



Waltham Forest Town Hall  
Forest Road  
E17 4JF

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## Council

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Minutes of  
26 February 2026 at 7.30 pm

**Present:**

**Mayor:** Councillor Tony Bell

**Councillors:**

Afzal Akram, Shumon Ali-Rahman, Raja Anwar, Naheed Asghar, Elizabeth Baptiste, Karen Bellamy, Kastriot Berberi, Marsela Berberi, Roy Berg, Emma Best, Tom Connor, Shabana Dhedhi, Andrew Dixon, Rosalind Doré, Paul Douglas, Rhiannon Eglin, Marion Fitzgerald, Kizzy Gardiner, Mitchell Goldie, Jenny Gray, Kisha Green, Justin Halabi, Crystal Ihenachor, Whitney Ihenachor, Kay Isa, Tim James, Ahsan Khan, Khevyn Limbajee, Sally Littlejohn, Clyde Loakes, Gerry Lyons, Zafran Malik, Anna Mbachu, Miriam Mirwitch, Louise Mitchell, John Moss, Sam O'Connell, Jonathan O'Dea, Yusuf Patel, Jack Phipps, Marie Pye, Caramel Quin, Uzma Rasool, Keith Rayner, Sebastian Salek, Catherine Saumarez, Richard Sweden, Steve Terry, Katy Thompson, Terry Wheeler, Jennifer Whilby and Grace Williams

**51. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catherine Deakin, Jemma Hemsted, Sazimet Palta Imre, Johar Khan, Kira Lewis and Sharon Waldron

**52. Declarations of interest**

None.

**53. Minutes of the council meeting held on 11th December 2025**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2025 were **AGREED** by Council and signed by the Mayor.

#### **54. Announcements from the Mayor, Council Leader, Cabinet Members and Chief Executive**

The Mayor extended a warm welcome to the first full council meeting of the calendar year. The Mayor announced with sadness the passing of John Turnbull, the former Strategic Director of Finance and Government, who had served the council for 12 years before retiring in April 2023. Mr. Turnbull had a distinguished career in local government since 1975 and made significant contributions to the finance community across London. A minute's silence was observed in his memory.

The Mayor expressed gratitude to all who attended the Mayor's Charity Quiz Night in December, which raised over £1,000 for mayoral charities. Special thanks were given to Jeremy Walling as quiz master and the band 'No Marks'.

The Mayor also highlighted the outstanding volunteering efforts of residents Mark Miller and Elaine Light in Valley Ward for their litter-picking initiatives. Appreciation was extended to Andrew Crossman and the Forest Ward Councillors for the invitation and hospitality at the Forest Lodge Christmas Grotto. The Mayor also announced that the Youth Mayor, Adwoa, had hosted a successful charity bingo night, raising almost £500 for mayoral charities. The Mayor concluded by expressing personal thanks to Lauren Jennings, the Mayor's Executive Officer for the past four years, for her invaluable support, advice, and professionalism, noting her exceptional dedication, including her role as a mace bearer.

Finally, as this would be the last council meeting before the Annual General Meeting, the Mayor expressed sincere gratitude for the support, cooperation, and goodwill received throughout the term.

Councillor Clyde Loakes, Deputy Leader, made three announcements. Firstly, the Oak Hill Primary School Street initiative had been signed off following a consultation that received support from residents. This marked the 26th School Street in Waltham Forest and the first in Highams Park, with thanks extended to parents, carers, school staff, residents, and local ward councillors. Secondly, positive recycling data for 2025-26 was presented. Dry recycling was up by 13.5%, food recycling by 19.3%, and garden recycling by 21.6%. Concurrently, residual black bin waste had decreased by 13.3%, leading to a recycling rate exceeding 39%, a 6% increase from the previous year. This success was attributed to residents embracing service changes. Thirdly, the borough would benefit from a new Superloop bus route from Stratford via Leyton, Walthamstow, and South Chingford to Chingford Hatch, expected from 2027, with lobbying underway for an earlier start date.

Councillor Limbajee, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, reported on significant improvements in safety across the borough. Working with the Metropolitan Police and partners, a place-based problem-solving approach had yielded positive results. In the last 12 months, theft of the person had fallen by 26%, drug-related antisocial behaviour by 50%, and serious violence by 11%. Knife injury offences were down by 44% compared to the previous 12 months and 62% lower than their peak in January 2024. The number of knife injury victims under 25 had reduced by over 50% between January 2024 and January 2026. The Committee acknowledged the crisis in the Metropolitan Police highlighted by the Casey Report and the subsequent

threat to the social contract of policing. In response to low trust and confidence levels in Waltham Forest, a Citizens' Assembly on neighbourhood policing was held. As a result, trust and confidence in the police had increased by 16 percentage points over two years, from 57% in September 2023 to 73% in September 2025, marking the greatest increase in any London borough during this period. Thanks were extended to Borough Commander Chief Superintendent Dan Card and his team. Members were invited to an All Council briefing on community safety on 9 March and a Safe Streets webinar for residents on 12 March.

Councillor Rosalind Doré, Cabinet Member for Libraries, Culture and Sports, reported on attending the 150th anniversary of Essex Cricket at City Hall. She highlighted the inspirational speech by Waltham Forest's sporting legend Graham Gooch on the impact of local cricket clubs and was delighted to announce that funding had been secured from the council's capital programme to build a brand new clubhouse for West Essex Cricket and Football Club, based in Rose Park, which serves hundreds of members. The club had been without a pavilion for five years, and works are set to begin later this year, with close collaboration planned with the club and community on the design. Councillor Doré reiterated the council's commitment to investing in sporting facilities to nurture future talent.

## **55. Public statements**

There were no requests for public speaking.

## **56. Budget and Council Tax setting 2026/27**

It was moved by Councillor Grace Williams and Councillor Paul Douglas that;

Council:

- **agreed** that the Waltham Forest basic amount of council tax, including the levying bodies, will be increased by 2.99% in 2026/27;
- **agreed** that the 2% permitted increase for Adult Social Care will be applied bringing the total increase to 4.99% and resulting in a council tax of £1,876.45 per Band D property in 2026/27;
- **noted** that the element of council tax charged by the Greater London Authority will be £510.51 per Band D property in 2026/27 which reflects an increase of £20.13 (4.10%);
- **agreed** that the overall council tax to be set for 2026/27 will be £2,386.96 per Band D property, which represents an overall increase of 4.80%;
- **agreed** that the projected budget (as set out in Appendix 1) for 2026/27 of £611.072 million is approved;

- **considered and noted** the whole of the Strategic Director of Resources report made under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 as set out in Appendix 2 and, in particular, their determination in the Financial Implications of this report on “the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves”;
- **noted** the amount of 82,991 (an increase of 208 over the previous year), as the Council Tax Base for the Council for 2026/27, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended);
- **agreed** that the following amounts to be approved for 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the Act);
  - a. Gross Expenditure  
£1,115.024 million – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (2) of the Act;
  - b. Gross Income  
£959.296 million – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (3) of the Act;
  - c. Net Expenditure  
**£155.728 million** – being the amounts by which the aggregate at 2.1.8(a), exceeds the aggregate at 2.1.8(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year.
  - d. LBWF Basic Amount of Council Tax including the Adult Social Care Precept
  - e. £1,876.45 – being the amount at 2.8.1(c) above, divided by 82,991 (the Council Tax Base), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year and includes the Adult Social Care Precept of £315.79.

f. Valuation Bands

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Basic	£	1,040.44	1,213.85	1,387.25	1,560.66	1,907.47	2,254.29	2,601.10	3,121.32
Social Care	£	210.53	245.61	280.70	315.79	385.97	456.14	526.32	631.58
Total LBWF	£	1,250.97	1,459.46	1,667.95	1,876.45	2,293.44	2,710.43	3,127.42	3,752.90

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 2.1.8(e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number

which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

- **noted** that for 2026/27 the Greater London Assembly (GLA) has stated that (with formal ratification on 26 February 2026) that the following amounts in precepts be issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below;

Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£ 340.34	397.06	453.79	510.51	623.96	737.40	850.85	1,021.02

- **agreed**, that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.1.8(f) and 2.1.9 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 sets the following amounts of council tax for 2025/26 for each of the categories of dwellings shown:

Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£ 1,591.31	1,856.52	2,121.74	2,386.96	2,917.40	3,447.83	3,978.27	4,773.92

- **noted** that the relevant basic amount of council tax for a Band D property (excluding precepts but now including levies) for the financial year 2026/27 be £1,876.45, which reflects a 2.99% increase, plus 2% Adult Social Care precept permitted increase for 2026/27 and therefore does not require a referendum;
- **agreed** that the Strategic Director of Resources and the officers nominated by him be authorised to finalise the necessary publicity as required by Section 38 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to promote the first day of the month instalment dates, and the six date options within each month for Direct Debit payers, as previously agreed;
- **noted** that in order to ensure the required period of notice is given, council taxpayers will be requested to pay their instalments on the first of each month commencing on 1 April 2026;
- **agreed** in accordance with the Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 to continue to maintain the maximum percentage allowed by current legislation for the empty home's premium from 1 April 2026;
- **agreed** in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 76) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings that have been empty for one year from 1 April 2026;
- **agreed** in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 77) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings which are

“substantially furnished” but have no “resident” (e.g., second homes) from 1 April 2026;

- **agreed** for the purposes of calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit, any war disablement pension, war widow’s or war widower’s pension which would otherwise be treated as income for the purposes of calculating entitlement to housing benefit should be disregarded in its entirety.
- **agreed** the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2035/36 as set out in Appendix 10;
- **agreed** the reserves strategy at Appendix 7 and note that the Strategic Director of Resources has delegated responsibility for the use of reserves throughout the year;
- **noted** an application for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) of £19 million from central government and the decision to utilise this support is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer;
- **agreed** the flexible use of capital receipts policy, as set out in Appendix 3 and paragraph 3.51 to invest in savings initiatives. This will enable the funding of revenue projects and redundancy costs totalling £22 million from capital receipts, over 2026/27 and 2027/28. These costs will enable delivery of savings.

An amendment was then moved by Councillor Emma Best and Councillor Afzal Akram. Councillor Akram formally seconded the amendment and reserved his right to speak during the debate.

The amendment sought;

That Council for the reasons set out in this report;

- 2.1.1 agree that the Waltham Forest basic amount of council tax, including the levying bodies, will be increased by ~~2.99~~ **0**% in 2026/27;
- 2.1.2 agree that the 2% permitted increase for Adult Social Care will be applied bringing the total increase to ~~4.99~~ **2**% and resulting in a council tax of £~~4,876.45~~ **1823.01** per Band D property in 2026/27;
- 2.1.3 note that the element of council tax charged by the Greater London Authority will be £510.51 per Band D property in 2026/27 which reflects an increase of £20.13 (4.10%);
- 2.1.4 agree that the overall council tax to be set for 2026/27 will be £~~2,386.96~~ **2,333.52** per Band D property, which represents an overall increase of ~~4.80~~ **2.45**%;

a.1.1 2.1.5 agree that the projected budget (as set out in Appendix 1) for 2026/27 of ~~£607.255~~ **606.638 million** is approved with the following amendments:  
Reduce Agency Staff Budget by £120,000.  
Reduce Furniture and Equipment budget by £1,600,000.  
Reduce Office Expenses budget by £150,000.  
Reduce Fees and Services Budget by £1,864,000.  
Reduce SRAs budget by £400,000  
Reduce Chief Officers by £300,000;

2.1.6 consider and note the whole of the Strategic Director of Resources report made under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 as set out in Appendix 2 and, in particular, their determination in the Financial Implications of this report on “the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves”;

2.1.7 note the amount of 82,991 (an increase of 208 over the previous year), as the Council Tax Base for the Council for 2026/27, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended);

2.1.8 agree that the following amounts to be approved for 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the Act);

f) Gross Expenditure  
~~£1,111.208~~ **1,110.590 million** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (2) of the Act;

f) Gross Income  
**£959.296 million** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (3) of the Act;

f) Net Expenditure  
~~£155.728~~ **151.294 million** – being the amounts by which the aggregate at 2.1.8(a), exceeds the aggregate at 2.1.8(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year.

f) LBWF Basic Amount of Council Tax including the Adult Social Care Precept

f) ~~£1,876.45~~ **1,823.01** – being the amount at 2.1.8(c) above, divided by 82,991 (the Council Tax Base), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the

basic amount of its council tax for the year and includes the Adult Social Care Precept of £315.79.

f) Valuation Bands

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Basic	£	– 1,040.44 <b>1,004.81</b>	– 1,213.85 <b>1,172.28</b>	– 1,387.25 <b>1,339.76</b>	– 1,560.66 <b>1,507.22</b>	– 1,907.47 <b>1,842.16</b>	– 2,254.29 <b>2,177.09</b>	– 2,601.10 <b>2,512.03</b>	– 3,121.32 <b>3,014.44</b>
Social Care	£	210.53	245.61	280.70	315.79	385.97	456.14	526.32	631.58
Total LBWF	£	– 1,250.97 <b>1215.34</b>	– 1,459.46 <b>1417.89</b>	– 1,667.95 <b>1620.46</b>	– 1,876.45 <b>1823.01</b>	– 2,293.44 <b>2228.13</b>	– 2,710.43 <b>2633.23</b>	– 3,127.42 <b>3038.35</b>	– 3,752.90 <b>3646.02</b>

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 2.1.8(e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

2.1.9 Note that for 2026/27 the Greater London Assembly (GLA) has stated that (with formal ratification on 26 February 2026) that the following amounts in precepts be issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below;

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£	340.34	397.06	453.79	510.51	623.96	737.40	850.85	1,021.02

2.1.10 agree, that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.1.8(f) and 2.1.9 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 sets the following amounts of council tax for 2025/26 for each of the categories of dwellings shown:

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£	– 1,591.31 <b>1,555.68</b>	– 1,856.52 <b>1,814.95</b>	2,121.74 <b>2,074.25</b>	2,386.96 <b>2,333.52</b>	2,917.40 <b>2,852.09</b>	3,447.83 <b>3,370.63</b>	3,978.27 <b>3,889.20</b>	4,773.92 <b>4,667.60</b>

2.1.11 note that the relevant basic amount of council tax for a Band D property (excluding precepts but now including levies) for the financial year 2026/27 be £1,876.45–**1823.01**, which reflects a **2.990%** increase, plus 2% Adult Social Care precept permitted increase for 2026/27 and therefore does not require a referendum;

- 2.1.12 agree that the Strategic Director of Resources and the officers nominated by him be authorised to finalise the necessary publicity as required by Section 38 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to promote the first day of the month instalment dates, and the six date options within each month for Direct Debit payers, as previously agreed;
- 2.1.13 note that in order to ensure the required period of notice is given, council taxpayers will be requested to pay their instalments on the first of each month commencing on 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.14 agree in accordance with the Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 to continue to maintain the maximum percentage allowed by current legislation for the empty home's premium from 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.15 agree in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 76) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings that have been empty for one year from 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.16 agree in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 77) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings which are "substantially furnished" but have no "resident" (e.g., second homes) from 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.17 agree for the purposes of calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit, any war disablement pension, war widow's or war widower's pension which would otherwise be treated as income for the purposes of calculating entitlement to housing benefit should be disregarded in its entirety.
- 2.1.18 agree the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2035/36 as set out in Appendix 10;
- 2.1.19 agree the reserves strategy at Appendix 7 and note that the Strategic Director of Resources has delegated responsibility for the use of reserves throughout the year;
- 2.1.20 note an application for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) of £19 million from central government and the decision to utilise this support is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer;
- 2.1.21 agree the flexible use of capital receipts policy, as set out in Appendix 3 and paragraph 3.51 to invest in savings initiatives. This will enable the funding of revenue projects and redundancy costs totalling £22 million from capital receipts, over 2026/27 and 2027/28. These costs will enable delivery of savings.

An amendment was then moved by Councillor Roy Berg and Councillor John Moss. Councillor John Moss formally seconded the amendment and reserved his right to speak during the debate:

The amendment sought;

That Council for the reasons set out in this report;

- 2.1.1 agree that the Waltham Forest basic amount of council tax, including the levying bodies, will be increased by 2.99% in 2026/27;
- 2.1.2 agree that the 2% permitted increase for Adult Social Care will be applied bringing the total increase to 4.99% and resulting in a council tax of £1,876.45 per Band D property in 2026/27;
- 2.1.3 note that the element of council tax charged by the Greater London Authority will be £510.51 per Band D property in 2026/27 which reflects an increase of £20.13 (4.10%);
- 2.1.4 agree that the overall council tax to be set for 2026/27 will be £2,386.96 per Band D property, which represents an overall increase of 4.80%;
- 2.1.5 agree that the projected budget (as set out in Appendix 1) for 2026/27 of **£611.072 million** is approved **with the following amendment:**  
**Council agrees to take £250,000 from the SRAs budget to invest in an extra relocatable CCTV Camera for each ward across the Borough with a budget for an average of 3 moves per camera per year.**
- 2.1.6 consider and note the whole of the Strategic Director of Resources report made under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 as set out in Appendix 2 and, in particular, their determination in the Financial Implications of this report on “the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves”;
- 2.1.7 note the amount of 82,991 (an increase of 208 over the previous year), as the Council Tax Base for the Council for 2026/27, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended);
- 2.1.8 agree that the following amounts to be approved for 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the Act);
  - f) Gross Expenditure  
**£1,15.024 million** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (2) of the Act;

f) Gross Income  
**£959.296 million** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (3) of the Act;

f) Net Expenditure  
**£155.728 million** – being the amounts by which the aggregate at 2.1.8(a), exceeds the aggregate at 2.1.8(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year.

f) LBWF Basic Amount of Council Tax including the Adult Social Care Precept

f) £1,876.45 – being the amount at 2.8.1(c) above, divided by 82,991 (the Council Tax Base), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year and includes the Adult Social Care Precept of £315.79.

f) Valuation Bands

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Basic	£	1,040.44	1,213.85	1,387.25	1,560.66	1,907.47	2,254.29	2,601.10	3,121.32
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Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 2.1.8(e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

2.1.9 Note that for 2026/27 the Greater London Assembly (GLA) has stated that (with formal ratification on 26 February 2026) that the following amounts in precepts be issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below;

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Total	£	340.34	397.06	453.79	510.51	623.96	737.40	850.85	1,021.02

2.1.10 agree, that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.1.8(f) and 2.1.9 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 sets the following amounts of council tax for 2025/26 for each of the categories of dwellings shown:

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Total	£	1,591.31	1,856.52	2,121.74	2,386.96	2,917.40	3,447.83	3,978.27	4,773.92

- 2.1.11 note that the relevant basic amount of council tax for a Band D property (excluding precepts but now including levies) for the financial year 2026/27 be £1,876.45, which reflects a 2.99% increase, plus 2% Adult Social Care precept permitted increase for 2026/27 and therefore does not require a referendum;
- 2.1.12 agree that the Strategic Director of Resources and the officers nominated by him be authorised to finalise the necessary publicity as required by Section 38 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to promote the first day of the month instalment dates, and the six date options within each month for Direct Debit payers, as previously agreed;
- 2.1.13 note that in order to ensure the required period of notice is given, council taxpayers will be requested to pay their instalments on the first of each month commencing on 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.14 agree in accordance with the Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 to continue to maintain the maximum percentage allowed by current legislation for the empty home's premium from 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.15 agree in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 76) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings that have been empty for one year from 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.16 agree in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 77) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings which are "substantially furnished" but have no "resident" (e.g., second homes) from 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.17 agree for the purposes of calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit, any war disablement pension, war widow's or war widower's pension which would otherwise be treated as income for the purposes of calculating entitlement to housing benefit should be disregarded in its entirety.
- 2.1.18 agree the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2035/36 as set out in Appendix 10;
- 2.1.19 agree the reserves strategy at Appendix 7 and note that the Strategic Director of Resources has delegated responsibility for the use of reserves throughout the year;
- 2.1.20 note an application for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) of £19 million from central government and the decision to utilise this support is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer;

2.1.21 agree the flexible use of capital receipts policy, as set out in Appendix 3 and paragraph 3.51 to invest in savings initiatives. This will enable the funding of revenue projects and redundancy costs totalling £22 million from capital receipts, over 2026/27 and 2027/28. These costs will enable delivery of savings.

An amendment was then moved by Councillor Sam O'Connell and Councillor Catherine Saumarez.

The amendment sought;

That Council for the reasons set out in this report;

2.1.1 agree that the Waltham Forest basic amount of council tax, including the levying bodies, will be increased by 2.99% in 2026/27;

2.1.2 agree that the 2% permitted increase for Adult Social Care will be applied bringing the total increase to 4.99% and resulting in a council tax of £1,876.45 per Band D property in 2026/27;

2.1.3 note that the element of council tax charged by the Greater London Authority will be £510.51 per Band D property in 2026/27 which reflects an increase of £20.13 (4.10%);

2.1.4 agree that the overall council tax to be set for 2026/27 will be £2,386.96 per Band D property, which represents an overall increase of 4.80%;

2.1.5 agree that the projected budget (as set out in Appendix 1) for 2026/27 of **£611.072 million** is approved **with the following amendment:**

**Council agrees to reduce the SRA budget by £150K. This money will be allocated to officer time and research to prepare for a potential return to weekly bin collections when the contract is up for renewal in 2027 and with a brief to solve the missed bin collection epidemic and provide appropriate sized bins to our residents.**

2.1.6 consider and note the whole of the Strategic Director of Resources report made under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 as set out in Appendix 2 and, in particular, their determination in the Financial Implications of this report on “the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves”;

2.1.7 note the amount of 82,991 (an increase of 208 over the previous year), as the Council Tax Base for the Council for 2026/27, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended);

2.1.8 agree that the following amounts to be approved for 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the Act);

f) Gross Expenditure

**£1,115.024 million** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (2) of the Act;

f) Gross Income

**£959.296 million** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (3) of the Act;

f) Net Expenditure

**£155.728 million** – being the amounts by which the aggregate at 2.1.8(a), exceeds the aggregate at 2.1.8(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year.

f) LBWF Basic Amount of Council Tax including the Adult Social Care Precept

f) £1,876.45 – being the amount at 2.8.1(c) above, divided by 82,991 (the Council Tax Base), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year and includes the Adult Social Care Precept of £315.79.

f) Valuation Bands

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Basic	£	1,040.44	1,213.85	1,387.25	1,560.66	1,907.47	2,254.29	2,601.10	3,121.32
Social Care	£	210.53	245.61	280.70	315.79	385.97	456.14	526.32	631.58
Total LBWF	£	1,250.97	1,459.46	1,667.95	1,876.45	2,293.44	2,710.43	3,127.42	3,752.90

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 2.1.8(e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

2.1.9 Note that for 2026/27 the Greater London Assembly (GLA) has stated that (with formal ratification on 26 February 2026) that the following amounts in precepts be issued to the Council in accordance with

Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below;

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£	340.34	397.06	453.79	510.51	623.96	737.40	850.85	1,021.02

2.1.10 agree, that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.1.8(f) and 2.1.9 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 sets the following amounts of council tax for 2025/26 for each of the categories of dwellings shown:

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£	1,591.31	1,856.52	2,121.74	2,386.96	2,917.40	3,447.83	3,978.27	4,773.92

2.1.11 note that the relevant basic amount of council tax for a Band D property (excluding precepts but now including levies) for the financial year 2026/27 be £1,876.45, which reflects a 2.99% increase, plus 2% Adult Social Care precept permitted increase for 2026/27 and therefore does not require a referendum;

2.1.12 agree that the Strategic Director of Resources and the officers nominated by him be authorised to finalise the necessary publicity as required by Section 38 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to promote the first day of the month instalment dates, and the six date options within each month for Direct Debit payers, as previously agreed;

2.1.13 note that in order to ensure the required period of notice is given, council taxpayers will be requested to pay their instalments on the first of each month commencing on 1 April 2026;

2.1.14 agree in accordance with the Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 to continue to maintain the maximum percentage allowed by current legislation for the empty home's premium from 1 April 2026;

2.1.15 agree in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 76) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings that have been empty for one year from 1 April 2026;

2.1.16 agree in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 77) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings which are "substantially furnished" but have no "resident" (e.g., second homes) from 1 April 2026;

2.1.17 agree for the purposes of calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit, any war disablement pension, war widow's or war widower's pension which would otherwise be treated as income for the purposes of calculating entitlement to housing benefit should be disregarded in its entirety.

- 2.1.18 agree the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2035/36 as set out in Appendix 10;
- 2.1.19 agree the reserves strategy at Appendix 7 and note that the Strategic Director of Resources has delegated responsibility for the use of reserves throughout the year;
- 2.1.20 note an application for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) of £19 million from central government and the decision to utilise this support is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer;
- 2.1.21 agree the flexible use of capital receipts policy, as set out in Appendix 3 and paragraph 3.51 to invest in savings initiatives. This will enable the funding of revenue projects and redundancy costs totalling £22 million from capital receipts, over 2026/27 and 2027/28. These costs will enable delivery of savings.

An amendment was then moved by Councillor Kay Isa and Councillor Mitchell Goldie that the motion be amended by adding the following words in red:

- 2.1 That Council for the reasons set out in this report;
- 2.1.1 agree that the Waltham Forest basic amount of council tax, including the levying bodies, will be increased by 2.99% in 2026/27;
- 2.1.2 agree that the 2% permitted increase for Adult Social Care will be applied bringing the total increase to 4.99% and resulting in a council tax of £1,876.45 per Band D property in 2026/27;
- 2.1.3 note that the element of council tax charged by the Greater London Authority will be £510.51 per Band D property in 2026/27 which reflects an increase of £20.13 (4.10%);
- 2.1.4 agree that the overall council tax to be set for 2026/27 will be £2,386.96 per Band D property, which represents an overall increase of 4.80%;
- 2.1.5 agree that the projected budget (as set out in Appendix 1) for 2026/27 of **£611.072 million** is approved **with the following amendment:**
- Reduce the Council's spend on consultants up to £794,000 to offset any losses in on-street parking income from reintroducing the on-street parking times (including the 15 minutes free period) from before Experimental Traffic Order ET2(25) came into force.**
- 2.1.6 consider and note the whole of the Strategic Director of Resources report made under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 as set out in Appendix 2 and, in particular, their determination in the

Financial Implications of this report on “the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves”;

2.1.7 note the amount of 82,991 (an increase of 208 over the previous year), as the Council Tax Base for the Council for 2026/27, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended);

2.1.8 agree that the following amounts to be approved for 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the Act);

f) Gross Expenditure

**£1,114.230 million** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (2) of the Act;

f) Gross Income

**£958.502 million** – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (3) of the Act;

f) Net Expenditure

**£155.728 million** – being the amounts by which the aggregate at 2.1.8(a), exceeds the aggregate at 2.1.8(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year.

f) LBWF Basic Amount of Council Tax including the Adult Social Care Precept

f) £1,876.45 – being the amount at 2.8.1(c) above, divided by 82,991 (the Council Tax Base), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year and includes the Adult Social Care Precept of £315.79.

f) Valuation Bands

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Basic	£	1,040.44	1,213.85	1,387.25	1,560.66	1,907.47	2,254.29	2,601.10	3,121.32
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Total LBWF	£	1,250.97	1,459.46	1,667.95	1,876.45	2,293.44	2,710.43	3,127.42	3,752.90

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 2.1.8(e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular

valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

2.1.9 Note that for 2026/27 the Greater London Assembly (GLA) has stated that (with formal ratification on 26 February 2026) that the following amounts in precepts be issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below;

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£	340.34	397.06	453.79	510.51	623.96	737.40	850.85	1,021.02

2.1.10 agree, that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.1.8(f) and 2.1.9 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 sets the following amounts of council tax for 2025/26 for each of the categories of dwellings shown:

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£	1,591.31	1,856.52	2,121.74	2,386.96	2,917.40	3,447.83	3,978.27	4,773.92

2.1.11 note that the relevant basic amount of council tax for a Band D property (excluding precepts but now including levies) for the financial year 2026/27 be £1,876.45, which reflects a 2.99% increase, plus 2% Adult Social Care precept permitted increase for 2026/27 and therefore does not require a referendum;

2.1.12 agree that the Strategic Director of Resources and the officers nominated by him be authorised to finalise the necessary publicity as required by Section 38 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to promote the first day of the month instalment dates, and the six date options within each month for Direct Debit payers, as previously agreed;

2.1.13 note that in order to ensure the required period of notice is given, council taxpayers will be requested to pay their instalments on the first of each month commencing on 1 April 2026;

2.1.14 agree in accordance with the Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 to continue to maintain the maximum percentage allowed by current legislation for the empty home's premium from 1 April 2026;

2.1.15 agree in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 76) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings that have been empty for one year from 1 April 2026;

- 2.1.16 agree in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 77) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings which are “substantially furnished” but have no “resident” (e.g., second homes) from 1 April 2026;
- 2.1.17 agree for the purposes of calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit, any war disablement pension, war widow’s or war widower’s pension which would otherwise be treated as income for the purposes of calculating entitlement to housing benefit should be disregarded in its entirety.
- 2.1.18 agree the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2035/36 as set out in Appendix 10;
- 2.1.19 agree the reserves strategy at Appendix 7 and note that the Strategic Director of Resources has delegated responsibility for the use of reserves throughout the year;
- 2.1.20 note an application for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) of £19 million from central government and the decision to utilise this support is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer;
- 2.1.21 agree the flexible use of capital receipts policy, as set out in Appendix 3 and paragraph 3.51 to invest in savings initiatives. This will enable the funding of revenue projects and redundancy costs totalling £22 million from capital receipts, over 2026/27 and 2027/28. These costs will enable delivery of savings.

There was debate in which Councillors John Moss, Khevyn Limbajee, Clyde Loakes and Afzal Akram spoke.

Councillor Grace Williams responded with her right of reply.

Councillor Emma Best raised a point of order confirming that the amendments were financial sound.

Due to mandatory standing orders as set out under The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, all votes on the Budget and Council Tax setting item and any amendments must be taken as recorded votes. The following votes were recorded:

**Vote on Amendment 1 in the names of Councillors Emma Best and Afzal Akram**

FOR: Councillors A Akram, R Berg, E Best, M Fitzgerald, M Goldie, J Halabi T James, K Isa, J Moss, S O’Connell and C Saumarez

AGAINST: Councillors S Ali-Rahman, R Anwar, N Asghar, E Baptiste, K Bellamy, K Berberi, M Berberi, T Connor, A Dixon, R Doré, P Douglas, S Dhedhi, K Gardiner, J Gray, K Green, C Ihenachor, W Ihenachor, A Khan, K Limbajee, S Littlejohn, C

Loakes, G Lyons, Z Malik, M Mirwitch, L Mitchell, J O’Dea, Y Patel, J Phipps, M Pye, C Quin, K Rayner, U Rasool, S Salek, R Sweden, S Terry, K Thompson, T Wheeler, J Whilby and G Williams

ABSTAIN: Councillors R Eglin and A Mbachu

The amendment in the names of Councillors Emma Best and Afzal Akram **FELL**.

**Vote on Amendment 2 in the names of Councillors Roy Berg and John Moss**

FOR: Councillors A Akram, R Berg, E Best , M Goldie, K Isa, J Moss, S O’Connell and C Saumarez

AGAINST: Councillors S Ali-Rahman, R Anwar, N Asghar, E Baptiste, K Bellamy, K Berberi, M Berberi, T Connor, A Dixon, R Doré, P Douglas, S Dhedhi, R Eglin, K Gardiner, J Gray, K Green, C Ihenachor, W Ihenachor, A Khan, K Limbajee, S Littlejohn, C Loakes, G Lyons, Z Malik, M Mirwitch, L Mitchell, J O’Dea, Y Patel, J Phipps, M Pye, C Quin, K Rayner, U Rasool, S Salek, R Sweden, S Terry, K Thompson, T Wheeler, J Whilby and G Williams

ABSTAIN: Councillors M Fitzgerald, J Halabi, T James and A Mbachu  
The amendment in the names of Councillors Roy Berg and John Moss **FELL**.

**Vote on Amendment 3 in the names of Councillors Sam O’Connell and Catherine Saumarez**

FOR: Councillors A Akram, R Berg, E Best , M Goldie, K Isa, J Moss, S O’Connell and C Saumarez

AGAINST: Councillors S Ali-Rahman, R Anwar, N Asghar, E Baptiste, K Bellamy, K Berberi, M Berberi, T Connor, A Dixon, R Doré, P Douglas, S Dhedhi, R Eglin, K Gardiner, J Gray, K Green, C Ihenachor, W Ihenachor, A Khan, K Limbajee, S Littlejohn, C Loakes, G Lyons, Z Malik, M Mirwitch, L Mitchell, J O’Dea, Y Patel, J Phipps, M Pye, C Quin, K Rayner, U Rasool, S Salek, R Sweden, S Terry, K Thompson, T Wheeler, J Whilby and G Williams

ABSTAIN: Councillors M Fitzgerald, J Halabi, T James and A Mbachu

The amendment in the names of Councillors Sam O’Connell and Catherine Saumarez **FELL**.

**Vote on Amendment 4 in the names of Councillors Kay Isa and Mitchell Goldie**

FOR: Councillors A Akram, R Berg, E Best , M Goldie, K Isa, J Moss, S O’Connell and C Saumarez

AGAINST: Councillors S Ali-Rahman, R Anwar, N Asghar, E Baptiste, K Bellamy, K Berberi, M Berberi, T Connor, A Dixon, R Doré, P Douglas, S Dhedhi, R Eglin, K

Gardiner, J Gray, K Green, C Ihenachor, W Ihenachor, A Khan, K Limbajee, S Littlejohn, C Loakes, G Lyons, Z Malik, M Mirwitch, L Mitchell, J O'Dea, Y Patel, J Phipps, M Pye, C Quin, K Rayner, U Rasool, S Salek, R Sweden, S Terry, K Thompson, T Wheeler, J Whilby and G Williams

ABSTAIN: Councillors M Fitzgerald, J Halabi, T James and A Mbachu

The amendment in the names of Councillors Kay Isa and Mitchell Goldie **FELL**.

**Vote on the substantive motion in the names of Councillors Grace Williams and Paul Douglas**

FOR: Councillors S Ali-Rahman, R Anwar, N Asghar, E Baptiste, K Bellamy, K Berberi, M Berberi, T Connor, A Dixon, R Doré, P Douglas, S Dhedhi, K Gardiner, J Gray, K Green, C Ihenachor, W Ihenachor, A Khan, K Limbajee, S Littlejohn, C Loakes, G Lyons, Z Malik, M Mirwitch, L Mitchell, J O'Dea, Y Patel, J Phipps, M Pye, C Quin, K Rayner, U Rasool, S Salek, R Sweden, S Terry, K Thompson, T Wheeler, J Whilby and G Williams

AGAINST: Councillors A Akram, R Berg, E Best , M Goldie, K Isa, J Moss, S O'Connell and C Saumarez

ABSTAIN: Councillors R Eglin, M Fitzgerald, J Halabi, T James and A Mbachu

The substantive motion in the names of Councillors Grace Williams and Paul Douglas **PASSED**.

Council:

- **agreed** that the Waltham Forest basic amount of council tax, including the levying bodies, will be increased by 2.99% in 2026/27;
- **agreed** that the 2% permitted increase for Adult Social Care will be applied bringing the total increase to 4.99% and resulting in a council tax of £1,876.45 per Band D property in 2026/27;
- **noted** that the element of council tax charged by the Greater London Authority will be £510.51 per Band D property in 2026/27 which reflects an increase of £20.13 (4.10%);
- **agreed** that the overall council tax to be set for 2026/27 will be £2,386.96 per Band D property, which represents an overall increase of 4.80%;
- **agreed** that the projected budget (as set out in Appendix 1) for 2026/27 of £611.072 million is approved;
- **considered and noted** the whole of the Strategic Director of Resources report made under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 as set out in Appendix 2 and, in particular, their determination in the Financial Implications

of this report on “the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations, and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves”;

- **noted** the amount of 82,991 (an increase of 208 over the previous year), as the Council Tax Base for the Council for 2026/27, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 made under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended);
- **agreed** that the following amounts to be approved for 2026/27 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the Act);
  - b. Gross Expenditure  
£1,115.024 million – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (2) of the Act;
  - c. Gross Income  
£959.296 million – being the aggregate of the amounts which the council estimates for the items in Sections 31A (3) of the Act;
  - d. Net Expenditure  
**£155.728 million** – being the amounts by which the aggregate at 2.1.8(a), exceeds the aggregate at 2.1.8(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act as its council tax requirement for the year.
  - e. LBWF Basic Amount of Council Tax including the Adult Social Care Precept
  - f. £1,876.45 – being the amount at 2.8.1(c) above, divided by 82,991 (the Council Tax Base), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year and includes the Adult Social Care Precept of £315.79.

g. Valuation Bands

Band		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
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Being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 2.1.8(e) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as

the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands;

- **noted** that for 2026/27 the Greater London Assembly (GLA) has stated that (with formal ratification on 26 February 2026) that the following amounts in precepts be issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below;

Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£ 340.34	397.06	453.79	510.51	623.96	737.40	850.85	1,021.02

- **agreed**, that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2.1.8(f) and 2.1.9 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 sets the following amounts of council tax for 2025/26 for each of the categories of dwellings shown:

Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total	£ 1,591.31	1,856.52	2,121.74	2,386.96	2,917.40	3,447.83	3,978.27	4,773.92

- **noted** that the relevant basic amount of council tax for a Band D property (excluding precepts but now including levies) for the financial year 2026/27 be £1,876.45, which reflects a 2.99% increase, plus 2% Adult Social Care precept permitted increase for 2026/27 and therefore does not require a referendum;
- **agreed** that the Strategic Director of Resources and the officers nominated by him be authorised to finalise the necessary publicity as required by Section 38 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and to promote the first day of the month instalment dates, and the six date options within each month for Direct Debit payers, as previously agreed;
- **noted** that in order to ensure the required period of notice is given, council taxpayers will be requested to pay their instalments on the first of each month commencing on 1 April 2026;
- **agreed** in accordance with the Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018 to continue to maintain the maximum percentage allowed by current legislation for the empty home's premium from 1 April 2026;
- **agreed** in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 76) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings that have been empty for one year from 1 April 2026;
- **agreed** in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Clause 77) to maintain a premium of 100% on dwellings which are "substantially furnished" but have no "resident" (e.g., second homes) from 1 April 2026;

- **agreed** for the purposes of calculating entitlement to Housing Benefit, any war disablement pension, war widow's or war widower's pension which would otherwise be treated as income for the purposes of calculating entitlement to housing benefit should be disregarded in its entirety.
- **agreed** the Capital Programme for 2025/26 to 2035/36 as set out in Appendix 10;
- **agreed** the reserves strategy at Appendix 7 and note that the Strategic Director of Resources has delegated responsibility for the use of reserves throughout the year;
- **noted** an application for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) of £19 million from central government and the decision to utilise this support is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer;
- **agreed** the flexible use of capital receipts policy, as set out in Appendix 3 and paragraph 3.51 to invest in savings initiatives. This will enable the funding of revenue projects and redundancy costs totalling £22 million from capital receipts, over 2026/27 and 2027/28. These costs will enable delivery of savings.

## 57. Treasury Management Strategy 2026/27

It was moved by Councillor Marie Pye and seconded by Councillor Steve Terry that:

Council:

- **approved** the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Report 2026-27.
- **approved** the MRP Policy for 2026-27.
- **approved** the Prudential Indicators as set out in the Treasury Management Strategy, which demonstrate that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable prudent and sustainable.

A recorded vote was requested by the Conservative group.

FOR: Councillors S Ali-Rahman, R Anwar, N Asghar, E Baptiste, K Bellamy, K Berberi, M Berberi, T Connor, A Dixon, R Doré, P Douglas, S Dhedhi, K Gardiner, J Gray, K Green, C Ihenachor, W Ihenachor, A Khan, K Limbajee, S Littlejohn, C Loakes, G Lyons, Z Malik, M Mirwitch, L Mitchell, J O'Dea, Y Patel, J Phipps, M Pye, C Quin, K Rayner, U Rasool, S Salek, R Sweden, S Terry, K Thompson, T Wheeler, J Whilby and G Williams

AGAINST: None.

ABSTAIN: Councillors A Akram, R Berg, E Best ,R Eglin, M Fitzgerald, M Goldie, K Isa, J Halabi, T James, A Mbachu, J Moss, S O'Connell and C Saumarez

The motion in the names of Councillors Marie Pye and Steve Terry was **PASSED**.

Council:

- **approved** the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Report 2026-27.
- **approved** the MRP Policy for 2026-27.
- **approved** the Prudential Indicators as set out in the Treasury Management Strategy, which demonstrate that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable prudent and sustainable.

#### **58. Pay Policy Statement 2026/27**

It was moved by Councillor Grace Williams and seconded by Councilor Paul Douglas that;

Council:

- **adopted** the Pay Policy Statement 2026/27 at Appendix A with supporting documents.
- **noted** that the increment progression will be applied as outlined within the Pay Policy Statement for April 2026.

Councillor Afzal Akram spoke.

The motion was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**.

#### **59. Members allowances scheme 2026/27**

It was moved by Councillor Grace Williams and seconded by Councillor Paul Douglas that:

- Council agree the Scheme as resolved in February 2025, to remain in effect until at least 31 March 2027.

Councillor Mitchell Goldie spoke on the item.

Councillor Tim James raised a point of personal explanation in relation to Cllr Goldie's use of casework data, noting that councillor performed a variety of roles.

Councillor Jonathan O'Dea raised a point of personal explanation in relation to Cllr Goldie's use of casework data, querying the accuracy of casework data centrally

held and whether it was legitimate to use it to assess the competency of a councillor's performance.

The Council **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** the motion.

#### **60. Rationalisation of committees**

It was moved by Councillor Steve Terry, seconded by Councillor Mitchell Goldie, and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that;

Council:

- **agreed** to merge Budget Scrutiny Committee with Scrutiny Coordinating Committee from May Council AGM 2026.
- **delegated** authority to the Corporate Director of Governance and Law to make relevant amendments within the Constitution to the terms of reference if the proposals are to be agreed.
- **noted** that the full six members as stated in the terms of reference for Audit and Governance will be appointed to from May Council AGM 2026.

#### **61. Proportionality of committees**

It was moved by Councillor Steve Terry, seconded by Councillor Mitchell Goldie, and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that;

Council:

- **Noted** that the political balance of the Council is:
  - 44 members of the Labour Group
  - 10 members of the Conservative Group
  - 3 members of the Reform UK Group
  - 3 Ungrouped Members
    - 3 independent members
- **Noted** the committees set out for the municipal year 2025/26 listed in Appendix 1 as agreed at the Annual Council Meeting held on 22 May 2025.
- **Agreed** to vary proportionality as set out in Appendix 1 and adopt some arrangement other than that prescribed by the Act or Regulations.
- **Agreed** any changes to the memberships of those committees as tabled at this Council meeting for approval.

**62. Draft calendar of meetings 2026/27**

It was moved by Councillor Steve Terry, seconded by Councillor Mitchell Goldie, and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that;

Council:

- **approved** the draft meetings programme for 2026-27 as set out in Appendix 1
- **noted** that the programme will be finalised at the Annual Council Meeting on 21 May 2026.

**The meeting closed at 9.25 pm**

**Chair's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_