
West Sussex County Council – Ordinary Meeting

14 February 2025

At the Ordinary Meeting of the County Council held at 10.30 am on Friday, 14 February 2025, at County Hall, Chichester PO19 1RQ, the members present being:

Cllr Montyn (Chairman)

Cllr Sparkes (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr Kerry-Bedell
Cllr Albury	Cllr Lanzer
Cllr Ali	Cllr Lord
Cllr Atkins, RD	Cllr Markwell
Cllr Baldwin	Cllr Marshall
Cllr Baxter	Cllr McDonald
Cllr Bence	Cllr McGregor
Cllr Boram	Cllr McKnight
Cllr Burgess	Cllr Mercer
Cllr Burrett	Cllr Milne
Cllr Cherry	Cllr Mitchell
Cllr Cooper	Cllr Nagel
Cllr Cornell	Cllr Oakley
Cllr Crow	Cllr O'Kelly
Cllr Dabell	Cllr Oppler
Cllr J Dennis	Cllr Patel
Cllr N Dennis	Cllr Payne
Cllr Duncton	Cllr Pendleton
Cllr Dunn	Cllr Pudaloff
Cllr Elkins	Cllr Quinn
Cllr Forbes	Cllr Russell
Cllr Gibson	Cllr Smith
Cllr Greenway	Cllr Turley
Cllr Hillier	Cllr Urquhart
Cllr Hunt	Cllr Waight
Cllr Johnson	Cllr Wall
Cllr A Jupp	Cllr Walsh, KStJ, RD
Cllr N Jupp	Cllr Wickremaratchi

57 Death of Mrs Liz Kitchen

57.1 The Chairman reported the death a former member of the Council, Mrs Liz Kitchen, who represented the St Leonard's Forest division from 2013 until 2021.

57.2 Members held a minute's silence.

58 100th Anniversary of the Library Service

58.1 The Chairman commented that 13 February 2025 had marked the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Library Service. He

observed that over the last 100 years the service has evolved in many ways, not least with the digital age, but promotion of literacy and access to trusted information have always been fundamental to the way libraries support our communities to thrive.

59 Chief Fire Officer: Award of King's Fire Service Medal

- 59.1 The Chairman reported that Dr Sabrina Cohen-Hatton, the Chief Fire Officer, has been presented with the King's Fire Service Medal on 4 February by His Majesty the King at Buckingham Palace.
- 59.2 Members joined the Chairman in congratulating the Chief Fire Officer on this achievement.

60 Apologies for Absence

- 60.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Bradbury, Cllr Britton, Cllr Chowdhury, Cllr Condie, Cllr Evans, Cllr Hall, Cllr Kenyon, Cllr Linehan, Cllr Oxlade, Cllr Richardson, Cllr Sharp and Cllr Wild. Cllr Joy was absent.
- 60.2 Cllr Pendleton, Cllr Wall and Cllr Burgess gave apologies for lateness and arrived 10.40 am, 10.55 am and 12.45 pm respectively. Cllr Marshall gave his apologies and left at 12.30 pm. Apologies for the afternoon session were received from Cllr Bence. Cllr Nagel was absent for the afternoon session.
- 60.3 Cllr O'Kelly arrived for the afternoon session at 2.10 pm. Cllr Lord and Cllr Burgess gave apologies and left at 3.45 pm and 3.52 pm respectively. Cllr Oppler, Cllr Cherry and Cllr Milne left at 3.45 pm, 4.20 pm and 4.30 pm respectively.

61 Members' Interests

- 61.1 Members declared interests as set out at Appendix 1.

62 Minutes

- 62.1 It was agreed that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the County Council held on 13 December 2024 (pages 3 to 24) be approved as a correct record.

63 Review of Proportionality

- 63.1 The County Council noted the review of proportionality on its committees following the recent changes in group affiliation of Cllr Baldwin. A paper on the application of the proportionality rules and how they were applied was set out on page 25. A table showing the number of seats on committees as a result of the review, was set out on page 5 of the supplement pack.
- 63.2 Resolved –

That the proportionality be approved.

64 Committee Appointments

64.1 The Council approved appointments as set out below.

Committee	Change
Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Linehan to fill vacancy with Cllr Baldwin as substitute Cllr Kenyon as substitute to fill vacancy
Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Patel to fill vacancy Cllr Wickremaratchi as substitute in place of Cllr Patel
Fire and Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Linehan as substitute in place of Cllr Bence
Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Albury as substitute
Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee	Cllr N Jupp to fill vacancy Cllr Baldwin in place of Cllr Linehan, with Cllr Bence as substitute
Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee	Cllr Baldwin in place of Cllr Bence, with Cllr Linehan as substitute to fill vacancy

65 Independent Remuneration Panel

65.1 The Council noted Mr Steve Cooper, a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel, was first appointed to the Panel in February 2017 and reappointed in 2021 for a further four-year term.

65.2 The Council was invited to reappoint him for a third term, to run to February 2029.

65.3 Resolved –

That Mr Steve Cooper be reappointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a third term, to run to February 2029.

66 Address by a Cabinet Member

66.1 Members received an address by the Leader on the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation proposals.

67 Cllr David Britton

67.1 The Council resolved that, in accordance with Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, Cllr Britton's current period of special leave should be approved as a reason for absence.

68 Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee: Changes to Standing Orders on Procurement and Contracts

68.1 The Council considered changes to Standing Orders on Procurement and Contracts, in the light of a report by the Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee (RAAC) (pages 27 to 86). The Vice-Chairman of the Committee confirmed that the proposals had been endorsed by the meeting of RAAC on 7 February 2025, subject to the minor changes set out below.

- Page 31, paragraph 1.11 and the heading of Table 1 on page 36 – change 'Commercial Legal Team' to 'Procurement and Commercial Legal Teams'
- Page 42, paragraph 6.1 (f) – change the date to 2029

68.2 Resolved –

That the proposed changes to the County Council's Standing Orders on Contracts and Procurement, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to the changes in minute 68.1 above, be approved.

69 Council Plan and Budget 2025/26

69.1 The Leader moved the report on the Council Plan and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property moved the report on the budget for 2025/26, the Capital Strategy 2025-30 and the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26 (budget pack pages 1 to 240). Members also had before them a revision to the budget (supplement page 9), which had been circulated.

69.2 An amendment was moved by Cllr Walsh and seconded by Cllr O'Kelly as set out below.

Proposed amendment to the Revenue Budget

Ongoing Increase for Revenue Budget

Ongoing amendment to the Revenue Budget	2025/26 £,000
Increase to the schools crossing budget to fund staffing of up to 72 sites (which is what can be afforded within the 2024/25 budget), alongside	88

Ongoing amendment to the Revenue Budget	2025/26 £,000
an enhanced advertising campaign in schools and local communities	
Total Ongoing Amendment	88

One-off Increase for the Revenue Budget

One-off Amendment to the Revenue Budget	2025/26 £,000
An increase in the Highways Maintenance budget for increased pothole repairs	1,000
Increased provision of earlier Special Needs assessment services	1,000
Pilot preventative early intervention to delay or avoid the need for residential care	1,000
Total One-off Amendment	3,000

Ongoing Funding for the Revenue Budget

Ongoing Amendments to the Revenue Budget	2025/26 £,000
This will be funded by a deletion of two posts, with oncosts, at Grade 8 or equivalent within Transactional Services in Support Services ideally in an area with known vacancies	(88)
Total Ongoing Amendments to the Revenue Budget	(88)

One-off Funding for the Revenue Budget

One-off Funding for the Revenue Budget	2025/26 £,000
One-off use of the Highways Commuted Sums Reserve	(1,000)
One-off use of Budget Management Reserve	(2,000)
Total One-off Funding for the Revenue Budget	(3,000)

Total

Total	2025/26 £,000
Total On-going Increase in Revenue Budget	88
Total One-off Increase in Revenue Budget	3,000
Total On-going Funding	(88)
Total One-off Funding	(3,000)
Total Change	-

69.3 The amendment was put to a recorded vote under Standing Order 3.36.

(a) For the amendment – 7

Cllr N Dennis, Cllr Gibson, Cllr Johnson, Cllr Kerry-Bedell, Cllr Mercer, Cllr O’Kelly and Cllr Walsh.

(b) Against the amendment – 33

Cllr Albury, Cllr Ali, Cllr Atkins, Cllr Baldwin, Cllr Boram, Cllr Burrett, Cllr Cooper, Cllr Crow, Cllr Dabell, Cllr J Dennis, Cllr Duncton, Cllr Dunn, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Forbes, Cllr Greenway, Cllr Hillier, Cllr Hunt, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Markwell, Cllr McGregor, Cllr Mitchell, Cllr Montyn, Cllr Oakley, Cllr Patel, Cllr Payne, Cllr Pendleton, Cllr Russell, Cllr Sparkes, Cllr Urquhart, Cllr Waight and Cllr Wickremaratchi.

(c) Abstentions – 6

Cllr Baxter, Cllr Cornell, Cllr McKnight, Cllr Pudaloff, Cllr Smith and Cllr Turley.

69.4 The amendment was lost.

69.5 An amendment was moved by Cllr Markwell and seconded by Cllr Baldwin as set out below.

Proposed amendment to the Revenue Budget

Ongoing amendment to the Revenue Budget	2025/26 £,000
Full employment costs of four dedicated SENAT Caseworkers focused on managing communication with families going through an EHCNA process, ensuring timely updates and responses. These roles will also provide additional support for the administrative workload associated with tribunal procedures.	128
Total Ongoing Amendment	128

Ongoing amendment to the Revenue Budget	2025/26 £,000
Full employment costs of the reduction of three Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) staff.	(176)
Total Ongoing Funding	(176)

Total	2025/26 £,000
Total ongoing increase in revenue budget	128
Total ongoing funding	(176)
Total Budget Change	(48)

69.6 The amendment was put to a recorded vote under Standing Order 3.36.

(a) For the amendment – 2

Cllr Baldwin and Cllr Markwell.

(b) Against the amendment – 44

Cllr Albury, Cllr Ali, Cllr Atkins, Cllr Baxter, Cllr Boram, Cllr Burrett, Cllr Cooper, Cllr Cornell, Cllr Crow, Cllr Dabell, Cllr J Dennis, Cllr N Dennis, Cllr Duncton, Cllr Dunn, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Forbes, Cllr Gibson, Cllr Greenway, Cllr Hillier, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Johnson, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Kerry-Bedell, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr McGregor, Cllr McKnight, Cllr Mercer, Cllr Mitchell, Cllr Montyn, Cllr Oakley, Cllr O'Kelly, Cllr Patel, Cllr Payne, Cllr Pendleton, Cllr Pudaloff, Cllr Russell, Cllr Smith, Cllr Sparkes, Cllr Turley, Cllr Urquhart, Cllr Waight, Cllr Walsh and Cllr Wickremaratchi.

(c) Abstentions – 0

69.7 The amendment was lost.

69.8 The recommendations were put to a recorded vote under Standing Order 3.36.

(a) For the recommendations – 35

Cllr Albury, Cllr Ali, Cllr Atkins, Cllr Baldwin, Cllr Boram, Cllr Burrett, Cllr Cooper, Cllr Crow, Cllr Dabell, Cllr J Dennis, Cllr Duncton, Cllr Dunn, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Forbes, Cllr Gibson, Cllr Greenway, Cllr Hillier, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Johnson, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Markwell, Cllr McGregor, Cllr Mitchell, Cllr Montyn, Cllr Oakley, Cllr Patel, Cllr Payne, Cllr Pendleton, Cllr Russell, Cllr Sparkes, Cllr Urquhart, Cllr Waight and Cllr Wickremaratchi.

(b) Against the recommendations – 0

(c) Abstentions – 11

Cllr Baxter, Cllr Cornell, Cllr N Dennis, Cllr Kerry-Bedell, Cllr McKnight, Cllr Mercer, Cllr O'Kelly, Cllr Pudaloff, Cllr Smith, Cllr Turley and Cllr Walsh.

69.9 Resolved –

That, taking account of the priorities contained in the Council Plan, the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement and noting the Director of Finance and Support Services' assessment of the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves as required by Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 (Section 9), the County Council approves the following recommendations:

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- (1) The Council Plan and KPIs for 2025/26 (as set out in paragraph 2.9 of the report and **Appendix 8**).
 - (2) The net revenue budget requirement in 2025/26 of **£826.996m** (as set out in paragraph 3.40 of the report and **Appendix 1**).
 - (3) An increase in Council Tax in 2025/26 of 4.99% comprising 2.0% in the precept for the costs for Adults' Social Care and 2.99% for General Fund services.
 - (4) The increase in fees and charges as set out in **Appendix 7** to the report.
 - (5) The five year capital programme of **£739.852m** over the period 2025/26 to 2029/30, of which **£118.582m** is expected to be spent in 2025/26.
 - (6) The overall budget envelopes as set out in **Appendix 1** to the report.
 - (7) The following amounts be approved for the financial year 2025/26 in accordance with Section 42A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
 - (a) That the Council Tax requirement for 2025/26 is **£644.548m**.
 - (b) The Council Tax base for the year 2025/26 is the aggregate amount calculated of Band D equivalents by the billing authorities to which the County Council issues precepts totalling **357,974.97**.
 - (c) The amount of Council Tax being the council tax requirement at 7(a) above divided by the council tax base at 7(b) above, shall be **£1,800.54** to the nearest penny for Band D.
 - (d) The amount of Council Tax payable for dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, calculated in accordance with the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, shall be as follows:

Band	2025/26 Council Tax £	2024/25 Council Tax £	Increase £	Increase %
A	1,200.36	1,143.30	57.06	4.99
B	1,400.42	1,333.85	66.57	4.99
C	1,600.48	1,524.40	76.08	4.99
D	1,800.54	1,714.95	85.59	4.99

Band	2025/26 Council Tax £	2024/25 Council Tax £	Increase £	Increase %
E	2,200.66	2,096.05	104.61	4.99
F	2,600.78	2,477.15	123.63	4.99
G	3,000.90	2,858.25	142.65	4.99
H	3,601.08	3,429.90	171.18	4.99

- (e) That the district and borough councils be requested to make payments totalling **£644.548m** to West Sussex County Council of sums due under precepts calculated in proportion to their Council Tax Band D equivalents as set out in **Section 10** of the report.
- (8) The Medium Term Financial Position for period 2026/27 to 2029/30 which shows a budget gap of between **£50m and £191m** as set out in **Section 6** of the report.
- (9) The total Schools Budget of **£952.4m** to meet the County Council's statutory requirement on schools funding as set out in **Section 4** of the report.
- (10) The delegation to the Director of Finance and Support Services (as Section 151 Officer) of authority to make changes to the report on net revenue expenditure or to the precepts required:
- as a result of a change in the Council Tax base notified by the district and borough councils;
 - arising from updated information from the district and borough councils to the Council Tax collection funds and business rates forecast and collection funds; or
 - arising from any funding announcements from central government, including through the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025/26, expected to be published in early February 2025.
- All such changes of funding (positive or negative) to be applied through the appropriate reserve.
- (11) These ancillary financial management provisions:
- (a) The Capital Strategy for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30, including the specific delegation of authority set out in the Strategy, as set out in **Annex 2(a)** of the report.
- (b) The policy for making a prudent level of revenue provision for the repayment of debt as set out in **Annex 2(a) Appendix B** of the report.

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- (c) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy for 2025/26 and 2026/27 as set out within the Capital Strategy, **Annex 2(a), Section 8** of the report.
 - (d) The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2025/26, as set out in **Annex 2(b)** of the report.
 - (e) The Prudential Indicators, as set out in **Annex 2(c)** of the report.
- (12) The importance of effective lobbying with local, regional and national partners to ensure the Government understands the needs of West Sussex residents, businesses and communities. The focus during 2025/26 will be on funding for adults and children’s social care, home to school transport, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and essential road maintenance. This is particularly important in the run up to the Spending Review in Spring 2025.

Chairman

The Council rose at 5.35 pm