

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 6 March 2024

MINUTE OF MEETING OF ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

Sederunt:

Lord Provost David Cameron, Chairperson;
Depute Provost Steve Delaney; and

COUNCILLORS

GILLIAN AL-SAMARAI
NURUL HOQUE ALI
CHRISTIAN ALLARD
ALISON ALPHONSE
KATE BLAKE
JENNIFER BONSELL
MARIE BOULTON
DESMOND BOUSE
RICHARD BROOKS
HAZEL CAMERON
DONNA CLARK
JOHN COOKE
NEIL COPLAND
WILLIAM CORMIE
BARNEY CROCKETT
SARAH CROSS
DEREK DAVIDSON
LEE FAIRFULL
EMMA FARQUHAR
GORDON GRAHAM
ROSS GRANT
MARTIN GREIG

DELL HENRICKSON
RYAN HOUGHTON
MICHAEL HUTCHISON
MICHAEL KUSZNIR
GRAEME LAWRENCE
SANDRA MACDONALD
NEIL MacGREGOR
ALEXANDER McLELLAN
KEN McLEOD
CIARAN McRAE
M. TAUQEER MALIK
DUNCAN MASSEY
JESSICA MENNIE
ALEX NICOLL
MIRANDA RADLEY
MRS JENNIFER STEWART
KAIRIN VAN SWEEDEN
LYNN THOMSON
DEENA TISSERA
SIMON WATSON
and
IAN YUILL

Lord Provost David Cameron, in the Chair.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. (A) The Lord Provost welcomed a group of postgraduate students and their lecturer from the University of Aberdeen, who were in attendance in the public gallery and observing the meeting as part of their studies.

(B) The Lord Provost welcomed Fiona Mitchelhill to her first Council meeting since her appointment as Chief Officer of the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership and wished her well in the role.

DEPUTATIONS

2. Councillor Malik moved as a procedural motion, seconded by Councillor Tissera:-

That the Council suspend Standing Order 14.5.3 in order to hear the deputation from Aberdeen Trades Union Council.

On a division, there voted:-

For the procedural motion (21) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Boulton, Brooks, Crockett, Cross, Farquhar, Graham, Grant, Houghton, Kuszniir, Lawrence, Macdonald, McLeod, Malik, Massey, Mrs Stewart, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Against the procedural motion (22) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Davidson, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, MacGregor, McLellan, McRae, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley and Yuill.

Declined to vote (1) - Councillor van Sweeden.

Absent from the division (1) - Councillor Fairfull.

The Council resolved:-

to reject the procedural motion.

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024/25 - COM/24/060

3. The Council had before it a report by the Chief Officer - Data & Insights which presented the Council Delivery Plan for 2024/25.

The report recommended:-

that the Council -

(a) note the content of the Council Delivery Plan 2024/25;

(b) instruct the Chief Executive to realign any of the delivery commitments set out in the Plan that may be required, as a result of any potential Council budget decisions, to meet Council's instructions; and

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- (c) instruct all Chief Officers to report performance improvement priorities for 2024/25 and progress towards improvement through the arrangements set out within the Council's Performance Management Framework.

Councillor Yuill moved, seconded by Councillor Allard:-
That the Council approve the recommendations.

Councillor Malik moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Tissera:-
That the Council -

- (1) note the content of the Council Delivery Plan 2024/25;
- (2) note the Accounts Commission overview of local government published in May 2023 as outlined in the report "*Demand and workforce pressures have been deepening after the pandemic and funding is forecast to reduce in real terms ... Councils need to radically rethink how they can work together, and with local partners, to provide services and meet wider ambitions to tackle climate change, child poverty and inequalities*". Therefore, agree that if the Council is actually serious about poverty and the causes of poverty it must scrap the Anti-Poverty Committee and encourage partners through Community Planning Aberdeen working alongside the Council to strengthen prevention and early intervention, particularly focusing on those communities in most need, and targeting: Poverty, Homelessness, Net Zero and Partnership working;
- (3) agree that the budget process has missed a golden opportunity to highlight how the prevention and intervention strategy could have seriously shaped citizens lives for the better, but decided that a policy of offering up cuts without meaningful extract on what their impact meant to the prevention and intervention strategy, confirms the Administration are not serious or understand the concept of prevention and intervention on the budget; and
- (4) instruct the Chief Executive to bring forward at next year's budget any impact on the prevention and intervention strategy from budget options proposed by officers for 2025/26.

During the course of summing up, Councillor Yuill advised that he had a connection in relation to the matter by virtue of his appointment by the Council to the Board of NHS Grampian, however having applied the objective test he did not consider that had had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (32) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Boulton, Bouse, Brooks, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Cross, Davidson, Farquhar, Greig, Henrickson, Houghton, Hutchison, Kuszniir, MacGregor, McLellan, McLeod, McRae, Massey, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley, Mrs Stewart, van Sweeden and Yuill.

For the amendment (12) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Crockett, Graham, Grant, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Absent from the division (1) - Councillor Fairfull.

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The Council resolved:-

to adopt the motion.

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 TO 2028/29 - RES/24/061

4. (A) The Council had before it a report by the Chief Officer - Finance which provided the Council with information on both the revenue budget for 2024/25 to 2028/29 in order that approved budgets and the Council Tax rate for main and second homes could be set for the year commencing 1 April 2024. In addition, following devolution of Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief to Local Government, the report noted that the Council must decide on an Empty Property Relief Scheme that would apply for the year ahead.

The report recommended:-

that the Council -

Balance Sheet

- (1) note the projected balance sheet position including the reserves as at 31 March 2024, shown at Appendix 1;
- (2) note the financial resilience of the Council continues to be stretched by factors, such as pay award, price inflation and funding settlement, which remain outwith the control of the Council;
- (3) note that the latest Risk Appetite Statement has been approved and now reflects a cautious appetite for longer term capital and financial investment, and remains averse to risks associated with impairing financial stewardship, internal controls, and financial sustainability;
- (4) give due regard to the Council's Financial Resilience Framework measures, included at Appendix 2, and Prudential Indicators, at Appendix 3, when setting Council Tax and the Revenue and Capital budgets;
- (5) approve the Prudential Indicators as attached at Appendix 3 and agree to limit the annual Cost of Financing Capital at 12% of projected Net Revenue;
- (6) approve the General Fund Capital Programme as attached at Appendix 4;
- (7) consider the capital projects described in Appendix 5, which were referred to the General Fund Capital Programme;
- (8) approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 6;
- (9) approve the retention of the Service Concession Reserve to support the commitment to no compulsory redundancies, as a funding source for continued use of the voluntary severance/early retirement scheme (VSER);
- (10) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to build a long term outlook model for the Council and submit it, alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy, to the Council by the end of September 2024;

Medium-Term Financial Projections

- (11) note the forecast medium-term financial projection for the period ending 31 March 2029 as shown in paragraph 5.16;
- (12) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of September 2024 in line with the requirements of the budget protocol;

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Risks

- (13) note that pay negotiations for financial year 2024/25 are not concluded and therefore remain uncertain;
- (14) note the ongoing exposure that the local government sector has to inflation, with 'very high' exposure applying to a number of procurement frameworks relevant to the Council;
- (15) note that high inflation has increased the cost of bond repayments, increasing the forecast cost of borrowing for the Council;
- (16) note the extent of contingent liabilities described in Appendix 13;
- (17) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance, to monitor budget planning assumptions on pay award, supply chain risk and cost of borrowing and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee of any in year changes required via Financial Performance Quarter 1 report;
- (18) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee, as part of the Financial Performance Quarter 1 report, on any action required;

Annual Revenue Budget Recommendations

- (19) note, that on a like for like basis, the 2024/25 Local Government settlement has resulted in the Council receiving a 1.1% reduction (£4.9m) to revenue funding being awarded from the current year;
- (20) note that the conditions outlined by the Scottish Government within the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25 are met by the proposals set out in the report;
- (21) note that the General Fund budget has £4m of in-year contingencies included to provide for unknown risks that may arise during the year, this represents only 0.7% of the net budget;
- (22) approve the savings and redesign of Council services to address demand, and to set at least a balanced budget for financial year 2024/25, having due regard to the:
 - a) Budget Model as contained in paragraph 5.16 that identifies a funding shortfall of £25.3m for 2024/25;
 - b) Impact of service redesign on services and fees and charges described in Appendix 8;
 - c) Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement, that sets out the Council should maintain uncommitted General Fund balances of between a minimum of £12m and £34m;
 - d) Savings options and cost of implementation put forward in Appendix 8 and Fees and Charges proposals in Appendix 9;
 - e) Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (Cosla) commitment to 1% of the budget being subject to participatory budgeting;
 - f) Revenue items referred to the budget process, as shown in Appendix 10;
 - g) Council's Risk Appetite Statement; and
 - h) Public Sector Equality Duty and the Integrated impact assessments provided;
- (23) approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as shown in Appendix 11;

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- (24) note the baseline information provided in Appendix 7 on the three tier prevention model for our group structure and that officers will continue to develop this work through reporting to the ALEO Assurance Hub;
- Annual Revenue Budget - Aberdeen City Council Group**
- (25) approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2024/25 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraph 6.10, and to note that it will be for the IJB itself to determine how it will balance its budget;
- (26) approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 9;
- (27) approve the level of funding for the Council's other group entities and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs), in 2024/25 with reference to paragraph 6.10; and note that it will be for the ALEOs themselves to determine how they will balance their budgets;
- (28) note the baseline information provided on the three tier early intervention and prevention model for our group structure and continue to develop this through reporting to the ALEO Assurance Hub;
- (29) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £902,000 to Sport Aberdeen and £221,934 to VSA, both being nominated charities of NYOP;
- (30) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund.
- Taxation Recommendations**
- (31) note the offer from the Scottish Government of a grant of £6.978m to freeze the Council Tax rate at the 2023/24 level. In isolation, the value of the grant is equivalent to a 5% increase in the Council Tax rate for 2024/25, noting that the DFM has confirmed in writing to COSLA that funding provided in 2024-25 for the purposes of freezing Council Tax, will be baselined into the General Revenue Grant in future years for those councils which freeze their Council Tax;
- (32) note that, subject to the impact of the UK Spring Budget on the Scottish Budget 2024/25, an additional sum of £62.7m has been offered by the Scottish Government to Local Authorities that freeze their Council Tax, this could result in an additional £2m of grant funding for the Council, but this remains conditional and uncertain as the UK Spring Budget will only be published on 6 March 2024;
- (33) note that by accepting a grant instead of raising the Council Tax rate it limits the value of income that can be generated for the Council in 2024/25 and as it does not increase the Council Tax base the future level of income that could be generated will be lower. On that basis reject the grant funding and approve a Band D equivalent Council Tax rate of £1,608.71 (8% increase), with effect from 1 April 2024, noting this will increase income by c.£4m in 2024/25, recurring, over and above the value of the grant on offer to freeze Council Tax referred to at (31) above;
- (34) note that the Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2023 permits a premium of up to 100% (i.e. 200% charged for the property) to be added in respect of Second Homes, and this comes into force on 1 April 2024. Therefore approve the introduction of a premium for those with Second Homes, implementing the full 100% premium to the 100% charge currently applied;

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- (35) impose and levy Council Tax assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
- (36) note that the Council implements revisions to the national Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) scheme as defined by the Scottish Government within the relevant legislation and Finance Circulars, with effect from 1 April 2024;
- (37) approve an Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1 April 2024, as set out in paragraphs 5.28 to 5.30;
- (38) impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable; and **Integrated Impact Assessments**
- (39) consider the IIAs prepared by officers which reflect the findings from Phase 1 and 2 of the public engagement on the budget and Phase 3 involving targeted consultation with individuals and those that represented people with protected characteristics, and the requirements under section 149 of the Equality Act, as set out in the Legal Implications section, which should be applied in respect of a balanced budget for the year 2024/25.

(B) The Council also had before it a report by the Chief Officer - Finance which provided details of the draft Common Good budget for 2024/25 to enable the Council to approve a final budget that would take effect on 1 April 2024.

The report recommended:-

that the Council -

- (a) approve the Common Good budget for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 1;
- (b) consider and decide on each of the new requests for funding detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, taking account of the affordable funding available for 2024/25; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to integrate the Common Good Budget setting into the General Fund Budget for 2025/26.

(C) The Council also had before it a report by the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning which sought approval for the Council Carbon Budget for the financial year 2024/25 to support the Council Climate Change Plan 2021-25.

The report recommended:-

that the Council -

- (a) note the Carbon Budget forecast targets to be achieved up to 2029/30;
- (b) agree to set the Council's target of maximum carbon emissions for 2024/25 at 24,113 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e);
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning following consultation with the Chief Officer - Data and Insights, to establish a Council Carbon Data Forum, to review and mature the Council's approach to carbon data; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Capital, to develop methodologies for estimating and assessing carbon impacts; and report on the processes in the annual Climate Change report to Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

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At this juncture, the Lord Provost explained that this was the first Council budget meeting since the introduction of the Budget Protocol and the Council therefore agreed to suspend Standing Order 29.2 to enable all budgets to be considered.

Councillor McLellan moved, seconded by Councillor Yuill:-

That the Council -

Working in Partnership for Aberdeen

Supporting people with the cost of living

- (1) approve a freeze for the Council tax rate in 2024/25, with a Band D equivalent Council tax rate of £1,489.55 (0% increase), effective from 1 April 2024;
- (2) acknowledge the provision of £1million to mitigate against the ongoing cost of living crisis and instruct the Director of Corporate Services to report to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee with options for how the Council could use the £1million to address poverty in the city, with the Committee required to make recommendations to the Finance and Resources Committee for approval;
- (3) acknowledge the continued investment in anti-poverty initiatives, including the ongoing enhanced funding for the Financial Inclusion Team who play a vital role in helping our citizens ensure they are receiving all the financial help to which they are entitled;
- (4) acknowledge its continued support for the Fairer Aberdeen Fund by providing it with £1.54million to distribute to third sector organisations and projects, which provides vital support to communities to tackle poverty and inequality in priority areas, with outcomes aligned to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Locality Plans;
- (5) acknowledge the freeze to school meals provided for 2024/25;

A City of Opportunity

- (6) note that the innovative family support model in children's social care is playing a key part in tackling health inequalities, improving the physical and mental wellbeing of young people;
- (7) welcome the expansion of learning opportunities for young people through joint working with universities, further education partners and the private sector so that schools offer a greater diversity learning opportunities;
- (8) welcome the continuation of Easter, Summer and Autumn in the City as effective learning experiences that offer a wide range of activities for young people;
- (9) acknowledge Aberdeen City Council provides 1,140 hours for all 3 and 4 year olds, and eligible 2 year olds, funded by the Scottish Government;
- (10) acknowledge the Council's continued commitment to equal access to music tuition across the city, promoting talent in music;
- (11) welcome the School Estate Plan, based on need and condition, and in particular welcome the commitment to build a new Hazlehead Academy, the building of a new school building for Riverbank Primary, the commitment to create a refurbished and expanded home for St Peter's Primary and the long overdue investment in Victorian school buildings;

A Vibrant City

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- (12) instruct the Director of City Regeneration and Environment to proceed with an Outline Business Case for an urban park at Queen Street, with active travel routes linking to the proposed wider city centre cycle network, at the earliest opportunity and report subsequent decisions and progress through the Finance and Resources Committee;
- (13) instruct the Director of City Regeneration and Environment to proceed with a Full Business Case to refurbish the Castlegate, with active travel routes linking the proposed wider city centre cycle network, at the earliest opportunity noting the funds allocated as per the Non Housing Capital Programme, and report subsequent decisions and progress through the Finance and Resources Committee;
- (14) instruct the Director of City Regeneration and Environment to end the funding for the City Centre Manager on 31 March 2024, and to create a City Centre Manager post within the Council, and recruit to the post as soon as possible;
- (15) instruct the Director of City Regeneration and Environment to implement £1 off-street parking fees after 5pm, and to run this for six months before reporting the impact on the city centre to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee;
- (16) recognise the importance of the arts and therefore agree to provide Aberdeen Performing Arts (APA) with their £710,000 core grant as outlined, and a further £175,000 to support festivals such as Granite Noir, as per Appendix 4 circulated separately;
- (17) agree to continue to support SPECTRA - Scotland's Festival of Light - noting that Aberdeen City Council had been awarded £275,000 from the Shared Prosperity Fund to support the delivery of SPECTRA;
- (18) agree the allocation of £50,000 from the Common Good to support the delivery of phase 2 of the Denis Law Legacy trail, as per Appendix 6 circulated separately;
- (19) welcome the community led initiative to secure the long term future of the Belmont Cinema and acknowledge the award of £50,000 grant as per Appendix 6 and instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord, in consultation with the Chief Officer - City Development and Regeneration to continue dialogue with the group to bring forward a business case for the future operation of the facility, committing £125,000 in principle from the Condition & Suitability capital budget;

A greener and more sustainable city

- (20) agree to provide a free garden waste collection service from 1 September 2024 for households' first garden/food waste wheelie bin, noting that a charge of £30 per annum would continue for households with additional garden/food waste wheelie bins;
- (21) instruct the Director of City Regeneration and Environment to report to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee on how the Council could encourage and support the expansion of home composting of garden waste;
- (22) instruct the Director of City Regeneration and Environment in conjunction with the Director of Corporate Services to identify projects to improve air quality in the city centre suitable for any surplus income generated from the implementation of the Low Emission Zone;

Greener Transport, Safer Streets, Real Choices

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- (23) agree that the Kingswells supported bus service be funded from the Bus Lane Enforcement (BLE) fund for 2024/25 and in future years;
 - (24) instruct the Director of Corporate Services, with regard to the B999 Shielhill Road Junction improvements, to ensure necessary legal matters are concluded as soon as possible, and instruct the Director of City Regeneration and Environment to bring forward the delivery of the project where possible;
 - (25) reaffirm its commitment to expanding 20mph speed limits in residential communities and other areas where there is community support, noting the funding provided within the General Fund Capital Programme;
 - (26) welcome the investment of an additional £3million in 2024/25 in resurfacing, repairing and improving the standards of Aberdeen's roads and pavements as part of the multi-year programme;
 - (27) note the current road restrictions at Greyhope Road and instruct the Chief Officer - Operations to carry out mitigation works to ensure continued access to the Torry Battery area, and to fund these works from the Planned Renewal & Replacement of Roads Infrastructure budget within the General Fund Capital Programme;
- An Active City**
- (28) agree an increase to Sport Aberdeen's funding for 2024/25, to incorporate the operating costs of Bucksburn Swimming Pool, ensuring citizens would continue to engage in activities which promote health and wellbeing as per Appendix 4 circulated separately;
- A Prosperous City**
- (29) instruct the Director of City Regeneration and Environment to ensure there are Planning, Building Standards and Conservation Officers with specific responsibility for the city centre to support the reuse of shops and upper floors of Union Street;
 - (30) note the General Fund Capital Programme included £150,000 in capital grants to Aberdeen City Heritage Trust to support a 3-year programme of projects targeted at the west end of Union Street, enabled by a capital investment of £450,000 which would complement the work ongoing through the Historic Places Programme on the east end of Union Street;
- Empowering Aberdeen's Communities**
- (31) instruct the Director of Families and Communities to increase the funding to the Leased Community Centres by £70,000 for 2024/25, which represented an overall increase of 62.5% since 2022/23 as part of the commitment to double funding to ensure they continue to deliver the important services and activities they provide;
- A Transparent, Accessible and Accountable City**
- (32) instruct the Chief Executive to bring forward proposed changes to the budget protocol confirming the consultation requirements for savings options which may breach Scottish Government grant conditions, breach legislation or guidance within the budget protocol with a lessons learned report submitted to the April meeting of Council;
 - (33) instruct the Chief Executive to continue to engage third sector, ALEOs, public sector partners, Aberdeen Youth Movement, school students and Higher and Further Education students, as part of the budget consultation moving forward;

Balance Sheet Recommendations

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- (34) having given due regard to the Financial Resilience Framework, the Prudential Indicators and Risk Appetite Statement, approve the General Fund Capital Programme as at Appendix 1 circulated separately;
 - (35) approve the Prudential Indicators as at Appendix 2 circulated separately;
 - (36) approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 6 of the report;
 - (37) approve the use of the Service Concessions Reserve to the value of £30million for the Capital Programme in 2023/24;
 - (38) approve the use of the remaining Service Concession Reserve to support the commitment to no compulsory redundancies, as a funding source for continued use of the voluntary severance/early retirement scheme (VSER);
 - (39) approve an annual cap on capital funding costs of 12% of General Fund Net Expenditure;
 - (40) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to build a long-term outlook model for the Council and submit it, alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy, to the Council by the end of September 2024;
- Medium-Term Financial Projections**
- (41) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of September 2024 in line with the requirements of the Budget Protocol;
- Risks**
- (42) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to monitor budget planning assumptions on pay award, supply chain risk and cost of borrowing and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee of any in year changes required via Financial Performance Quarter 1 report;
 - (43) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective;
- Revenue Budget Recommendations**
- (44) having due regard to the contents of the report and appendices and taken advice from the Chief Officer - Finance in relation to the use of non-recurring funding, specifically in respect of the use of Reserves; and had due regard to protected characteristics and how the authority could reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage in terms of the Equality Act 2010, approve the use of various savings options to set at least a balanced budget for financial year 2024/25 as detailed in Appendices 3, 5 and 7 circulated separately;
 - (45) approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as described in Appendix 11 of the report, subject to any amendments approved and included in (44) above, noting that the Chief Officer - Finance had confirmed, as far as possible, that the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards being implemented were consistent with the draft budget 2024/25;
 - (46) approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2024/25 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraph 6.10 of the report, and as shown in Appendix 4 circulated separately, noting that it would be for the IJB itself to determine how it would balance its budget;

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- (47) approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 5 circulated separately;
- (48) approve the level of funding for the Council's other group entities and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) in 2024/25 as shown in Appendix 4 circulated separately;
- (49) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £1,203,052 to Sport Aberdeen, being the nominated charity of NYOP;
- (50) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund;
- (51) approve if additional General Revenue Grant was received from the Scottish Government following the UK Spring Statement on 6 March 2024, that this would be used to replenish Earmarked Reserves, used to balance the 2024/25 General Fund budget;
- (52) having received permission from Transport Scotland and Scottish Ministers on 29 February 2024, to instruct the Chief Officer - Operations to implement an increase in the Bus Lane Enforcement Charge Notice from £60 to £100;

Taxation Recommendations

- (53) in accordance with the powers provided by the Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2023, approve the introduction of a premium on Second Homes, implementing the full 100% premium to the 100% charge currently applied to second homes, effective from 1 April 2024;
- (54) impose and levy Council tax assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
- (55) approve the Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1 April 2024, as set out in Appendix 3 circulated separately;
- (56) impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable;

Integrated Impact Assessments

- (57) consider and note the Integrated Impact Assessments as per Appendix 7 circulated separately, prepared in support of the decisions taken by the Council in approving the General Fund and Common Good budgets for 2024/25;

Further resolutions

- (58) instruct the Chief Executive to continue to seek external funding for the delivery of long-term objectives for the Council's infrastructure/capital plans, including but not limited to the City Centre and Beach Masterplans, the school estate, active travel network(s) and Net Zero;
- (59) acknowledge that a number of staff now work flexibly and from home, and fewer desks are occupied in the Council operational estate. Therefore to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out a review of all Aberdeen City Council assets, including but not limited to Marischal College and the Town House, with a view to rationalising space used by

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- the Council and maximising alternative uses for the space identified income generating opportunities;
- (60) instruct officers to engage with all Governments, relevant regulatory and professional bodies, working groups with regard to RAAC;
- Common Good**
- (61) approve the Common Good budget for 2024/25 as detailed in the Common Good budget report, modified as detailed in Appendix 6 circulated separately;
- (62) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to carry out a review of the Common Good budget, and the grant application criteria, and report to the Finance and Resources Committee by September 2024;
- (63) note that in making grant funding available to external organisations, all payments of such funding were subject to the Chief Officer - Finance being satisfied that any necessary planning or other consents had been obtained and that such grant awards were managed in accordance with the Following the Public Pound guidance;
- Carbon Budget**
- (64) agree to set the Council's target of maximum carbon emissions for 2024/25 at 24,113 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e);
- (65) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Data Insights, to establish a Council Carbon Data Forum, to review and mature the Council's approach to carbon data; and
- (66) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Capital, to develop methodologies for estimating and assessing carbon impacts; and to report on the processes in the annual Climate Change Report to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

(Appendices associated with the motion are available [here](#))

Councillor Malik moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Blake:-

That the Council -

- (1) note the content of the reports and appendices;
- (2) agree SNP austerity cuts are hurting the citizens of Aberdeen, noting recommendation (20) which confirms the 2024/25 Local Government settlement has resulted in the Council receiving £4.9m less in revenue funding this year compared to last year;
- (3) agree the Scottish Government has absolutely no regard for Councils by agreeing the Verity Agreement then proceeding to ignore the Verity Agreement by announcing a Council Tax freeze without consultation with COSLA despite having no powers to implement same;
- (4) agree the Prevention and Intervention agenda is the way forward for the Council, but cuts have been tabled with no thought to the implication for Prevention and Intervention;
- (5) agree with the head of Scotland's leading housing and homeless charity Shelter that our First Minister lacks credibility when it comes to child poverty given his Scottish Budget condemns 10,000 children to lives trapped in homelessness;
- (6) note the UK Government has offered to meet directly with Scottish Councillors to discuss the UK Government bypassing SNP ministers to

Council Meeting, Wednesday, 6 March 2024

ensure Barnett Consequentials go straight to Scotland's local councils. Agree that this Council should take UK Government up on this offer and discuss how best Council can receive more money even if it is direct from Westminster;

- (7) note the Water charges are due to rise by around 8.8% following Scottish Government approval meaning citizens will see an increase in their Council Tax bills;
- (8) agree the "cost of living crisis" is not helped by SNP mismanagement of our economy;
- (9) agree Councils have limited power to help with the "cost of living crisis" when the SNP Scottish Government impose punitive punishments on Councils who decide to exercise their democratic duty in imposing Council Tax increases;
- (10) agree Capital spend must be controlled after many successful years, which delivered:-
 - 8 new schools, Milltimber, Countesswells, Greyhope, Orchard Brae, Stoneywood, Tillydrone, Brimmond Primary Schools plus Lochside Academy
 - TECA
 - Union Terrace Gardens
 - 2,000 Council Homes
 - The new Market
 - Upgrade to Art Gallery
 - Upgrade to Music Hall
 - Provost Skene House
 - Marischal Square
 - Energy from Waste Plant
 - Tillydrone Community Hub
 - £75m for AWPR
 - Acquired St Joseph's Primary School
 - Burnside Social Care facilities;
- (11) therefore, agree that the Chief Officer - Finance bring forward a report to the Finance and Resources Committee, highlighting total Capital Spend required for all City Centre and Beach Masterplan proposals in order that these can be assessed and agreed or otherwise showing benefits of total package rather than what we currently have which is piecemeal;
- (12) agree that Northfield Academy is past its sell by date and as a regeneration area deserves a new purpose-built secondary academy including community facilities therefore instruct the Chief Executive to bring forward a report to the Council on the best way to bring forward proposals to build a school starting in 2025/26, including indicative funding in the capital programme to deliver this;
- (13) agree to re-open all 6 Libraries closed by the SNP following last year's budget;
- (14) agree to provide Aberdeen Cyrenians with £250,000 to help them and VSA Aberdeen deliver a fuel poverty scheme for citizens in Aberdeen who are suffering with Fuel poverty based on the Fuel Poverty Foundation;

Balance Sheet Recommendations

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- (15) note the projected balance sheet position including the reserves as at 31 March 2024, shown at Appendix 1 of the budget report;
- (16) note the financial resilience of the Council continues to be stretched by factors, such as pay award, price inflation and funding settlement, which remain outwith the control of the Council;
- (17) note that the latest Risk Appetite Statement has been approved and now reflects a cautious appetite for longer term capital and financial investment, and remains averse to risks associated with impairing financial stewardship, internal controls, and financial sustainability;
- (18) give due regard to the Council's Financial Resilience Framework measures, included at Appendix 2 of the budget report, and Prudential Indicators, when setting Council Tax and the Revenue and Capital budgets;
- (19) approve the Prudential Indicators as attached at Appendix 2 of the amendment and agree to limit the annual Cost of Financing Capital at 12% of projected Net Revenue;
- (20) approve the General Fund Capital Programme as attached at Appendix 1 of the amendment;
- (21) consider the capital projects described in Appendix 5 to the budget report which were referred to the General Fund Capital Programme and agree to defer all Capital Spend associated with these requests for one year under exception of Bucksburn pool noting recommendations (2), (3), (10), (13), (14) and (18) which will impact on Capital spend going forward;
- (22) approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 6 of the budget report;
- (23) approve the retention of the Service Concession Reserve to support the commitment to no compulsory redundancies, as a funding source for continued use of the voluntary severance/early retirement scheme (VSER);
- (24) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to build a long term outlook model for the Council and submit it, alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy, to the Council by the end of September 2024;

Medium-term Financial Projections

- (25) note the forecast medium-term financial projection for the period ending 31 March 2029 as shown in paragraph 5.16;
- (26) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of September 2024 in line with the requirements of the budget protocol;

Risks

- (27) note that pay negotiations for financial year 2024/25 are not concluded and therefore remain uncertain;
- (28) note the ongoing exposure that the local government sector has to inflation, with 'very high' exposure applying to a number of procurement frameworks relevant to the Council;
- (29) note that high inflation has increased the cost of bond repayments, increasing the forecast cost of borrowing for the Council, noting the cost for the SNP 3Rs Schools increase at a similar cost to the Council;
- (30) note the extent of contingent liabilities described in Appendix 13 of the budget report;
- (31) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance, to monitor budget planning assumptions on pay award, supply chain risk and cost of borrowing and to advise the

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Finance and Resources Committee of any in year changes required via Financial Performance Quarter 1 report;

- (32) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee, as part of the Financial Performance Quarter 1 report, on any action required;

Annual Revenue Budget Recommendations

- (33) note, that on a like for like basis, the 2024/25 Local Government settlement has resulted in the Council receiving a 1.1% reduction (£4.9m) to revenue funding being awarded from the current year;
- (34) note that the conditions outlined by the Scottish Government within the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25 are met by the proposals set out in the report;
- (35) note that the General Fund budget has £1m of in-year contingencies included to provide for unknown risks that may arise during the year;
- (36) approve the savings and redesign of Council services to address demand, and to set at least a balanced budget for financial year 2024/25, having due regard to the:-
- a) Budget Model as contained in paragraph 5.16 that identifies a funding shortfall of £25.3m for 2024/25;
 - b) Impact of service redesign on services and fees and charges described in Appendix 8;
 - c) Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement, that sets out the Council should maintain uncommitted General Fund balances of between a minimum of £12m and £34m;
 - d) Savings options and cost of implementation put forward in Appendix 8 and Fees and Charges proposals in Appendix 9 of the budget report;
 - e) Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (Cosla) commitment to 1% of the budget being subject to participatory budgeting;
 - f) Revenue items referred to the budget process, as shown in Appendix 10 of the budget report;
 - g) Council's Risk Appetite Statement; and
 - h) Public Sector Equality Duty and the Integrated Impact Assessments provided;
- (37) approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as shown in Appendix 11 of the budget report subject to any changes agreed in this budget;
- (38) note the baseline information provided in Appendix 7 of the budget report on the three tier prevention model for our group structure and that officers will continue to develop this work through reporting to the ALEO Assurance Hub;
- (39) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations & Protective Services to introduce a controlled parking zone at the beach;
- (40) having received permission from Transport Scotland and Scottish Ministers on 29 February 2024, instruct the Chief Officer - Operations & Protective Services to implement an increase in the Bus Lane Enforcement Charge Notice from £60 to £100;

Annual Revenue Budget Recommendations - Aberdeen City Council Group

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- (41) approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2024/25 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraph 6.10, and to note that it will be for the IJB itself to determine how it will balance its budget;
- (42) approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 5 of the amendment;
- (43) approve the level of funding for the Council's other group entities and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs), in 2024/25 as shown in Appendix 4 of the amendment; and note that it will be for the ALEOs themselves to determine how they will balance their budgets;
- (44) note the baseline information provided on the three tier early intervention and prevention model for our group structure and continue to develop this through reporting to the ALEO Assurance Hub;
- (45) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £968,000 to Sport Aberdeen and £235,052 to VSA, both being nominated charities of NYOP;
- (46) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund;

Taxation Recommendations

- (47) note the offer from the Scottish Government of a grant of £6.978m to freeze the Council Tax rate at the 2023/24 level. In isolation, the value of the grant is equivalent to a 5% increase in the Council Tax rate for 2024/25, noting that the DFM has confirmed in writing to COSLA that funding provided in 2024-25 for the purposes of freezing Council Tax, will be baselined into the General Revenue Grant in future years for those Councils which freeze their Council Tax;
- (48) note that, subject to the impact of the UK Spring Budget on the Scottish Budget 2024/25, an additional sum of £62.7m has been offered by the Scottish Government to Local Authorities that freeze their Council Tax, this could result in an additional £2m of grant funding for the Council, but this remains conditional and uncertain as the UK Spring Budget will only be published on 6 March 2024;
- (49) agree that by accepting a grant instead of raising the Council Tax rate it limits the value of income that can be generated for the Council in 2024/25 and as it does not increase the Council Tax base the future level of income that could be generated will be lower;
- (50) note that the Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2023 permits a premium of up to 100% (i.e. 200% charged for the property) to be added in respect of Second Homes, and this comes into force on 1 April 2024. Therefore approve the introduction of a premium for those with Second Homes, implementing the full 100% premium to the 100% charge currently applied;
- (51) impose and levy Council Tax assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
- (52) note that the Council implements revisions to the national Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) scheme as defined by the Scottish Government within the relevant legislation and Finance Circulars, with effect from 1 April 2024;

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- (53) approve an Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1 April 2024, as set out in Appendix 3 of the amendment;
- (54) impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable;

Integrated Impact Assessments

- (55) consider the IIAs prepared by officers which reflect the findings from Phase 1 and 2 of the public engagement on the budget and Phase 3 involving targeted consultation with individuals and those that represented people with protected characteristics, and the requirements under section 149 of the Equality Act, as set out in the Legal Implications section, which should be applied in respect of a balanced budget for the year 2024/25;

Common Good

- (56) approve the Common Good budget for 2024/25 as detailed in the Common Good budget report, modified as detailed in Appendix 6 of the amendment and refer the uncommitted balance of £131,800 to the Finance and Resources Committee;
- (57) note that in making grant funding available to external organisations, all payments of such funding are subject to the Chief Officer - Finance being satisfied that any necessary planning or other consents have been obtained and that such grant awards are managed in accordance with the Following the Public Pound guidance.

Carbon Budget

- (58) agree to set the Council's target of maximum carbon emissions for 2024/25 at 24,113 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e);
- (59) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning following consultation with Chief Officer - Data and Insights, to establish a Council Carbon Data Forum, to review and mature the Council's approach to carbon data; and
- (60) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Capital, to develop methodologies for estimating and assessing carbon impacts; and report on the processes in the annual Climate Change Report to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

(Appendices associated with Councillor Malik's amendment are available [here](#))

Councillor Houghton moved as a further amendment, seconded by Councillor Brooks:-

That the Council -

- (1) note the content of the reports and appendices;

Balance Sheet Recommendations

- (2) having given due regard to the Financial Resilience Framework, the Prudential Indicators and Risk Appetite Statement, approve the General Fund Capital Programme as attached at Appendix 1 of the amendment;
- (3) approve the Prudential Indicators as attached at Appendix 2 of the amendment;
- (4) approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 6 of the Council report;
- (5) approve an annual cap on capital financing costs, of 12% of General Fund Net Expenditure;

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- (6) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to build a long term outlook model for the Council and submit it, alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy, to the Council by the end of September 2024;
 - (7) note that there is a total of £143M in the Capital Programme for the CCMP and Beach Masterplan projects;
 - (8) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital to report back within 2 cycles to the Council with any changes required to the project construction priority list for the Beachfront to reflect the £143M project funding available;
- Medium-Term Financial Projections**
- (9) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of September 2024 in line with the requirements of the Budget Protocol;
- Risks**
- (10) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance, to monitor budget planning assumptions on pay award, supply chain risk and cost of borrowing and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee of any in year changes required via Financial Performance Quarter 1 report;
 - (11) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee, as part of the Financial Performance Quarter 1 report, on any action required;
- Revenue Budget Recommendations**
- (12) having due regard to the contents of the report and appendices and taken advice from the Chief Officer - Finance in relation to the use of non-recurring funding, specifically in respect of the use of Reserves; and had due regard to protected characteristics and how the authority could reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage in terms of the Equality Act 2010, approve the use of various savings options to set at least a balanced budget for financial year 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 3, Appendix 5 and Appendix 7 of the amendment;
 - (13) approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as described in Appendix 11 of the Council report, subject to any amendments approved and included in 4.1, noting that the Chief Officer - Finance has confirmed, as far as possible, that the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards being implemented are consistent with the draft budget for 2024/25;
 - (14) approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2024/25 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraph 6.10 of the Council report, and as shown in Appendix 4 of the amendment, noting that it will be for the IJB itself to determine how it will balance its budget;
 - (15) approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 5 of the amendment;
 - (16) approve the level of funding for the Council's other group entities and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs), in 2024/25 as shown in Appendix 4 of the amendment;
 - (17) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £981,118 to Sport Aberdeen and £221,934 to VSA, both being nominated charities of NYOP;

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- (18) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund;
- (19) approve that if additional General Revenue Grant is received from Scottish Government following the UK Spring Statement on 6 March 2024 that this will be used to replenish Earmarked Reserves, used to balance the 2024/25 General Fund budget;
- (20) instruct the Chief Executive to bring proposals for a realisation of in-year revenue saving of £3.4M by redundancy in non-statutory functions and workforce rationalisation, for Councillors to determine at the meeting of Finance and Resources Committee on 8 May 2024, with any unrealised saving to be met from unearmarked reserves;
- (21) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to bring to the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee on 8 May 2024 a report outlining options for consolidating office space used in Marischal College to understand the true capacity required daily, to recognise the significant change in working location habits and to set out steps required for marketing and leasing unused office space;
- (22) instruct the Director of Resources to report to the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee on 8 May 2024 with options to provide financial assistance to those homeowners affected by RAAC and to write to the Scottish Government requesting that the Council be a participant in the RAAC working group due to the council's high level of affected properties;
- (23) allocate £300,000 to a City Centre Safety Fund, and as part of this instruct the Chief Officer - City Growth to work in collaboration with Police Scotland to increase the active presence of police officers in the city;

Taxation Recommendations

- (24) approve a freeze for the Council Tax rate in 2024/25, with a Band D equivalent Council Tax rate of £1,489.55 (0% increase), effective from 1 April 2024;
- (25) in accordance with the powers provided by the Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2023 approve the introduction of a premium on Second Homes, implementing the full 100% premium to the 100% charge currently applied to second homes, effective from 1 April 2024;
- (26) impose and levy Council Tax assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
- (27) approve the Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1 April 2024, as set out in Appendix 3 of the amendment;
- (28) impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable;

Integrated Impact Assessments

- (29) consider and note the integrated impact assessments per Appendix 7 of the amendment, prepared in support of the decisions taken by the Conservative Group in approving the General Fund and Common Good budgets for 2024/25;

Common Good

Council Meeting, Wednesday, 6 March 2024

- (30) approve the Common Good budget for 2024/25 as detailed in the Common Good budget report, modified as detailed in Appendix 6 of the amendment;
- (31) note that in making grant funding available to external organisations, all payments of such funding are subject to the Chief Officer - Finance being satisfied that any necessary planning or other consents have been obtained and that such grant awards are managed in accordance with the Following the Public Pound guidance;
Carbon Budget
- (32) agree to set the Council's target of maximum carbon emissions for 2024/25 at 24,113 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e);
- (33) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning following consultation with Chief Officer - Data and Insights, to establish a Council Carbon Data Forum, to review and mature the Council's approach to carbon data; and
- (34) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Capital, to develop methodologies for estimating and assessing carbon impacts; and report on the processes in the annual Climate Change Report to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

(Appendices associated with Councillor Houghton's amendment are available [here](#))

Councillor Boulton moved as a further amendment, seconded by Councillor Mrs Stewart:-

That the Council:-

- (1) note the content of the report and appendices;
Balance Sheet Recommendations
- (2) having given due regard to the Financial Resilience Framework, the Prudential Indicators and Risk Appetite Statement approve the General Fund Capital Programme as attached at Appendix 1 of the amendment;
- (3) approve the Prudential Indicators as attached at Appendix 2 of the amendment;
- (4) approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves Statement for 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 6 of the Council report;
- (5) approve an annual cap on capital financing costs, of 12% of General Fund Net Expenditure;
- (6) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to build a long term outlook model for the Council and submit it, alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy, to the Council by the end of September 2024;
- (7) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital to stop the works at the Beachfront, letting no further contracts and only existing contractual obligations being met with immediate effect;
Medium-Term Financial Projections
- (8) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to refresh the Medium Term Financial Strategy and report to the Council by the end of September 2024 in line with the requirements of the Budget Protocol;
Risks
- (9) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance, to monitor budget planning assumptions on pay award, supply chain risk and cost of borrowing and to

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advise the Finance and Resources Committee of any in year changes required via Financial Performance Quarter 1 report;

- (10) instruct the Chief Officer - Capital, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Finance, to keep the Capital Programme under review from a value for money perspective and to advise the Finance and Resources Committee, as part of the Financial Performance Quarter 1 report, on any action required;

Revenue Budget Recommendations

- (11) having due regard to the content of the report and appendices and taken advice from the Chief Officer - Finance in relation to the use of non-recurring funding, specifically in respect of the use of Reserves; and had due regard to protected characteristics and how the authority could reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage in terms of the Equality Act 2010, approve the use of various savings options to set at least a balanced budget for financial year 2024/25 as detailed in Appendix 3, Appendix 5 and Appendix 7 of the amendment;
- (12) approve the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards as described in Appendix 11 of the Council report, subject to any amendments approved and included in 4.1, noting that the Chief Officer - Finance has confirmed, as far as possible, that the Commissioning Intentions and Service Standards being implemented are consistent with the draft budget for 2024/25;
- (13) approve the level of funding for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB 2024/25 to meet the conditions of the Scottish Government Financial Settlement, described in paragraph 6.10 of the Council report, and as shown in Appendix 4 of the amendment, noting that it will be for the IJB itself to determine how it will balance its budget;
- (14) approve the fees and charges for the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership IJB, as shown in Appendix 5 of the amendment;
- (15) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to give notice to the Board of Directors of NYOP Education (Aberdeen) Ltd to disburse £902,000 to Sport Aberdeen and £301,052 to VSA, both being nominated charities of NYOP;
- (16) instruct the Chief Officer - Finance to recover the full costs associated with being the Administering Authority of the North East Scotland Pension Fund from the Pension Fund;
- (17) approve that if additional General Revenue Grant is received from Scottish Government following the UK Spring Statement on 6 March 2024 that this will be used to replenish Earmarked Reserves, used to balance the 2024/25 General Fund budget;
- (18) having received permission from Transport Scotland and Scottish Ministers on 29 February 2024, instruct the Chief Officer - Operations & Protective Services to implement an increase in the Bus Lane Enforcement Charge Notice from £60 to £100;
- (19) instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Scottish Government requesting, despite increasing Council Tax for 2024/25, that they provide the Council with any additional monies distributable for the council tax freeze or Barnett consequentials.
- (20) instruct the Chief Officer - Education to consult with parents/carers over the potential to reduce the school week starting 2026/27 academic year;

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- (21) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations & Protective Services to investigate the opportunity to take on apprentices in our environmental team which would provide succession planning but also allow the service to bid for contracts to earn income from carrying out grounds maintenance for new housing developments which has service charges, explore the opportunity to provide elderly private tenants with grass cutting and shrub maintenance;
- (22) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations & Protective Services to explore opportunity to provide grounds maintenance to other public bodies, such as hospital grounds, Universities;
- (23) instruct the Chief Officer - Operations & Protective Services to explore the opportunities of running gardening classes by the environmental team from the Winter Gardens;
- (24) instruct the Chief Officer - City Growth to explore the opportunities of running art classes from the Art Gallery;

Taxation Recommendations

- (25) approve an increase for the Council Tax rate in 2024/25, with a Band D equivalent Council Tax rate of £1,608.71 (8% increase), effective from 1 April 2024;
- (26) in accordance with the powers provided by the Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2023 approve the introduction of a premium on Second Homes, implementing a 50% premium to the 100% charge currently applied to second homes, effective from 1 April 2024;
- (27) impose and levy Council Tax assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all chargeable dwellings in Aberdeen City to be paid by the persons liable therefor under the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994;
- (28) approve the Empty Property Relief Scheme for Aberdeen City with effect from 1 April 2024, as set out in Appendix 3 of the amendment;
- (29) impose and levy Non-Domestic Rates assessments for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 on all occupiers in Aberdeen City to be paid by those liable;

Integrated Impact Assessments

- (30) consider and note the integrated impact assessments per Appendix 7 of the amendment, prepared in support of the decisions taken by Councillor Boulton in approving the General Fund and Common Good budgets for 2024/25;

Common Good

- (31) approve the Common Good budget for 2024/25 as detailed in the Common Good budget report, modified as detailed in Appendix 6 of the amendment;
- (32) note that in making grant funding available to external organisations, all payments of such funding are subject to the Chief Officer - Finance being satisfied that any necessary planning or other consents have been obtained and that such grant awards are managed in accordance with the Following the Public Pound guidance;

Carbon Budget

- (33) agree to set the Council's target of maximum carbon emissions for 2024/25 at 24,113 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e);

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- (34) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning following consultation with Chief Officer - Data and Insights, to establish a Council Carbon Data Forum, to review and mature the Council's approach to carbon data; and
- (35) instruct the Chief Officer - Strategic Place Planning, following consultation with the Chief Officer - Capital, to develop methodologies for estimating and assessing carbon impacts; and report on the processes in the annual Climate Change Report to the Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee.

(Appendices associated with Councillor Boulton's amendment are available [here](#))

At this juncture, Councillor Grant stated that he had taken legal advice from officers with regard to the budget proposal on the City Centre Manager post and therefore declared an interest by reason of his employment by Aberdeen Inspired and withdrew from the meeting.

There being a motion and three amendments, the Council first divided between the amendment by Councillor Houghton and the amendment by Councillor Boulton.

On a division, there voted:-

For the amendment by Councillor Houghton (7) - Councillors Brooks, Cross, Farquhar, Houghton, Kusznr, McLeod and Massey.

For the amendment by Councillor Boulton (2) - Councillors Boulton and Mrs Stewart.

Declined to vote (34) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Ali, Allard, Alphonse, Bonsell, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Crockett, Davidson, Fairfull, Graham, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, Lawrence, Macdonald, MacGregor, McLellan, McRae, Malik, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley, van Sweeden, Thomson, Tissera, Watson and Yuill.

Absent from the division (2) - Councillors Blake and Grant.

The Council next divided between the amendment by Councillor Malik and the amendment by Councillor Houghton.

On a division, there voted:-

For the amendment by Councillor Malik (10) - Councillors Ali, Bonsell, Crockett, Graham, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

For the amendment by Councillor Houghton (7) - Councillors Brooks, Cross, Farquhar, Houghton, Kusznr, McLeod and Massey.

Declined to vote (26) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Boulton, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Davidson, Fairfull, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, MacGregor, McLellan, McRae, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley, Mrs Stewart, van Sweeden and Yuill.

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Absent from the division (2) - Councillors Blake and Grant.

The Council then divided between the motion and the amendment by Councillor Malik.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (24) - Lord Provost; Depute Provost; and Councillors Al-Samarai, Allard, Alphonse, Bouse, Hazel Cameron, Clark, Cooke, Copland, Cormie, Davidson, Fairfull, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, MacGregor, McLellan, McRae, Mennie, Nicoll, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

For the amendment by Councillor Malik (10) - Councillors Ali, Bonsell, Crockett, Graham, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Declined to vote (9) - Councillors Boulton, Brooks, Cross, Farquhar, Houghton, Kuszniir, McLeod, Massey and Mrs Stewart.

Absent from the division (2) - Councillors Blake and Grant.

The Council resolved:-
to adopt the motion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. (A) The Lord Provost noted that two former Councillors had recently passed away - Alan Milne and George Penny. He added that he had known them both long before any of them had entered politics, and that he had been honoured to attend Alan's memorial service. The Lord Provost expressed his condolences to their friends and family.

(B) The Lord Provost advised that this was the last Council meeting for Steve Whyte, Director of Resources, before he retired from the organisation. The Lord Provost highlighted that Steve had fulfilled many important roles within the Council, and its predecessor authorities, including Section 95 Officer. He added that Aberdeen City Council would miss him, he thanked him for his excellent service and wished him well in his future endeavours.

Members of the Council gave Steve a standing ovation, following which Councillors Malik, Mrs Stewart, Houghton, Yuill, Crockett, Boulton and Allard each paid their own tributes to Steve and wished him well.

- **DAVID CAMERON, Lord Provost**.