

RESOLVED:

That the Public Sector Audit Appointments' invitation to opt into the sector-led option for the appointment of external auditors to principal local government and police bodies for five financial years from 1 April 2023 be accepted

9. COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS FOR UNOCCUPIED AND UNFURNISHED DWELLINGS AND LONG TERM EMPTY PREMIUM

The General Assembly of the Council considered a report which proposed the reduction of the discount for unoccupied and unfurnished dwellings from 100% for one month to 0% and the increase of the premium on dwellings that were long-term empty (unoccupied and unfurnished for more than two years). Reducing the Class C discount for unoccupied and unfurnished dwellings to 0% and increasing the long-term empty charge from 100% to 200% for 5 years to one day less than 10 year and 300% for 10 years+ would support the Council's empty homes plan and encourage empty dwellings to be brought back into use more quickly and would also align the Council with other districts across the county.

RESOLVED:

1. That the discount for unoccupied and unfurnished dwellings be changed from 100% for one month to 0%; and
2. That the additional charge for dwellings that are unoccupied and unfurnished for 5 years to one day less than 10 years, be increased from 100% to 200% and dwellings that are unoccupied and unfurnished for 10 years or more, be increased to 300%.

10. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2022/23

The General Assembly of the Council considered a report on the proposed Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2022-23, including setting the overall level of General Fund and Housing Revenue Account revenue and capital expenditure for Dartford Borough Council for 2022/23, the level of Council Tax for Dartford Borough in its parished and unparished areas for 2022/23 and fees and charges for 2022/23, and approving the Pay Policy Statement and sundry related matters. The Council's determination to provide high quality services and to keep tax low, wherever possible, was reflected in the proposals which included no increase in the Dartford Borough Council element of Council tax, the freezing of rents for Council social housing and for pitches at the Claywood Lane, Caravan Site, Bean for the year, setting fees and charges, and adding to earmarked reserves for future years as part of the Council's prudent approach to budgeting.

In accordance with Standing Order 16(4), a motion was proposed, seconded and carried, to allow extra time for Leaders of the Political Groups to deliver their speeches on the Budget report.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J A Kite, thanked Officers for their work with Members in developing the budget, and in particular Sarah Martin and Tim Sams. He also congratulated the Leadership Team, including two new Directors, Peter Dosad and Caroline Hicks, on the direction and leadership they were providing as the Council emerged into the post-pandemic world and commended the work of the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance, and his Cabinet colleagues and Lead Members. He noted that people were returning to work and customers were returning to the streets across the country and enjoying freedoms that they had been unable to use for nearly two years but that those who had been lost to the pandemic would never be forgotten. In this context he was pleased to announce that for a second year in a row the Council would be funding a scholarship for a local medical student for the duration of their training. He also announced that the Council would be making funding available immediately to help Ukrainian nationals living in Dartford to provide support and assistance to family members caught up in the current crisis.

Turning directly to the budget, the Leader of the Council outlined the considerations that had been in play when considering whether to increase Council Tax. Council's had faced a 'perfect storm' of challenges which had hit service revenues at precisely the time that demand for those services had increased and other factors such as skill and material shortages, lock-downs and post-Brexit adjustments were impacting the economy. In this context a

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decision had to be taken on the impact that an increase or freeze in Council Tax might have and the impact that a freeze might have on future revenues and the Council's ability to deliver services. Taking everything into account it was proposed to freeze the Dartford Borough Council council tax again in order to assist local families at the early stage of financial recovery as this was felt to be the right thing to do.

Turning to the General Fund, the Leader of the Council explained that this remained in a strong position and that having balances available provided greater confidence to plan growth and improvement to services and assisted with decision making in the short and medium term. However it was important to recognise that there were financial challenges ahead and these balances were likely to be needed in the future. Whilst no increase to council tax was proposed this would not be at the expense of services. There would be no cuts to services or in the Council's ability to respond to changes but it was actually intended to grow services within the budget envelope. The Council was also proposing to freeze Council social housing rents and charges for caravan sites, and had also frozen many of its fees and charges, including cemeteries.

Addressing climate change, the Leader of the Council highlighted the work being carried out by the Council, including the introduction of energy efficiency measures in its housing stock, new play areas at The Bridge and Queen's Gardens, the Community Orchards and wildflowers and meadows. He praised the work being carried out by Peter Dosad and Sandra Woodfall on environmental issues and welcomed the creation of a new Environmental Team and the recent decision to carry out Climate Impact Assessments to support all future committee decision making.

At this point the Leader of the Council announced that he had been contacted before the meeting by Councillor Edie who wished to make a proposal which he felt might be worthy of addition to the budget proposals. He invited Councillor Edie to address the Council.

Councillor Edie informed Members that public bodies generated significant amounts of paperwork and that committee reports and agendas provided to Members could be substantial and many Members could now receive such reports electronically instead, a process accelerated by the availability of basic tablet devices. In view of the Council's commitment to reducing its impact on the environment she proposed that Members should be invited to confirm at the beginning of each civic year if they wished to receive documents in printed form but otherwise they would be provided electronically by default. In making this proposal she recognised that there were still many entirely legitimate reasons why Members might need to receive documents in traditional printed form and this option could still continue to be available for any or all documents on request even if a Member had previously expressed a preference for electronic delivery.

The Leader of the Council said that he felt that this was a worthy proposal, and on the basis that Members could choose freely whether to receive

committee papers electronically or in hard copy he was happy to add this proposal into the budget recommendations. He thanked Councillor Edie for this suggestion and for her work on Planet Dartford, along with Councillors Butterfill, S Gosine and Oliver.

Turning to the Capital Programme, the Leader of the Council said that there was an energetic programme of projects to benefit the community and the environment. He cited the town centre improvements and the past provision of important community facilities at Princes Park and the Stone Lodge Rugby Club, which was being well used by local groups. He noted the ongoing success of the Council's New Build housing programme and acquisitions of properties for social housing and noted the fall in the numbers of people in temporary accommodation from the height of the pandemic and the Council's commitment to continue to provide support to people in this situation. He thanked Councillor Hammock and Councillor Lloyd for their continuing oversight of the Council's investments and financial holdings. He also thanked Council staff for their support through difficult times and announced that there would be a 2% pay award to reflect the hard work that had been carried out. Finally he undertook to continue to work with all Members of the Council and across all political groups in the interests of the people of Dartford.

The Deputy Leader of the Council seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak until later in the debate.

The motion was then opened for debate.

A Member questioned whether a pay increase of 2% was sufficient when the current rate of inflation was 5% and that this was expected to increase to 7% during 2022. He felt that this was a pay cut in real terms and scant reward for dedicated staff who had kept services running. Another Member felt that no additional money had been included in the budget to improve community safety for women and another Member deplored the lack of funding for introducing CCTV in Swanscombe.

A Member also commented on the planned increase of £5 for the collection of bulky waste, which he did not feel would result in an increase in fly tipping (as had been suggested at the recent Cabinet Advisory Panel meeting). He also noted that the Council's reserves had increased to £61M and felt that the Council should be using this.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance said that the Council was in a good financial position due to strong leadership and financial management. Despite the lack of increase in council tax, rents and many fees and charges, officers felt that they could continue to deliver services within this budget framework. Whilst this might mean that some investments that the Council could have undertaken would not take place, a decision had been taken to focus on the needs of local people and to assist with some of the costs of living and getting back to normal trading, through such measures as freezing the charges for short-term car parks. In terms of the increase in the charge for bulk waste collection, this had last been increased in 2015 and it was appropriate to increase it at this time. The impact that this might have on fly-tipping would be reviewed in six months to ensure that there was no detriment from the increase. In terms of reserves, these were used as a tool to smooth peaks

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and troughs in income and expenditure, and whilst the Council had benefitted from past investments it was important to recognise that these could go down as well as up. He also pointed out that some of the money held by the Council in fact belonged to the Government and would need to be paid over at some stage. He commended the budget to the Council.

The Chairman of the Audit Board commended the Council's strong financial and governance arrangements and highlighted the external auditor's opinion that Dartford was a well-run financial institution.

A Member commented on the reference in the report to the outcome of the public consultation on the budget and wondered whether this could be included in future budget papers in full. She also stressed her view that more parking enforcement officers were needed to enforce parking restrictions across the borough.

The Shadow Leader of the Council thanked officers for their assistance in helping him to interpret the budget. He welcomed many aspects of the budget such as the freeze in council tax and social rents, efforts to deal with dangerous parking at schools and the environmental initiatives, but said that he had concerns about the accountability of decision making. Whilst he supported the freeze in Dartford's Council Tax he said that the overall level of Council Tax was still increasing and that this would amount to an increase of £43 per annum for a Band D property. He raised continuing concerns about the past management of special events such as the Dartford Festival and the lack of contingency plans. He also challenged why the funding from New Homes Bonus was being put into reserves when the number of people on the waiting list for housing had increased from 960 to 1,112 in the past year and expressed concern at the reference to there being 'other, smaller, earmarked reserves' and wondered what these were. He also felt that the 2% pay award to staff was insufficient and that there was a need for more investment in enforcement officers and CCTV.

A Member contrasted the Council's decision to freeze its Council Tax with the approach taken by Gravesham Borough Council whilst another Member pointed to the Government grant of £150 to people in Bands A to D in recognition of the need for more support in the current economic climate.

The Leader of the Council responded to comments made during the meeting. In terms of the pay award to staff he felt that this balanced reward and risk and was fair in current circumstances. He pointed out that the Council was a good and responsible employer but that any further increases would have to be funded from somewhere. The Council was also doing its best to support local people against cost-of-living pressures by doing its best to keep costs and council tax low. The Council also took community safety very seriously and had recently appointed a Lead Member with specific responsibility for 'Women & Girls' who would be pleased to work with opposition Members. He asked the Shadow Leader to re-think his comments about a lack of accountability in decision making and said that this was simply not the case and that the Council's processes were open, transparent, collaborative to a

degree not experienced by many authorities, and subject to scrutiny. He felt that the Shadow Leader's comments were a reflection of his frustration arising from a lack of electoral success. In terms of reserves he re-iterated that these would be used in the medium to longer term but that they would be managed prudently to ensure that balanced budgets could be delivered in future years. Addressing the increase in the charge for the collection of bulky waste, not only was this the first increase since 2015 but the new charge of £35 for 10 items compared favourably with the charges of neighbouring authorities, such as the £27 charged by Gravesham for 4 items with a £17 charge for white goods, but he also noted that fly-tippers were unlikely to respect boundaries. He pointed out that the Shadow Leader of the Council had a fundamental misunderstanding of the purpose of the New Homes Bonus. This wasn't funding for the building of new homes but funding provided for community infrastructure to support the whole community where those homes had been built.. He also pointed to the success of the Council's new build programme and provision of social and affordable housing. In terms of the reference to 'other, small, earmarked budgets' he said that there was no mystery. These were small reserves which were contained within the budget for such matters as providing central heating, wiring works, external chimney repairs, asbestos removal and many other similar matters. He repeated his wish to work together for the benefit of local people and commended the budget proposals to the General Assembly of the Council.

The budget proposals were put to the vote en-bloc and Members voted as follows:

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor A E D Barham	Councillor E H Ben Moussa
Councillor S H Brown	Councillor S N Gosine
Councillor S P Butterfill	Councillor K J Grehan
Councillor L A Canham	Councillor R A S Jones
Councillor M J Davis	Councillor V Oguntope
Councillor L H K Edie	
Councillor B Garden	
Councillor D A Hammock	
Councillor P M Harman	
Councillor G R Holt	
Councillor D E Hunnisett	
Councillor M B Kelly	
Councillor J A Kite	
Councillor A R Lloyd	
Councillor D J Mote	
Councillor D T Nicklen	
Councillor T Oliver	
Councillor Mrs J A Ozog	
Councillor E E Palmer	
Councillor R S L Perfitt	
Councillor M I Peters	
Councillor D J Reynolds	
Councillor A S Sandhu	
Councillor C J Shippam	
Councillor K Stealey	
Councillor Mrs R F Storey	

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Councillor D Swinerd Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow Councillor R J Wells The Deputy Mayor, P Cutler The Mayor, Mrs R M Currans	
TOTAL: 31	TOTAL: 5

The motion was carried and it was RESOLVED:

1. That the probable outturn and overall financial position for 2021/22, as set out in Section 6 of the report, be noted.
2. That, in the light of the probable outturn of the General Fund for 2021/22, the estimated General Fund balance of £3m at 31 March 2022 be noted, as set out in paragraph 7.6.1 of the report;
3. That the main changes to the General Fund Budget, as set out in Appendix A (ii) to the report, be noted;
4. That the Council Tax requirement of £7,171,304 for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix B (i) to the report, be approved;
5. That the Pay Policy Statement, at Appendix L to the report, be approved.
6. That an increase of 2% be applied to all salary levels and associated allowances, excluding protected pay;
7. That a 2% increase be applied to Member and Mayoral allowances and other relevant allowances for 2022/23;
8. That the level of Mayoral allowances be based on a standard rate income tax payer, and this be adjusted to reflect individual tax circumstances, as required;
9. That it be noted that the Chief Officer and Director of Corporate Services has delegated authority to agree fees payable for elections, as outlined in the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix L.
10. That the fees and charges as set out in Appendix B (ii) to the report, be with effect from 1 April 2022, be noted;
11. That it be noted that the Head of Finance has delegated authority to determine individual sums to be met from the Identified Initiative Reserve in accordance with the agreed general purpose for which it was established;

12. That it be noted that the Head of Finance has delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader, to determine any expenditure funded from the New Homes Bonus;
13. That the Community Grants budget, as set out in Appendix B (iii) to the report, be noted;
14. That the overall Housing Revenue Account Budget, at Appendix C (ii) to the report, be approved;
15. That it be noted that the rent charges relating to Housing Revenue Account properties will be kept at the 2021/22 levels for the 2022/23 year;
16. That the fees and charges relating to Housing Revenue Account properties, as set out in Appendix C (iii) to the report, be noted;
17. That it be noted that the rent charges relating to pitches at Claywood Lane Caravan Site Bean are to be kept at the 2021/22 levels for the 2022/23 year rent;
18. That the Corporate Property Maintenance and Improvement Programme, set out in Appendix E to the report, be noted;
19. That the overall Capital Programme and budget be agreed and the detail noted as set out in Appendices D (i) and D (ii) to the report;
20. That the Medium Term Financial Plan shown at Appendix B (iv) to the report be noted;
21. That the Capital Strategy shown at Appendix D (iii), Treasury Management Strategy Statement shown at Appendix D (v), and the Investment Strategy at Appendix D(iv) to the report, be approved, and that the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) be granted delegated authority to borrow for capital investment purposes, in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy, should it be in the interest of the Council to do so;
22. That it be noted that the Head of Finance is authorised to charge such sums which are currently anticipated to be met from revenue, balances or reserves, or capital accounts, to other accounts, as is deemed to be in the interest of the authority;
23. That the budget amendment rules for 2022/23, as set out in Appendix F to the report, be agreed;
24. That the special expense General Fund budget (parish precepts) as set out in Appendix H(ii) to the report, totalling £1,267,510 be noted;
25. That the requirement of major preceptors, as detailed in Appendix H(i) to the report, be noted;
26. That the financial threshold for the definition of a key decision, in accordance with Article 13.03(b) of the Constitution, be set at £500,000;

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27. That it be noted that, at its meeting on 13 December 2021, the General Assembly of the Council calculated the following amounts as its Council Tax Base for the year 2022/23 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31 B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended:

(a) £39,544.25 being the Council Tax Base, for the whole Council area.

and

(b) the aggregate of the amounts for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates, as follows:

	£
Bean Parish	551.66
Darenth Parish	1,291.10
Longfield and New Barn Parish	2,496.78
Southfleet Parish	651.30
Stone Parish	4,212.00
Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish	1,466.79
Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town	4,524.39
Wilmington Parish	2,988.86

28 That the following amounts now be calculated by the Council for the year 2022/23 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended:-

(a) £48,622,750 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the amounts set out in Section 31 A(2) of the 1992 Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.

(b) £40,183,890 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31 A(3) of the 1992 Act.

(c) £8,438,860 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with sections 31 A(4) of the 1992 Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.

(d) £213.40 being the amount at (c) above, divided by 27(a) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with section 31 B(1) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including parish precepts).

(e) £1,267,510 being the aggregate amount of all special items, i.e. the total of the parish and town council precepts, referred to in Section 34(1) of the 1992 Act.

(f) £181.35 being the amount at (d) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at (e) above by the amount at 27(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates

(g) Part of the Borough's area:

£217.73	Bean Parish
£241.53	Darenth Parish
£209.15	Longfield and New Barn Parish
£195.13	Southfleet Parish
£290.86	Stone Parish
£253.86	Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish
£275.84	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town
£213.55	Wilmington Parish

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 28 (f) above to the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above, divided in each case by the amount at 27 (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(h) That the following amounts, given by multiplying the amounts at 28(f) and 28(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, be the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands:

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL (BUDGET)

MONDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2022

Bean Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
145.15	169.35	193.54	217.73	266.11	314.5	362.88	435.46

Darenth Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
161.02	187.86	214.69	241.53	295.20	348.88	402.55	483.06

Longfield and New Barn Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
139.43	162.67	185.91	209.15	255.63	302.11	348.58	418.3

Southfleet Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
130.09	151.77	173.45	195.13	238.49	281.85	325.22	390.26

Stone Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
193.91	226.22	258.54	290.86	355.50	420.13	484.77	581.72

Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
169.24	197.45	225.65	253.86	310.27	366.69	423.1	507.72

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
183.89	214.54	245.19	275.84	337.14	398.44	459.73	551.68

Wilmington Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
142.37	166.09	189.82	213.55	261.01	308.46	355.92	427.1

Unparished Parts of the Borough

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
120.90	141.05	161.20	181.35	221.65	261.95	302.25	362.70

29. That it be noted that, for the year 2022/23, the major precepting authorities have 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 dwellings shown below:-

Precepting Authorities

Kent County Council – including social care precept

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
974.16	1136.52	1298.88	1461.24	1785.96	2110.68	2435.40	2922.48

Kent Police and Crime Commissioner

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
152.10	177.45	202.80	228.15	278.85	329.55	380.25	456.30

Kent Fire and Rescue

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
54.90	64.05	73.20	82.35	100.65	118.95	137.25	164.70

30. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 28(h) and 29 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts of Council Tax for the year 2022/23 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below: on the following page.

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL (BUDGET)

MONDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2022

Bean Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,326.31	1,547.37	1,768.42	1,989.47	2,431.57	2,873.68	3,315.78	3,978.94

Darenth Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,342.18	1,565.88	1,789.57	2,013.27	2,460.66	2,908.06	3,355.45	4,026.54

Longfield and New Barn Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,320.59	1,540.69	1,760.79	1,980.89	2,421.09	2,861.29	3,301.48	3,961.78

Southfleet Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,311.25	1,529.79	1,748.33	1,966.87	2,403.95	2,841.03	3,278.12	3,933.74

Stone Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,375.07	1,604.24	1,833.42	2,062.60	2,520.96	2,979.31	3,437.67	4,125.20

Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,350.40	1,575.47	1,800.53	2,025.60	2,475.73	2,925.87	3,376.00	4,051.20

Swanscombe and GreenhitheTown

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,365.05	1,592.56	1,820.07	2,047.58	2,502.60	2,957.62	3,412.63	4,095.16

Wilmington Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,323.53	1,544.11	1,764.70	1,985.29	2,426.47	2,867.64	3,308.82	3,970.58

Unparished Parts of the Borough

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1,302.06	1,519.07	1,736.08	1,953.09	2,387.11	2,821.13	3,255.15	3,906.18

31. That Members should be invited to confirm at the beginning of each civic year whether they wish to receive documents in printed form but otherwise these will be provided electronically by default. Members can elect to receive documents in traditional printed form at any time on request even if a Member has previously expressed a preference for electronic delivery.

The meeting closed at 8.28 pm

MAYOR

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS