

NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

10th December, 2014

A meeting of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council was held at the Town Hall, Nuneaton, on Wednesday, 10th December, 2014.

Present

The Mayor (Councillor B.L. Hawkes)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor B.J. Longden)

Councillors J.B. Beaumont, I.C. Bonner, R.G. Copland, T. Doherty, S. Doughty, P.M. Elliott, J. Foster, D. Fowler, J. Glass, N.G. Grant, W.J. Hancox, D. Harvey, J. Haynes, P.D. Hickling, J.A. Jackson, K.A. Kondakor, A.A. Loyd, I.K. Lloyd, S.J. Margrave, D.C. Navarro, C.S. Phillips, N.J.P. Phillips, G.D. Pomfrett, J. Sheppard, T.E. Sheppard, J.A. Tandy, R.A. Taylor, R.D. Tromans, C.M. Watkins and K.D. Wilson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Aldington, C. Bennett, N.G. Grant, J. Sheppard and C.M. Watkins.

Prayers were taken by the Rev. Helga Cornell.

CL38 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council meeting held on the 24th September, 2014 and the Special Council meeting held on the 19th November, 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Mayor, subject to the name of the speaker in Minute CL29(d) of the minutes of the meeting held on the 24th September, 2014 being amended to read "Michele Kondakor"

CL39 **Interests**

(a) Councillor J.A. Jackson declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any relevant item by reason of her husband's employment with Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council and Sport and Leisure Management for which she has received dispensation to speak and vote on matters that do not relate specifically to his contract of employment or the unit in which he is employed.

She also declared Other Interests in any relevant item by reason of her being on the board of Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprise Limited (NABCEL) for which she has received dispensation to speak and vote on matters relating to this company as long as this does not affect her personally and as a Member of Warwickshire County Council.

(b) Councillor D. Harvey declared an Other Interest in any item by virtue of him being on the board of Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprise Limited (NABCEL), for which he had received dispensation to speak and vote on matters relating to this company as long as this does not affect him personally. He also declared an Other Interest in agenda item 10(e) by reason of him occasionally working at Croft Middle School.

(c) Councillor A.A. Lloyd declared Other Interests in any relevant item by reason of him being the Council's representative on the Hospice Charity and also by reason of him being a Governor of George Eliot Hospital.

(d) Councillor D.C. Navarro declared an Other Interest in any relevant item by reason of him being a non-executive director of George Eliot Hospital.

(e) Councillor K.D. Wilson declared Other Interest in any item by virtue of him being on the board of Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Enterprise Limited (NABCEL) for which he had received dispensation to speak and vote on matters relating to this company as long as this does not affect him personally, his employment with Nuneaton County Court and Warwickshire Family Proceeding Court and as a Governor of Etone School.

(f) Councillors J.B. Beaumont, S. Doughty, K.A. Kondakor, B.L. Hawkes and C.S. Phillips, declared Other Interests in any item by virtue of them Members of Warwickshire County Council.

(g) Councillor J.A. Tandy declared Other Interests in any item by virtue of her being a Member of the County Council and a member of LEP.

CL40 **Announcements**

The Mayor presented a photograph representing his year of office 2013/2014 to the previous Mayor, Councillor Bob Copland.

CL41 **Public Participation**

(a) Hercules Botha asked the following question:

“At the Cabinet meeting, Ian Powell pointed out an omission that has a negative environment impact on the whole area. We have identified numerous errors and conflicts with the studied prepared to support the Bermuda Connectivity project which has also been omitted from the cabinet report. Can you commit to review these missing points before funding is approved?”

Councillor A. A. Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development responded as follows:

“This Council is not providing funds for the project.

The project is being funded by the County Council and a grant from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Concerns raised by residents at our Cabinet meeting on 3rd December have been passed to the County Highways department to consider.

Several more detailed studies will be done by the County Council.

They will then prepare initial design drawings that will be consulted on.

The County Council Cabinet will then make a decision on whether to progress the project to completion, which will include detailed design and construction.”

(b) Richard Briggs asked the following question:

“The scope and extents of the traffic modelling for the Bermuda Connectivity Project shown on Page 21 of the Cabinet Report of the 3rd December is not wide enough and will significantly underestimate the impact of the scheme on traffic patterns throughout the Arbury Ward. The Link Road created by the bridge is significantly shorter than current routes to the A444 via Heath End Road Greenmoor Road and as a result traffic heading towards the M6 will ‘rat run’ through Bermuda Road rather than using the purpose built A444 bypass. Traffic will reassign from Haunchwood Road and Tompkinson Road along Westbury Road, Northumberland Avenue and The Raywoods and parallel routes to avoid localised junction queues. These new routes are not within the Paramics modelling cordon so the impacts on the Arbury Ward will NOT be considered and the impacts of the scheme significantly under-estimated. Please confirm to the residents of Arbury Ward whether the Council is committed to working with its partners to extend the traffic modelling cordon up Tompkinson Road up to the junction of Haunchwood Road and Westbury Road so that the environmental impacts on the residential areas of Nuneaton are fully understood, if funding is provided to develop the scheme to public consultation?”.

Councillor A.A. Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, responded as follows:

“The County Council Highways Department has agreed to consider the proposal put forward by Mr. Briggs when they decide on the scope of the next round of transport modelling.”

(c) Mr. John Lane asked the following question:

“Please confirm why the Council have provided taxpayers money to the LEP for Bermuda connectivity project that within its own feasibility report notes construction of the development, as well as opening to traffic, will produce air and noise pollution and increase road accidents and congestion around the site.

The developments will also affect residents of Nuneaton due to increase of pollutants related to traffic emissions, when the LEP have an alternative scheme without the need for the bridge, the LEP report states “the scheme achieves its primary objective of addressing all queuing and congestion issues on the A444 corridor at this location.

Additionally, the scheme provides capacity for NBBC local plan growth over the plan period (up to 2028). The scheme has sufficient capacity to accommodate significant further growth?”

Councillor A.A. Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, responded as follows:

“No taxpayers’ money is being provided to the LEP for this project.

A grant received through the LEP is reducing the amount of taxpayers’ money needed to complete the scheme.

The LEP do not have an alternative scheme but they have referred to the potential link road that was described in the Council’s Preferred Options.

This potential link road will depend on future developer contributions.

There is no developer interest in that scheme at the moment so no detailed work has been done on it.

Even if that route does go ahead in the future, the proposed Bermuda Connectivity Project will still improve access to amenities by linking people to jobs and improving access to the George Eliot and the new railway station.

The Bermuda Connectivity Project will not go ahead until more detailed studies have been done to assess the environmental, road safety and other implications.

(d) Clare Golby asked the following question:

“As the WCC have identified that the building of a 1000+ housing estate on Arbury land is a ‘Key outcome’ of the Bermuda Bridge being opened, I’d like to ask why has this not been much publicised and openly discussed with the people of Bermuda and the wider area by both WCC and NBBC along with the agenda

of traffic easement and theoretical 4000 jobs creation of which the published information is heavily bias towards?

Councillor A.A. Lloyd responded as follows:

“The potential housing site was part of the Borough Council’s Preferred Options consultation which took place from 5th July, 2013 to 30th August, 2013.

This was a major public consultation.

No decisions have been taken yet about the potential housing site and there will be further consultation before a decision is taken.

The County Council have noted that an unintended benefit of the project will be to improve road access to the potential housing site at Bermuda if it goes ahead.”

(e) Elizabeth Sidwell asked the following question:

“Can the Council provide a breakdown by site and employment use for the estimated 4000 jobs to be created within the Bermuda Park development as an outcome of the Bermuda Connectivity Project?”

Councillor A.A. Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, responded as follows:

“We expect about 4,300 jobs to be created across the Bermuda area as a whole. At the moment we can not forecast how the jobs will be spread across the area. We expect the type of jobs to be as follows:

At the moment we cannot forecast how the jobs will be spread across the area.

We expect the type of jobs to be as follows:

1. 1% management jobs
2. 22% professional and technical jobs
3. 10% administration jobs
4. 26% skilled jobs
5. 11% sales and customer service jobs
6. 12% process and machine operation jobs
7. 18% unskilled jobs

(f) Andrew Wilson asked the following question:

“In the capital Growth Fund Business case it states one of the main objectives of the plan is to:

“Improve the environment for cyclists and pedestrians to increase mode of choice and accessibility.”

Considering this vehicle free bridge is already used by cyclists and pedestrian with no traffic on it all.

Do you think opening the bridge to all traffic is going to improve the desire and safety for cyclists and pedestrians to use this route?"

Councillor A.A. Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, responded as follows:

"The project is expected to include improving the local walking and cycling network between the Heath End Road/Bermuda Road junction and Griff Roundabout.

The focus is not just on the bridge but on the wider area.

The potential improvements include the following:

Proposed improvements to St.Georges Way, including the provision of a cycleway; and

Proposed improvements to the existing shared pedestrian/cycle link between the bridge and Barling Way (for access to EPIC building and George Eliot Hospital.

Councillor K.D. Wilson, seconded by Councillor R. Tromans put forward the following motion:

"That the issue of the Bermuda Connectivity Project be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further investigation."

A recorded vote was taken as follows;

For 5 (Councillors I.C. Bonner, J. Foster, K.A. Kondakor, R. Tromans and K.D. Wilson)

Against 24 (Councillor J.B. Beaumont, R.G. Copland, T. Doherty, S. Doughty, P.M. Elliott, D. Fowler, J. Glass, W.J. Hancox, D. Harvey, B.L. Hawkes, J. Haynes, P.D. Hickling, J.A. Jackson, A.A. Lloyd, I.K. Lloyd, B.J. Longden, S.J. Margrave, D.C. Navarro, C.S. Phillips, N.J.P. Phillips, G.D. Pomfrett, T.E. Sheppard, J.A. Tandy and R.A. Taylor)

The motion was lost.

(f) Alan Baxter asked the following question:

"Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council have onwards of 250 housing applications blacklisted and barred from progressing into Social Housing within the Borough as the applicants have debts with prior Landlords .

These people, whom are already struggling with paying their rent, are the very ones that would benefit from the lower rates of rent offered by Council Housing; which is roughly 1/3 cheaper than commercial private rentals. I understand that one of the aims of the Borough Council is to raise the standards of life in the Borough up towards those enjoyed by the affluent South of the County. To do this by forcing some of the poorest and most vulnerable individuals to look for housing outside of the Borough seems immoral.

NBBCs Housing Dept. has told me that the Borough homeless hostel is full and that homelessness in the Borough is rising. It was also reported in the free Metro newspaper that some 1/2 Million people nationally are at risk of being evicted from their homes in the coming year. Given this insidious background of financial hardship and homelessness;

Is it ethical for the Council Housing Dept. to blacklist the poorest and most vulnerable people in our Town?"

Councillor J.A. Jackson, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, responded as follows:

"The Council's Housing Allocation Policy includes **no** Policy or Protocol for 'blacklisting' any applicant. What the Policy does do is enable the Council to suspend an applicant if they owe a former rental debt to either ourselves, as a former Council tenant, or a former landlord, be it a Housing Association or a private landlord. The suspension is in place to enable the applicant to reduce the former rental debt to a figure of at least £200 after which point their application is made LIVE, and allows for the applicant to start expressing interests on properties whilst reducing their debt further.

The demand for social housing is high, and we currently have over 2000 LIVE applicants registered on Home Hunt for re-housing. The Allocation Policy, adopted by Members in 2013, seeks to allocate the limited supply of social housing stock within the Borough based on prioritising those in greatest housing need and according to criteria to enable fair and transparent allocations. Those applicants that are suspended for either former rental debts or other breaches of tenancy, for example Anti-social behaviour, will continue to receive advice and assistance in securing alternative accommodation such as that available within the private rented sector within the Borough."

(h) Katrina Slomczynski asked the following question:

"I am one of the 250 applicants who is on your list of suspended housing applications.

I would like to inform you that I was never told about any discretionary Housing payment fund until some one pointed it out to me in the local paper despite my frequent visits to the council house and CAB office for advice and support on what I could claim to help pay me rent to Jephson Housing

Association. This was due to my having dyslexia and being unable to fill paper work in properly on my own.

For over a year I had to beg people for a place to sleep whilst trying to still hold down 4 zero hour contract jobs that would take me over 2 hours to travel to.

Due to the lack of support I am now on your suspended application list due to an alleged outstanding debt and have been told by Jane Grant via phone and not via email or post like I requested that I can not make a retrospective claim so that I can provide a permanent home for my son. My son for whom when I was carrying was a high risk pregnancy I was told by one of your officers that they did not care if i was living in a boot of a car.

My son who is now thanks to being homeless a genuine First Generation Water Gypsy. This is not due to me choosing a "life style change", but having no other way of me being able to afford to keep a roof over his head. Again I was told by your staff that you do not support "Water Gypsies."

I would like to know how you are going to help me provide a safe home to raise and school him when to you people like my do not exist?

I would like know when I am going to get an apology from the Council for the lack of information and support that they have not provided me over the past 6 years?"

Councillor J.A. Jackson, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities, responded as follows:

"The Councils Strategic Housing and Communities Manager has confirmed that her Options Team's first contact with you, concerning your homelessness situation, was in April 2012, 2 and a half years ago. From this point to the present day Officers of this Council have endeavoured to advise and assist you , in line with our local Allocation Policy and the Statutory Homelessness Legislation. Over the past 6 months you have been in contact with Housing Officers, Housing Benefit Officers, the County Councils' Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer and also the Planning team relating to your on-going assertions that the Council is not helping you to find suitable accommodation.

My understanding is that despite being offered temporary accommodation following the birth of your son, which changed the Council's statutory duties toward you, you have chosen not to take up this offer. This offer is still available to you."

CL42 **Questions by Members**

(a) Councillor P.D. Hickling asked the following question:

“Please could the Portfolio Holder for Housing update the Council on the redevelopment taking place on Spinney Lane and Knowles Avenue?”

Councillor J.A. Jackson, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, responded as follows:

“The Council owns 45 properties in Spinney Lane and Knowles Avenue. Under the previous subsidy financing regime, which saw this Council pay in excess of £5 million to the Government annually, we did not receive adequate funding to address all of the refurbishment needs of our housing stock.

We moved to ‘self financing’ in April 2012 and this has allowed us to increase the amount of money we are able to spend on our homes, meaning that we have been able to prioritise the homes that were not built in a traditional method.

45 of those ‘non traditional’ homes are in Spinney Lane and Knowles Avenue and I am pleased to be able to advise Council that those homes have been refurbished and now have new windows, doors, fascias, soffits, guttering and importantly, external wall insulation which will significantly increase the energy efficiency of those homes and reduce the heating bills of tenants. All works will be completed before Christmas.

We have also attracted funding from the Department of Energy and Climate Change to enable owner occupiers in Spinney Lane and Knowles Avenue to obtain energy efficiency measures for their homes.

The feedback from residents have been overwhelmingly positive and I am proud that we have been able to increase the standard of these homes in this way.

(b) Councillor G.D. Pomfrett asked the following question:

“Can the Leader of the Council explain how much money the Council has made available to residents who are struggling to cope with the effects of changes in the benefits system introduced by the current government?”

The Leader of the Council, Councillor D. Harvey responded as follows:

“The Council has two funds available to assist those residents who are facing financial hardship as a result of the welfare reform changes introduced since April, 2013.

There is the Discretionary Housing Payment fund which is available to help residents who have a shortfall between the amount of Housing Benefit they receive and the amount of rent they have to pay. The Discretionary Housing Payment fund is provided by the Department of Work and Pensions and for 2014/15 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council have been allocated

£221,057. As well as assisting with rent shortfalls, DHP's can also be considered to help with moving costs should residents wish to move to more affordable accommodation.

Local Council Tax Support replaced Council Tax Benefit from 1st April, 2013. It was acknowledged that the introduction of Local Council Tax Support may mean some claimants receiving Local Council Tax Support – the amount allocated is £200,000. This amount also includes a contingency for an increase in caseload along with the effect of Local Council Tax Support on the Council Tax collection rates.

The authority actively encourage and promotes the take up of both funds and considers applications on a case by case basis. Decisions are based upon the individual circumstances of the applicant, their income and expenditure.

Promotion of the DHP and Hardship fund continues and has included a targeted outreach campaign at the beginning of the financial year. We have specifically encouraged applications from those affected by the Welfare Reform changes, including those affected by the spare room subsidy.

(c) Councillor K.A. Kondakor asked the following question:

“What is the likely financial cost for each six months delay in the Borough Plan, including officers' costs, lost CIL income and planning appeal costs?”

Councillor A.A. Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, responded as follows:

“To work out any costs associated with CIL income and planning appeals would only be possible if we had knowledge of future events. It is therefore impossible to answer this part of the question.

Officers are employed by the Council so the cost of their time is already paid for. Their priority is the Borough Plan which is put ahead of other work. If any delay in the Borough Plan creates time for officers, the time will be spent on those other priorities so there will be no increase in cost.

(d) Councillor S.J. Margrave asked the following question:

“In response to the Autumn Statement, the Institute for Fiscal Studies stated the Chancellor would need to make massive cuts in public spending if he is to carry through his plans on the deficit.

Can the Leader tell us then what re-electing a Conservative Government could mean for Council services local people rely on?”

The Leader of the Council, Councillor D. Harvey responded as follows:

“The main source of funding the Council receives from Central Government is Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and is used to support the delivery of services. Since the last General Election and Comprehensive Spending Review 2010 (CSR 10) the Council has experienced unprecedented reductions in RSG in excess of 40%. The Council has managed these reductions through its medium term financial planning and annual budget setting processes.

Funding for 2016/17 and beyond is uncertain, but significant on-going reductions in RSG are assumed in line with national funding reductions currently of 9%. These reductions have been built into the Council’s Medium term Financial Plan approved by Cabinet in October and representing and anticipated reduction of £1.3m over the two year period 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The reductions in RSG funding mean that it is increasingly becoming a smaller proportion of the financial NBBC has available to support its services, and income from business rates and Council tax have become more significant shares of our overall financing.

The Council must set a balanced budget each year and still needs to identify savings of £219k in 2015/16. The MTFP identifies that a further £1.5m of savings in 2016/17 and 2017/18 will also be required. If reductions in RSG are more severe than those assumed in the MTFP, additional savings will have to be identified.

However, Cabinet has already been working with officers on a two year savings plan for 2015/16 and 2016/17 to identify how this gap can be bridged with the minimum disruption to services for local people. The Council is using innovative ways to generate income, including the setting up of the Council’s trading arm – NABCEL, and working to generate additional income through business rates from business growth in the Borough.

The outcome of the next General Election is likely to have a significant impact on the Council’s MTFP and the assumptions will need to be reviewed early in the new Parliament to ensure that NBBC is best placed to meet the challenge.

Electing a Conservative Government, Mr. Mayor, based on our experience since 2010, would clearly be a disaster for local services and we can only hope that it will not happen.”

(f) Councillor J. Foster asked the following question:

"The Leader will be aware of the questions which I have asked previously around Air Pollution issues within the un-inspected Borough Plan and the damage done to the health of residents of the Borough, which have been rejected as unimportant.

Much of the air pollution damage is from the chemicals getting into the lung via the complex small molecules in extremely small particulates in modern diesel engines which the automotive industry has not yet properly woken up to.

As of Sunday last the Mayor of Paris announced radical plans to ban all diesel engines from the city by 2020. The London Mayor has announced a similar plan to be completed within 10 years for London.

In Britain about 29,000 premature deaths are blamed on air pollution.

Will the Leader now begin to take these matters seriously, and make efforts with Officers and outside experts to change the proposed flawed Borough Plan on an urgent basis, to take the planned continued traffic flow of through traffic away from our residential areas, to improve health within the Borough?"

Councillor I.K. Lloyd, Cabinet Member for Planning and Development, responded as follows:

"The Council already takes air quality seriously.

That is why officers have already commissioned independent experts to examine the effects on air quality of our proposals.

(e) Councillor K.D. Wilson asked the following question:

"Residents in Whitestone collected the largest petition the Borough against the Borough Plan. Similar petitions and responses in large droves were received by this Council almost a year and a half ago and yet thousands of people are yet to even receive the courtesy of a full reply from this Council.

Could the Portfolio Holder please enlighten residents and Councillors alike as to when we receive a proper response to the consultation?"

Councillor A.A. Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development responded as follows:

"All of the consultation responses have been published on the Council's website.

The Council has considered all of the responses carefully and is currently discussing them with the Borough Plan Working Party.

Residents will be informed of the results when the draft Borough Plan is published."

As a supplementary question Councillor K.D. Wilson asked "given the fact that Councillor Lloyd has said that the Borough Plan is a priority for this Council,

why has £59,000 been cut from the budget when the Planning Officer cost is £37,000 a year.

Councillor A.A. Lloyd responded by saying that a response would be sent in letter form to Councillor Wilson.

CL43 Special Urgency Decisions

There have been no decisions taken under the Special Urgency Rule.

RESOLVED that it be noted there have been no decisions taken under the Special Urgency rule.

CL44 Cabinet

Councillor Harvey submitted his report on behalf of Cabinet highlighting several issues which had been dealt with since the last meeting.

Several questions were raised to which Councillor Harvey gave responses.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CL45 Recommendations from Cabinet or Other Committees

(a) Consultation – The Local Government Boundary Commission – Draft Recommendations – New Electoral Arrangements for Warwickshire County Council

Councillor Harvey, Leader of the Council, reported on the recommendations made by Cabinet at its meeting on the 29th October, 2014 when it was recommended to Council that the letter sent to the Boundary Commission, together with a copy of the Boundary Commission's response be noted.

Councillor K.D. Wilson stated that he and his colleagues would not support the recommendation and that the Council should look at its own arrangements.

A recorded vote was taken on Cabinet's recommendation as follows:

For	24	(Councillors J.B. Beaumont, R.G. Copland, T. Doherty, S. Doughty, P.M. Elliott, D. Fowler, J. Glass, W.J. Hancox, D. Harvey, B.L. Hawkes, J. Haynes, P.D. Hickling, J.A. Jackson, A.A. Lloyd, I.K. Lloyd, B.J. Longden, S.J. Margrave, D.C. Navarro, C.S. Phillips, N.J.P. Phillips, G.D. Pomfrett, T.E. Sheppard, J.A. Tandy and R.A. Taylor)
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Against	3	(Councillors J. Foster, R. Tromans and K.D. Wilson)
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Abstention 2 (Councillors I.C. Bonner and K.A. Kondakor)

RESOLVED that the letter sent to the Boundary Commission, together with a copy of the Boundary Commission's response be noted.

(b) Bermuda Connectivity Project Funding Application

Councillor Harvey, Leader of the Council and Councillor A.A. Lloyd, Cabinet Member, Planning and Development reported on the recommendations made by Cabinet at its meeting on the 3rd December, 2014.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendation as follows:

For 23 (Councillors Councillors J.B. Beaumont, R.G. Copland, T. Doherty, S. Doughty, P.M. Elliott, D. Fowler, J. Glass, W.J. Hancox, D. Harvey, B.L. Hawkes, J. Haynes, P.D. Hickling, J.A. Jackson, A.A. Lloyd, I.K. Lloyd, B.J. Longden, S.J. Margrave, D.C. Navarro, N.J.P. Phillips, G.D. Pomfrett, T.E. Sheppard, J.A. Tandy and R.A. Taylor)

Against 5 (Councillors I.C. Bonner, J. Foster, K.A. Kondakor, R. Tromans and K.D. Wilson)

Abstention 1 (Councillor C.S. Phillips)

RESOLVED that the General Fund Capital Programme for 2014/15 be increased by £500,000, to be funded by grant monies from the Coventry and Warwickshire LEP.

(c) Local Council Tax Support

Councillor Harvey, Leader of the Council, reported on the recommendations made by Cabinet at its meeting on the 3rd December, 2014.

Councillor K.A. Kondakor, seconded by Councillor I.C. Bonner, put forward the following amendment to recommendation (i)

“no changes be made to the 2015/16 scheme other than the uprating of rates and allowances in line with those set nationally by Government and adjusting the 20% minimum payment so that only £20,000 is collected for the hardship fund;”

A recorded vote was taken on the amendment as follows:

For 5 (Councillors I.C. Bonner, J. Foster, K.A. Kondakor, R. Tromans and K.D. Wilson)

Against 24 (Councillors J.B. Beaumont, R.G. Copland, T. Doherty, S. Doughty, P.M. Elliott, D. Fowler, J. Glass, W.J. Hancox, D. Harvey, B.L. Hawkes, J. Haynes, P.D. Hickling, J.A. Jackson, A.A. Lloyd, I.K. Lloyd, B.J. Longden, S.J. Margrave, D.C. Navarro, C.S. Phillips, N.J.P. Phillips, G.D. Pomfrett, T.E. Sheppard, J.A. Tandy and R.A. Taylor)

The amendment was lost.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) no changes be made to the 2015/16 scheme other than the uprating of rates and allowances in line with those set nationally by Government; and
 - (ii) the proposed Local Council Tax Support scheme for 1st April, 2015 be approved.
- (d) Treasury Management 2014/15 – Mid Year Review

Councillor D. Harvey, Leader of the Council reported on the recommendations made by Cabinet at its meeting on the 3rd December, 2014.

Councillor R. Tromans, seconded by Councillor K.D. Wilson put forward the following amendment to recommendation (ii):

“specifically in respect of treasury management, the changes to the credit methodology whereby viability, financial strength and support ratings will not be considered as key criteria in the choice of creditworthy investment counterparties, as detailed within Section 8 be approved.”

A recorded vote was taken on the amendment as follows:

For: 5 (Councillors I.C. Bonner, J. Foster, K.A. Kondakor, R. Tromans and K.D. Wilson)

Against: 24 (Councillors J.B. Beaumont, R.G. Copland, T. Doherty, S. Doughty, P.M. Elliott, D. Fowler, J. Glass, W.J. Hancox, D. Harvey, B.L. Hawkes, J. Haynes, P.D. Hickling, J.A. Jackson, A.A. Lloyd, I.K. Lloyd, B.J. Longden, S.J. Margrave, D.C. Navarro, C.S. Phillips, N.J. P. Phillips, G.D. Pomfrett, T.E. Sheppard, J.A. Tandy, R.A. Taylor and C.M. Watkins)

The amendment was lost.

A recorded vote was taken on the original motion as follows:

For: 24 (Councillors J.B. Beaumont, R.G. Copland, T. Doherty, S. Doughty, P.M. Elliott, D. Fowler, J. Glass, W.J. Hancox, D. Harvey, B.L. Hawkes, J. Haynes, P.D. Hickling, J.A. Jackson, A.A. Lloyd, I.K. Lloyd, B.J. Longden, S.J. Margrave, D.C. Navarro, C.S. Phillips, N.J. P. Phillips, G.D. Pomfrett, T.E. Sheppard, J.A. Tandy, R.A. Taylor and C.M. Watkins)

Against: 4 (Councillors J. Foster, K.A. Kondakor, R. Tromans and K.D. Wilson)

Abstention: 1 (Councillor I.C. Bonner)

RESOLVED that

(i) the proposed Local Council Tax Support scheme for 1st April, 2015 be approved; and

(ii) the changes to the credit methodology whereby viability, financial strength and support ratings will not be considered as key criteria in the choice of creditworthy investment counterparties, as detailed within Section 8 be approved.”

(e) Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Councillor D. Aldington, Cabinet Member for Central Services, reported on the recommendations made by Cabinet at its meeting on the 5th November, 2014 and the further recommendation made at the Individual Cabinet Member Decision on the 2nd December, 2014.

RESOLVED that:

(i) the schedule of polling districts and polling places, as amended and attached to the report, be approved and published in accordance with statutory requirements;

(ii) the Returning Officer be given delegated authority in consultation with the Ward Councillors and other stakeholders to make any necessary amendments to the schedule prior to the next full review;

(iii) further consultation be undertaken in respect of the position regarding Priory Court and a report be submitted to an Individual Cabinet Member Decision; and

(iv) Priory Court remain as the polling station for the polling district ABF. A further review be carried out in the future on the possibility of using Fife Street.

CL46 **Appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officer**

Members of the Council considered the report of the Electoral Registration Officer regarding the appointment of an officer of the Council to be:-

- (a) the Electoral Registration Officer in line with Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act 1983; and
- (b) the Returning Officer in line with Section 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

RESOLVED that the formal appointment of the Deputy Electoral Registration Officers to the posts of Director of Governance and Recreation and Principal Solicitor be approved.

Mayor