

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
SPECIAL CABINET – 23 JANUARY 2018
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND
CULTURAL SERVICES)

BUDGET 2018/19

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The proposed 2018/19 budget papers were discussed at the Cabinet meeting on 9 January 2018. This report provides an update to these proposals for recommendation to Full Council.
- 1.2 The budget papers approved at the 9 January Cabinet meeting have been presented to the Resources and Overview Scrutiny Committee (ROSC) on 18 January 2018, and an update will be provided prior to this meeting to provide Cabinet with any feedback and recommendations from that committee.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the content of this paper and approve the changes detailed in section 3 of this report for inclusion into the budget papers.
- 2.2 That Cabinet consider the comments and recommendations made by Resources and Overview Scrutiny Committee on 18 January 2018.
- 2.3 That Cabinet recommend the budget 2018/19 and associated papers to Full Council for approval.

3 Explanation

Planning Fees

- 3.1 The budget pack approved by Cabinet on 9 January 2018, made reference to possible changes in legislation regarding planning fees and charges.
- 3.2 The Town and Country Planning (Fees for applications, deemed applications, requests and site visits) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2017, were approved into legislation on 20 December 2017, which saw planning fees and charges increase by 20% from 17 January 2018.
- 3.3 Given that Council had previously approved the fees to be increased by 20% back in April 2016, subject to the statutory legislation being put in place, these fees and charges are now being charged by the planning team, and a revised appendix E is attached for inclusion into the 2018/19 budget papers.
- 3.4 The Government has made clear, that the increased income from this legislation, must be used towards the service. The increased income has not yet been included in the service budgets, and more detailed work will take place in the next couple of months to review the income and expenditure budgets for the

service. A budget adjustment will be proposed in the first quarter of 2018/19 to account for the income and increase the relevant areas of expenditure. This change will be net neutral to the Councils financial position.

Overall impact on Budget Estimates

- 3.5 Other than the statutory increase in planning fees and charges, there have been no other items requiring an updated position. Overall, there has been no change to the net operating expenditure or council tax requirement for 2018/19.

4 Financial Implication(s)

- 4.1 The financial implications are set out within the reports submitted to cabinet on the 9 January 2018.

5 Link to Corporate Priorities

- 5.1 I confirm that the subject of this report is linked to the Council's Corporate Priority "Engage with our communities and provide value for money". It should be noted that individual growth and savings items are also linked to the Corporate priorities.

6 Procurement Implication(s)

- 6.1 There are no procurement implications arising directly from this report.

7 Security & Terrorism Implication(s)

- 7.1 There are no security and terrorism implications with the recommendation in this report.

8 Legal Implication(s)

- 8.1 The Council is required by the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to make estimates of gross revenue expenditure and anticipated income, leading to a calculation of a council tax requirement and the setting of an overall budget and Council Tax. The amount of the budget requirement must be sufficient to meet the Council's legal and financial obligations, ensure the proper discharge of its statutory duties, and lead to a balanced budget. The Council should be satisfied that the proposals put forward are a reasonably prudent use of resources in both the short and long term, and that the interests of both Council Tax payers and ratepayers on the one hand and the users of Council services on the other are both taken into account.

9 Climate Change Implication(s)

- 9.1 None

10 Risk Management Implications

- 10.1 There are considerable risks to the council's short and medium term budget strategy including the impact of public sector austerity, inflation and other changes in the national economy, spending exceeding budgets, pressures on existing budgets, further reductions in grant and legislative change demands for new spend. The budget process includes the recognition of these risks in determining the 2017/18 budget and relevant risk provisions are set out in the body of the report.

11 Equality and Diversity

11.1 In developing individual budget proposals officers have undertaken an equality impact assessment, where applicable.

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Date	15 January 2018

Appendices (References as per 9 January 2018 Budget Report)

Appendix E – General Fund Fees and Charges 2018/19

Background papers

Budget papers submitted to 9 January 2018 Cabinet