

## Ashford Borough Council

### Decisions taken by the Cabinet on 27 February 2020

| Minute No | Topic                  | Decision  |
|-----------|------------------------|---|
| 314       | Revenue Budget 2020/21 | <p>The report presented the final Draft 2020/21 Budget which would be recommended to the Full Council for approval. The Budget had been built with a lack of certainty over long term Government Funding as the Government's fair funding and spending review had been deferred to 2020/21, resulting in a one year settlement only. There was also some economic risk as the UK left the European Union and entered the transitional stage of the arrangement. The budget had also been built to support the current activities of the Council and represented the final year of the 2015-2020 Corporate Plan. The report also covered the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which included an increase in rents of CPI + 1% and reflected the business plan presented to the Cabinet in October as well as a number of strategies and framework documents for consideration.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Finance and IT introduced the report and directed Members' attention to the tabled paper which included an amendment to the net budget requirement figure in recommendation (ii), and detailed the comments of those who had responded to the budget consultation. He also drew particular attention to the tables on pages 52 and 54 of the report. He advised that the budget proposed a £5.00 rise in the Borough's annual Council Tax requirement which would still comfortably leave Ashford as the lowest of any Kent District. He thanked all involved in putting the budget together which included huge amounts of Officer hard work, formal scrutiny and consultation.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Housing commented on the HRA which had again set an ambitious programme for the coming year. He was pleased to see the proposed increase in rents of CPI + 1% as these had been frozen for a number of years and the increase would assist the HRA greatly.</p> |

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|  |  | <p><b>Resolved:</b></p> <p><b>That</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i) the budget context be noted.</b></li> <li><b>(ii) the Chief Finance Officer be delegated powers to establish local discounts in Business Rates in accordance with government policy.</b></li> <li><b>(iii) the summary of reserves at Table 6 and Appendix C of the report be noted.</b></li> <li><b>(iv) the Equality Impact Assessment at Appendix E to the report be noted.</b></li> <li><b>(v) the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2020/21 be approved.</b></li> <li><b>(vi) the estimated <u>average</u> rent increase of CPI + 1% (2.7%), in accordance with government guidance, be approved, and that rent setting for the future continues to follow government guidelines.</b></li> <li><b>(vii) the Capital Plan 2019/20 to 2022/23 at Appendix G to the report be approved.</b></li> <li><b>(viii) the Risk Based Verification policy, as outlined in Appendix L to the report, be approved.</b></li> <li><b>(ix) the ABC Exceptional Circumstances Policy, as outlined in Appendix M to the report, be approved.</b></li> <li><b>(x) the advice from the Chief Financial Officer concerning the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves, at Appendix N to the report, be noted.</b></li> </ul> |
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|  |  | <p><b>Recommended:</b></p> <p><b>That</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i) the Revenue Budget 2020/21, including the net budget requirement of £15,967,490 (excluding Parish Precepts), be approved.</b></li> <li><b>(ii) the level of Discretionary Fees to be levied from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 (as set out in Appendix D to the report) be approved.</b></li> <li><b>(iii) all profit from garage sales to the general fund be earmarked to enable investment and renovation of existing let sites.</b></li> <li><b>(iv) Band D Council Tax be set at £167.50.</b></li> <li><b>(v) the 2020/21 Capital Strategy (as set out in Appendix H to the report) be approved.</b></li> <li><b>(vi) the MRP Policy (as set out in Appendix I to the report), the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (at Appendix J to the report) and the Investment Strategy (at Appendix K to the report), be approved.</b></li> </ul> |
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