

4.3 **Strategy and Resources Committee**

Councillor Keith Baker, Chairman of the Strategy and Resources Committee, made the following statement:

"First of all, I would like to thank all the staff and councillors who have been involved in the areas covered within the Strategy & Resources Committee. For those present who are not familiar with "council speak" the Strategy & Resources is often considered as the committee that not only sets the direction for the council but also holds the "purse strings" and therefore has key financial accountability.

This Committee has four main areas namely financial, staffing, marketing and the community which I will briefly cover. Further information is available which covers in more detail the full working of the committee.

From a financial perspective it has been quite a busy year. Many facilities, like the Oakwood Centre, are reaching that age where things start failing. Examples include the windows in this building have been leaking, removal of Asbestos in Coronation Hall and heating improvements in the Leisure Centre. By sound financial management by the town clerk and her team all these items of remedial work were fully covered by reserves.

The investment portfolio, put in place to pay off the loan on this building, continues to perform as anticipated despite a weak second half of 2018. It is still on track to meet the required funds in 2025/26 when the loan will be repaid.

Despite all the financial "ups and downs" we still managed to freeze again the town council tax at 2007/08 levels. Out of the three Towns in the Borough we were the only one to do that.

Many residents have commented on the fact that facilities like Woodford Park and the Leisure Centre are excellent and have improved significantly over the last 4 years. This can only be achieved by the fantastic efforts of our staff who regularly go above and beyond their normal job. However, as we continue improving things, we recognise that the existing staff can only do so much. Therefore, we are continually looking at potentially adding new staff to the team including a Communications Manager and a new Grounds person.

The addition of a Communications Manager, the first in many a year, is already bearing fruit. She is highly active on social media, publicising the Council and its activities. At the same time, she is reviewing and developing new site-specific websites to increase the exposure of facilities like the Leisure Centre and the Oakwood Centre. She is currently developing a marketing plan for the Oakwood Centre which will be the first in probably ten years.

From a community perspective, we have entered an arrangement with Reading Community Energy Society to install solar panels on the Oakwood Centre, Coronation Hall and the Leisure Centre - an illustration of the town councils desire to be eco-friendly. Centre Stage is now free to use and we are working on developing strategies to encourage better use of it. Our relationship with Woodley Business Club and the Carnival Committee continues and a new link with the University of the 3rd Age has been established to research the history of Woodley.

I will leave you with mentioning what I consider the highlight of the year which was the commemoration of the end of World War 1. With estimated attendance of between two and three thousand residents it absolutely highlighted the amazing community spirit we have here in Woodley. The whole project from the refurbishment of the gates and the new panels around the memorial through to the tea and cakes afterwards was amazing and made me very proud to be a resident of this great town of ours."

The detailed report on the activities of the Strategy and Resources Committee was as follows:

Working parties and sub committees:

Investments Working Party

Members met with the Council's investment manager in November to receive an annual report on the Council's portfolio – being built up to pay the principal of the loan to build the Oakwood Centre. Over the past year, the fund had only achieved an increase of £1,629 over the previous year's portfolio value, due to turbulence in the markets from October 2018; however, the fund was still on track to meet its target in 2025/26.

The Treasury Management Strategy was considered by committee and approved at Full Council.

Catering Partnership Management Panel

Brown Bag had been running the café at the Oakwood Centre for three years and the centre team and councillors met regularly with Brown Bag to review and discuss café operations and the business and social function catering and how to jointly enhance services at the centre.

Risk Management Working Party

The working party reviewed the risk management register and strategy and these were approved in May 2018 following recommendation from the Committee.

Personnel Sub Committee

The former PR/Marketing Coordinator role was reviewed and a new part time Communications Manager post was created. This post was appointed to in June 2018.

A new Groundsperson post was also added to support the Grounds team in their work to continue the improvement of the Council's park areas and the maintenance of these to a high level.

The Council reviewed the roles and payscales of the Deputy Town Clerk and a Groundsperson post and agreed to fund an Apprentice Administrative Assistant post, which was appointed to in December 2018.

Publicity

A part time Communication Manager was appointed in June 2018 and work was continuing to increase publicity for the Council and its activities, develop social media, and to review and introduce new websites for the Council, the Oakwood Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

The Council adopted a new logo for the Mayoral regalia and changes to the existing regalia would incorporate the new design.

Financial/Licences/legal:

The Committee reviewed allotment rents and agreed an increase of 8.3% on the charges with effect from 1 January 2019. The higher than Retail Price Index increase was agreed to go part way to cover the increased rent paid to Reading Borough Council.

The Committee received an update on the actions being undertaken in preparation for the introduction of the General Data Protection Act.

The Council agreed to enter an arrangement with Reading Community Energy Society for the provision of electricity and the installation of solar panels on the roofs of the Oakwood Centre, Coronation Hall and Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

Following a recommendation by the Committee, the Council applied for, and received, a loan of £270,000 to build a new workshop, fund the works to the lake in Woodford Park, and to refurbish the foyer and install new ladies toilets at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

The Committee recommended that the Council approve the installation of a bike hub by Wokingham Borough Council's My Journey initiative - this was agreed by Council under a licence agreement.

First payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was received, totalling £4,583.

Plans for the commemoration of the centenary of the end of World War 1 were overseen by the Committee - and great feedback was received from those attending the commemoration event, including the tea and cake provided afterwards in the Oakwood Centre.

Problems with the envelope of the Oakwood Centre building were investigated and a specialist company carried out dynamic leak testing of windows to identify remedial works. A sum of £20,000 was allocated from the Building and Facilities fund to pay for works associated with the water ingress and flooring issues at the centre. Further works were required to replace the hot water cylinder, which had failed.

With the flooring and water ingress issues at the Oakwood Centre, the need to remove asbestos in the roof space at Coronation Hall and heating system improvements required at the leisure centre, the Committee agreed to allocate £50,000 from the general reserve to the Building and Facilities fund to fund the costs of the works required.

The Committee agreed to waive charges for the use of the Centre Stage from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2020.

The Committee agreed to work with the University of the 3rd Age Shared Learning Project, researching the history of Woodley.

It also agreed to support Woodley Business Club by agreeing free use of the Oakwood Centre for its business festival and planning meetings during the year.

The Committee had also agreed new lease terms for an agreement with Optalis for the use of the offices at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

The Committee also dealt with some legal matters that currently remained confidential.

Projects:

The public toilet was installed on 17 February and was expected to be up and running shortly.

The new inclusive play area in the town centre was installed by Wokingham Borough Council in Spring 2018. The play area was very popular and had been well used.

Financial:

Each meeting received a monitoring report on its budget (as did the other committees).

Internal Audit Plan

The 2017/18 internal audit report was received by the committee with any items identified either already, or in the process of being, addressed. The report of the 2018/19 year's internal audit was due to be received at the next meeting of the committee.

External Auditor

PKF Littlejohn LLP had been the Council's external auditor since 2017/18 – and gave an 'unqualified' report on the 2017/18 Annual Return and Financial Statements.

Grants

14 community groups and 5 individual athletes were awarded grants towards their costs.

2019/20 Budget

The 2019/20 Budget and precept charge was agreed at the last Council meeting on 5 February. The Band D charge would remain at £106.71 for the year.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE**

No correspondence had been received.

6. **GENERAL PARISH AFFAIRS**

No matters were raised under this item.

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting closed at 8:25 pm

Woodley Town Council

Budget Summary

Revised Estimates 2019/20
Budget Estimates 2020/21

BUDGET SUMMARY 2020/21

	2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	Band D	2021/22	2022/23
	Actual	Budget	Revised Budget Estimates	2020/21 Projected Budget Estimates	Projected	Projected
REVENUE EXPENDITURE						
Strategy & Resources	841212	879995	892491	975346	1004606	1034744
Leisure Services	623848	657440	648450	677624	697953	718892
Planning & Community	31662	31581	31581	33093	33672	34177
	1496722	1569016	1572522	1686063	1736231	1787813
INCOME						
Strategy & Resources	229237	237734	243611	264594	269886	275284
Leisure Services	497799	478908	534913	497693	517601	538305
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)			43221			
	727036	716642	821745	762287	787487	813589
	769686	852374	750777	923776	948744	974224
NET REVENUE EXPENDITURE						
CAPITAL & PROJECT EXPENDITURE						
Strategy & Resources	45000	45000	45000	45000	45000	45000
Capital Programme	262427	271610	271610	266506	264979	264979
Capital & Projects			43221			
CIL						
	307427	316610	359831	311506	309979	309979
	1077113	1168984	1110608	1235282	1258723	1284203
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE						
Financed as follows						
Precept Support Grant (from WBC)	17288	8644	8644	0		
Precept	1101119	1123528	1123528	1203188		
Precept and grant funding	1118407	1132172	1132172	1203188		
Funds to (-) or from (+) Council's general reserve (a minus figure shows contribution to reserves)	-41294	36812	-21564	32094		
TOTAL NET FUNDING	1118407	1132172	1132172	1203188		
TAX BASE	10318.8	10528.8	10528.8	10659		
£ Band D pa	106.71	106.71	106.71	112.88		
RESERVES - General Reserve						
General Reserve at 1st April	485587	467017	467017	488581		
2018/19 Utility V £12,170	-12170					
Transfer to Building & Facilities Fund	-50000					
2018/9 Additional funds to Mayoral regalia EMR	-1850					
Funds held BLC fuel costs not billed-released to general reserve	4156					
General reserve at 31st March	467017	430205	488581	456487		
EARMARKED RESERVES AS AT 31/12/2019						
	£				£	
Capital programme	42917	Loddon Mead art project			800	
Building and facilities fund	28689	Parents self help gps - CYP			779	
Oakwood Centre marketing	390	WPLC Bursary Fund			1500	
Maintenance Workshop	76194	WPLC Sports grants			8334	
Repairs and renewals	27420	Elections reserve			0	
WPLC changing rooms	10000	Allotment - toilets			1530	
Special projects fund	25040	Speedwatch equip			1246	
Play area reserve	22662	WPLC refurbishment			31169	
Mayoral regalia	1610	Allotment security			814	
Bookings software	30000	Clock/Centre Stage			2984	
3G pitch carpet replacement	48000	CIL funds			42871	
Youth shelter	687	Capital receipt			89400	
JAC - Loddon Mead project	2500					
			Total		497536	

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STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - BUDGET SUMMARY 2020/21

Expenditure					
		Actual	Estimate	Revised Est	Estimate
		2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21
Code	Description				
	Central Costs	219065	244102	252614	273269
	Democratic Costs	56619	52535	61054	54560
	Corporate Management	312492	345240	342338	368092
	Capital Projects	45000	45000	45000	45000
	Grants -Section 137	16573	17000	17450	17000
	Oakwood Centre	178929	167478	169751	172224
	Maintenance HQ	5708	5100	3800	4500
	Woodley Town Centre Man Init	51826	48540	45484	85700
	Capital and Projects	262427	271610	271610	266506
Total		1148639	1196605	1209101	1286852
Income					
		Actual	Estimate	Revised Est	Estimate
		2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21
Code	Description				
	Central Costs	7631	9205	8454	8638
	Democratic Costs	0	0	1891	0
	Corporate Management	9302	9180	9480	0
	Capital Projects	0	0	0	0
	Grants -Section 137	0	0	0	0
	Oakwood Centre	159242	171349	165302	170256
	Maintenance HQ	1232	0	0	0
	Woodley Town Centre Man Init	64463	61000	58484	85700
	Capital and Projects	0	0	0	0
Total		241870	250734	243611	264594
Net		906769	945871	965490	1022258

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LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE - BUDGET SUMMARY 2020/21					
Expenditure		Actual	Estimate	Revised Est	Estimate
		2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21
Code	Description				
201	Woodford Park Leisure Centre	368253	383381	385092	402610
401	Grounds Maintenance-Depot	31491	31126	31401	31605
402	Football	18630	21743	21945	22474
403	Cricket	10205	11647	12102	12428
404	Bowling Green	13734	13993	14998	15338
405	Woodford Park	33003	34757	34766	35992
406	Memorial Ground	9183	10017	9530	9717
407	Garden of Remembrance	9688	8575	7097	7274
408	Play Areas /Open Spaces	12958	15280	12732	12468
501	Coronation Hall	29114	29000	28012	28837
502	Chapel Hall	21369	20165	20299	21720
601	Allotments	24562	19399	19833	19946
602	Amenities	4407	6571	5398	4784
603	Events	10013	12503	9529	12930
604	Public toilet	0	10718	7814	10501
608	Youth services	27048	28565	27902	29000
Total		623658	657440	648450	677624
Income		Actual	Estimate	Revised Est	Estimate
		2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21
Code	Description				
201	Woodford Park Leisure Centre	392016	372279	426067	387763
401	Grounds Maintenance-Depot	332	500	500	512
402	Football	5947	5075	6559	5940
403	Cricket	3441	2455	2506	2600
404	Bowling Green	7280	7919	8023	8181
405	Woodford Park	6730	6750	7784	6750
406	Memorial Ground	115	118	236	241
407	Garden of Remembrance	1266	1100	520	520
408	Play Areas /Open Spaces	0	0	0	0
501	Coronation Hall	34419	34000	35000	36000
502	Chapel Hall	34213	35000	34000	35000
601	Allotments	12040	12252	13268	13586
602	Amenities	0	0	0	0
603	Events	0	0	0	0
604	Public toilet	0	1460	450	600
608	Youth services	0	0	0	0
Total		497799	478908	534913	497693
Net		125859	178532	113537	179931

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PLANNING & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE BUDGET SUMMARY 2020/21

Expenditure					
		Actual	Estimate	Revised Est	Estimate
		2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21
Code	Description				
	Grants and Service Level	31662	31581	31581	33093
	Agreements				
Total		31662	31581	31581	33093
Income					
		Actual	Estimate	Revised Est	Estimate
		2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	2020/21
Code	Description				
Total		0	0	0	0
Net		31662	31581	31581	33093