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Dear Councillor

FULL COUNCIL - THURSDAY, 6 MARCH, 2025

I now enclose, for consideration the following items that were not available when the agenda was published.

7. **Questions from Members of the Public and Council**

The following question was received in accordance with the deadline but was not included on the Agenda.

In accordance with Rule No. 3.3.2 the following question was submitted to the Council by Mr. Laurence Goff.

Emily Blagg 90th Anniversary of Her Death On 7th April 1935 – 2025

Is it time to now recognise, acknowledge an exceptional intellectual woman of her life work in and around Newark? Would you agree it is time that Mrs Emily Blagg can be remembered with a Blue Plaque that can be on display at Newark Palace Theatre, Blagg and Johnson, Newark Cemetery, the two house she lived in: The Lodge 23 London Road around the corner from Lime Grove; 2 The Park Newark; and where she lived the rest of her life at 131 Lime Grove.

Her contribution had a profound impact and has transformed Newark with her life work and story having been told on TV programmes like Bargain Hunt, with many repeats also at Newark Advertiser, Blagg and Johnson, Newark Library, Newark Palace Theatre and on the internet.

A wonderful and incredible woman, her legacy must live on for what she done for Newark and putting us on the world's map of history marking. As part of International Women's Day on Saturday 8th March 2025, let us now put this tribute right so other woman can be inspired by her achievements.

Would you agree that this wonderful and incredible woman's legacy must live on for what she done for Newark? As part of International Women's Day, let us now put this tribute right so other woman can be inspired by her achievements.

8. **Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26 (Pages 3 - 6)**

Two proposed amendments to the Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26

10. **2025/26 to 2028/29 Medium Term Financial Plan (Pages 7 - 8)**

Two proposed amendments to the 2025/26 to 2028/29 Medium Term Financial Plan

MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL – 6 MARCH 2025

AGENDA ITEM No. 8 – REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING FOR 2025/26

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

The following amendment will be proposed by Councillor Jack Kellas and seconded by Councillor Sylvia Michael.

As outlined in Section 3 of the report, that the revenue estimates for 2025/26 and schedule of fees and charges, as submitted in the Council's Budget book be approved subject to the following changes as outlined below:

- 1.0 Council reduces the proposed increase in council tax from the maximum increase allowable of 2.99%, to a lower and more conservative increase of 1.94%, whereby:
 - 1.1 Proposal 3(g) will change to **£8,484,323** being the amount at 3(c) less the amount at 3(d) plus the amount at 3(e) less the amount at 3(f) calculated by the Council as the net Council Tax requirement for the year.
 - 1.2 Proposal 3(h) will change to **£198.60** being the amount at 3(g) above divided by the amount at 2(a), calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those part of its area which no special item relates.
 - 1.3 Proposal 3(j) will change to **£294.37** being the amount at 3(g) above plus the amount at 3(i) divided by the amount at 2(a) calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.
 - 1.4 Proposal 3(f) will change to **£316,301** being the original proposal for 3(f) less the difference between the original proposal for 3(g) and the amended 3(g) as above.
- 2.0 The revenue estimates for 2025/2026 and schedule of fees and charges, as submitted in the Council's Budget book be approved subject to removing the requested funding of £45,000 at row 6 of paragraph 3.23 of the Budget Book to 'support the action plan for Motion for the Ocean' recognising that:
 - 2.1 The discussion during item 11 of the Cabinet agenda paper on Tuesday 21 January 2025 acknowledged that this Council has already completed an impressive amount of work in this area. The discussion included a congratulatory message from an Ocean Expert and Co-founder of motion for the ocean who outlined how incredibly proud they are of all that this Council has achieved with trailblazing work, and as a leading light in this area.
 - 2.2 Item 11 of the Cabinet agenda paper on Tuesday 21 January 2025 clarified that other funds are proffered for activities around the commitment to increase ocean literacy.

- 2.3 Item 11 of the Cabinet agenda paper on Tuesday 21 January 2025 clarified that the £45,000 was to finance a touring theatre company to perform an experience of the ocean to all primary schools in the district, without assessing anticipated uptake, desire from local schools, alignment to curriculum, development of life skills, or measurable outcomes to demonstrate value for money.
- 3.0 Council allocates the sum of £39,000, funded by the removal of the £45,000 at paragraph 2.0 of this amendment to establish a pilot Members Ward Fund for the financial year 2025-26, whereby each individual member is allocated a sum of £1,000 to support charities, community groups and public bodies working within their wards for the benefit of residents.
- 4.0 Council allocates the sum of £6,000, funded by the removal of the £45,000 at paragraph 2.0 of this amendment for further tree planting within the district, including tree planting for flood alleviation schemes to assist in preventing future flooding.
- 5.0 Financial Implications (FIN24-25/2894)
- 5.1 The decision to reduce the increase in Council Tax from 2.99% to 1.94% would equate to a loss in Council Tax revenue in 2025/26 of £83,679. Over the four years of the MTFP, 2025/26 to 2028/29, this would amount to a reduction in funding from Council Tax of £370,914. The proposal suggests that this reduction in funding would be funded by the MTFP reserve for which there is sufficient funding available, however it should be noted that the ability for the Council to raise funding from future Council Tax increases will be reduced indefinitely.
- 5.2 The proposal also includes the reduction of spend of £45,000 in relation to the Motion for the Ocean. This spend is currently a one off (hence isn't included in future years within the Council's MTFP elsewhere on this agenda). The funding is then proposed to be re-allocated to fund a, one off, £39,000 pilot for a Members Ward fund and a, one off, £6,000 for further tree planting within the District. Should this part of the proposal be approved, the funding could be redirected, with any unspent funds in 2025/26 being allocated to the General Fund on 31 March 2026.
- 6.0 Legal Implications (LEG2425/9587)
- 6.1 If this amendment is carried a report will need to be submitted to Cabinet setting out detailed proposals for a Members Ward Fund, including resourcing implications. Cabinet may wish to task Policy and Performance Improvement Committee with developing the policy. Any necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution will need to be considered by Audit & Governance Committee for recommendation on to Full Council. Decisions in relation to tree planting proposals will be taken by Cabinet, Portfolio Holder or Officers as appropriate in accordance with Part C of the Council's Constitution – Responsibility for Functions.

MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL – THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2025

AGENDA ITEM No. 8 – REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING FOR 2025/26

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

The following amendment will be proposed by Councillor John Lee and seconded by Councillor Matthew Spoons.

That Council approve the proposals under Section 3 of the report, subject to the addition of £19,500 for the establishment of a Councillor Community Fund. This initiative would provide each elected member with £500 per year over the next two years to support local projects and initiatives within their respective wards. This addition to be funded from the Change Management Reserve.

The rationale for the amendment being:

1. Direct Community Benefit

- This amendment enables elected members to allocate funds to initiatives that reflect the specific needs of their communities.
- It ensures a fairer and broader investment across the district.

2. Increased Local Engagement

- By distributing funds to councillors, local residents will have a greater say in how public money is spent.
- This strengthens community engagement and ensures investments align with local priorities.

3. Addressing Resident Concerns

- This amendment ensures taxpayer money is spent in alignment with public sentiment and community needs.

4. Long-Term Positive Impact

- The Councillor's Community Fund supports sustainable, localised investment, allowing each elected member to back projects that benefit their constituents.
- Examples include local sports clubs, community centres, small infrastructure improvements, and grassroots initiatives.

Financial Implications (FIN24-25/6563)

The proposed addition of £19,500 can be accommodated from within the Change Management reserve.

Legal Implications (LEG2425/4282)

If this amendment is carried a report will need to be submitted to Cabinet setting out detailed proposals for a Councillor's Community Fund, including resourcing implications. Cabinet may wish to task Policy and Performance Improvement Committee with developing the policy. Any necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution will need to be considered by Audit & Governance Committee for recommendation on to Full Council.

MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL – 6 MARCH 2025

AGENDA ITEM No. 10 – 2025/26 TO 2028/29 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

The following amendment will be proposed by Councillor Jack Kellas and seconded by Councillor Sylvia Michael.

That Council approves the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for the four financial years between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2029 (2025/26 to 2028/29) subject to an amended annual increase of 1.94%, hence replacing the 2.99% annual increase proposed within the original report with a 1.94% annual increase as per previous iterations of the MTFP.

Financial Implications (FIN24-25/4670)

Inclusive of the decision regarding setting the level of Council Tax at 1.94% for 2025/26, the overall impact of an increase at 1.94% in all four years between 2025/26 and 2028/29 is a loss in funding from Council Tax of £935,427 compared with an increase of 2.99% in each of those years. The proposal suggests that this reduction in funding would be funded by the MTFP reserve for which there is sufficient funding available, however it should be noted that the ability for the Council to raise funding from future Council Tax increases will be reduced indefinitely.

Legal Implications (LEG2425/2828)

None.

MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL – 6 MARCH 2025

AGENDA ITEM No. 10 - 2025/26 TO 2028/29 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

The following amendment will be proposed by Councillor John Lee and seconded by Councillor Matthew Spoons.

That the MTFP for 2025/26 to 2028/29 be approved, subject to the addition of £19,500 in 2026/27 for a Councillor Community Fund.

Financial Implications (FIN24-25/2504)

The proposed addition of £19,500 can be accommodated from within the Change Management reserve.

Legal Implications (LEG2425/4282)

If this amendment is carried a report will need to be submitted to Cabinet setting out detailed proposals for a Councillor's Community Fund, including resourcing implications. Cabinet may wish to task the Policy & Performance Improvement Committee with developing the policy. Any necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution will need to be considered by Audit & Governance Committee for recommendation on to Full Council.