

Councillor McLellan moved, seconded by the Depute Provost:-

That the Council -

- (1) approves the recommendations;
- (2) notes that the Scottish Government's proposed budget, presented to the Scottish Parliament on 4 December 2024, provides an uplift to local authority budgets in a continued context of financial challenge for public services, and that this budget goes some way to meeting COSLA's asks; however, recognises it will take more than a single year's settlement to restore the financial position of local authorities;
- (3) notes that the Scottish Government estimates (*published 20 November 2024*) a £549m cost implication, including £265m cost to local government, of employer National Insurance Contributions (NICs) changes to the directly employed devolved Scottish public sector workforce as a result of UK employer NICs policy;

Workforce (directly employed)	Increase in NICs bill in financial year 2025 to 2026 as a result of UK policy changes £ million
Local government	265
NHS boards	191
Police	25
Fire and Rescue Service	5
Prison Service	6
Transport Bodies (including rail)	12
Scottish Government	10
Other	34
Total	549

(*the Scottish Government, 20 November 2024*)

- (4) agrees the UK Government must urgently clarify additional funding to protect Scotland's local government, including ALEOs and partners who deliver statutory services, from additional costs arising from the rise in employer NIC; and
- (5) instructs the Chief Executive to write to the UK Government's Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for Scotland, and the Scottish Government's Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, setting out the costs of NIC to Aberdeen City Council, and Aberdeen City Council's budget position if funding for NIC is not provided from the UK Government in addition to the Local Government Financial Settlement for 2025/26

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

That the Council -

- (1) note the contents of the report;

- (2) agree, subject to any further clarification from Scottish Government, that the General Fund budget model for 2025/26 will assume the Council receives its fair share of funding from the Scottish Government, noting the Scottish Government has received the biggest settlement from Westminster since devolution which includes extra funding of £5.4 billion pounds;
- (3) note that COSLA has written to Scottish Government seeking assurance that local government in Scotland and the communities we serve will receive our fair share of the additional funds announced in the UK Budget. Noting Scottish Local Government has seen significant cuts to our core settlement over time, and moving into 2025/26 we can begin to reverse these cuts and ensure that there is sustainable investment in local public services;
- (4) agree that the Chief Officer - Finance, working with the Extended Corporate Management team, update the General Fund financial model for 2025/26 for the Local Government Financial Settlement for 2025/26 from Scottish Government and to take account of the analysis work described in the report;
- (5) agree, due to the new financial risks, that updated financial modelling is done in conjunction with NHS Grampian, for the Aberdeen City Integration Joint Board and included in the General Fund budget report for 2025/26; and
- (6) note that the Council will be presented with the final budget position and the request to approve a balanced General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget, and set Council Tax for 2025/26 at the Budget meeting in March 2025.

Councillor Boulton moved as a further amendment, seconded by Councillor Nicoll:-
That the Council approve the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Watson moved as a procedural motion, seconded by Councillor Tissera:-
That the vote on this item be conducted by roll call.

On a division, there voted:-

For the procedural motion (22) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Boulton, Brooks, Crockett, Cross, Farquhar, Graham, Grant, Houghton, Kuszniir, Lawrence, Macdonald, McLeod, Malik, Massey, Nicoll, Mrs Stewart, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Against the procedural motion (23) - 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, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

The Council resolved:-

to reject the procedural motion.

The Council then voted on the substantive item.

There being a motion and two amendments, the Council first voted between the amendment by Councillor Malik and the amendment by Councillor Boulton.

On a division, there voted:-

For the amendment by Councillor Malik (11) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Graham, Grant, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

For the amendment by Councillor Boulton (10) - Councillors Boulton, Brooks, Cross, Farquhar, Houghton, Kuznir, McLeod, Massey, Nicoll and Mrs Stewart.

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

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

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (23) - 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, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

For the amendment by Councillor Malik (14) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Crockett, Graham, Grant, Lawrence, Macdonald, Malik, Nicoll, Mrs Stewart, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Declined to vote (8) - Councillors Boulton, Brooks, Cross, Farquhar, Houghton, Kuznir, McLeod and Massey.

The Council resolved:-
to adopt the motion.

In terms of the remaining business, the Council resolved to approve Councillor Kuznir's notice of motion at item 10.1.

Councillor Allard moved as a procedural motion, seconded by Councillor Radley:-

That the Council -

- (1) refer item 10.2 to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee;
- (2) refer item 10.3 to the budget process;
- (3) refer item 10.4 to the Finance and Resources Committee;
- (4) refer item 10.5 to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee;
- (5) defer items 7.1, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7 and 9.10 to the next Council meeting; and
- (6) refer items 9.8 and 9.9 to the Finance and Resources Committee.

On a division, there voted:-

For the procedural motion (23) - 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, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

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

Declined to vote (1) - Councillor Cross.

The Council resolved:-

to reject the procedural motion.

Councillor Houghton moved as a procedural motion, seconded by Councillor Malik:-
That the Council suspend Standing Order 40.2 to extend the length of the meeting to consider item 9.4.

Councillor Watson moved as a procedural motion, seconded by Councillor Malik:-
That the vote on this item be conducted by roll call.

On a division, there voted:-

For the procedural motion (22) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Boulton, Brooks, Crockett, Cross, Farquhar, Graham, Grant, Houghton, Kuszniir, Lawrence, Macdonald, McLeod, Malik, Massey, Nicoll, Mrs Stewart, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Against the procedural motion (23) - 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, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

The Council resolved:-

to reject the procedural motion.

The Council then voted on the initial procedural motion by Councillor Houghton.

On a division, there voted:-

For the procedural motion (22) - Councillors Ali, Blake, Bonsell, Boulton, Brooks, Crockett, Cross, Farquhar, Graham, Grant, Houghton, Kuszniir, Lawrence, Macdonald, McLeod, Malik, Massey, Nicoll, Mrs Stewart, Thomson, Tissera and Watson.

Against the procedural motion (23) - 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, Radley, van Sweeden and Yuill.

The Council resolved:-

to reject the procedural motion.