

MINUTES

COUNCIL

MONDAY, 1 MARCH 2010

2.00 PM



PRESENT

Councillor Bob Adams Chairman

Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Christine Brough
Councillor Robert Broughton
Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor Elizabeth Channell
Councillor George Chivers
Councillor Michael Cook
Councillor Nick Craft
Councillor Alan Davidson
Councillor John Dawson
Councillor Mike Exton
Councillor Stuart Farrar
Councillor Mrs Joyce Gaffigan
Councillor John Harvey
Councillor Bryan Helyar
Councillor David Higgs
Councillor Trevor Holmes
Councillor Reginald Howard
Councillor Sam Jalili
Councillor Mrs Maureen Jalili
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown
Councillor Albert Victor Kerr
Councillor Reg Lovelock MBE.

Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew
Councillor Stuart McBride
Councillor Andrew Moore
Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal
Councillor John Nicholson
Councillor Alan Parkin
Councillor Mrs Margery Radley
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Bob Sandall
Councillor Trevor Scott
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith
Councillor John Smith
Councillor Mrs Maureen Spencer-Gregson O.B.E.
Councillor Peter Stephens
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Mike Taylor
Councillor Jeff Thompson
Councillor Frank Turner
Councillor Andrea Webster
Councillor Tom Webster
Councillor Graham Wheat
Councillor Mike Williams
Councillor Avril Williams
Councillor Paul Wood
Councillor Raymond Wootten

OFFICERS

Chief Executive (Beverly Agass)
Strategic Director (Ian Yates)
Corporate Head Finance & Customer Services (Richard Wyles)

OFFICERS

Legal Services Manager – Monitoring Officer (Lucy Youles)
Democracy Services Manager (Lena Shuttlewood)

"Listening Learning Delivering"

77. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

Question from Mrs Kara McDonald to the Portfolio Holder for Healthy Environment (Councillor John Smith):

Are there any plans for improving the play park on Beechcroft Road (in Grantham), if so, when? If not, why not?

Reply from Councillor John Smith:

Thank you for coming and asking the question about the play park on Beechcroft Road.

Our current budget is entirely used for the maintenance and repair of equipment to ensure that it is kept fully compliant with Health and Safety regulations. This budget is under pressure with the unfortunate amount of vandalism in some areas. However, I am pleased to say that it is intended to repair the existing apparatus by engaging the services of the Unpaid Work Scheme, better known as The Probation Service, and also to repair any equipment which needs it. Most importantly we will be fully repairing the damaged areas of safety surfacing.

Supplementary question from Mrs McDonald:

When would this be done, when would it be started?

Reply from Councillor John Smith:

As soon as possible.

78. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hearmon, Joynson, Russell and Selby.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor John Smith declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Part A of the budget item concerning the Bourne Core Area element of the Capital Programme. His interest arose by virtue of his being a member of a club whose premises were located within the Bourne Core Area. Councillor Smith took no part in the voting or discussion on the Capital Programme and left the Chamber

whilst it was under consideration, and returned to the meeting following a vote on part of the budget.

80. MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the addition of Councillor Mrs Joyce Gaffigan to the list of those present at the meeting.

81. COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS)

The Chief Executive reminded Members that there would be an open session at Mowbeck House where Care Services and the CCTV Centre were based. Mrs Agass paid tribute to these services who had responded to a great number of calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the recent poor weather. The Council agreed (by unanimous show of hands) to extend a formal vote of thanks to these services.

82. MOTION BY THE CHAIRMAN TO REQUEST THE CONSENT OF THE COUNCIL TO EXTEND THE LENGTH OF SPEECHES.

DECISION:

That Council consent that a speech by any Member during the item on the agenda relating to the budget proposals for this meeting alone be permitted to not exceed ten minutes.

83. BUDGET 2010/11 AND INDICATIVE BUDGETS FOR 2011/12 AND 2012/13 AND APPROVAL OF PRIORITY THEME ACTION PLANS

PART A: Revenue Estimates 2009/10 and indicative budget 2010/11 and 2011/12

DECISION:

That the Council:-

General Fund Revenue Estimate

- a.) set a General Fund budget requirement of £16.416M for 2010/11 (inclusive of special expenses) and note the indicative budget requirement figures of £15.893M for 2011/12 and £16.115M for 2012/13
- b.) set a Council Tax increase of 2.5% for 2010/11 (1.2% inclusive of special expense areas)
- c.) approve the original base estimate for 2010/11 and indicative base estimates for 2011/12 and 2012/13 as detailed in the summary at Appendix A page 1
- d.) approve the Treasury Management Strategy provided at Appendix E
- e.) approve increases in Fees and Charges for 2010/11 (in accordance with the Council's Fees and Charges Strategy) as set out in Appendix D

- f.) approve the Revenue and Capital Reserves statement contained at Appendix C
- g.) continue the fundamental review of services where the projected income levels show a continued reduction to ensure the allocated resources are proportionally aligned
- h.) approve a revised funding allocation of £56K per annum in respect of the town centre partnerships
- i.) approve a service review programme to ensure all services delivered are cost efficient, aligned to priorities and providing value for money to the taxpayer
- j.) approve the growth in the base budgets in respect of the following:
 - o Choice based lettings set up costs
 - o Provision for additional benefits assessor
 - o Civilian parking enforcement set up costs
 - o Creation of priority action plans provision
 - o Efficiency initiatives provision
 - o Service initiatives provision
- k.) set cash releasing efficiency targets for each service area at corporate level in order for the Council to achieve its overall efficiency target
- l.) approve the use of the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant in respect of the works associated with the Local Development Framework
- m.) approve the priority theme action plans as detailed at Appendix G
- n.) approve the use of the priority themes and service improvement reserve to financially support the 'next steps' programme

Capital Programme

- o.) note the forecast outturn Capital Programme for 2009/10 and approve the indicative programme for 2010/11 to 2012/13 detailed at Appendix B pages 1-3
- p.) authorise the funding proposals subject to an annual review of the financing options by the Corporate Head of Finance and Customer Services, in consultation with the Resources and Assets Portfolio Holder, during the preparation of the Statement of Accounts to optimise the use of Council resources.
- q.) approve the setting of a cash releasing efficiency target in respect of the Capital programme

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- r.) set dwelling rent increases in accordance with Government guideline rent, of 3.1% providing an average rent of £61.86 (and an actual average rental increase of 1.78%)
- s.) set an increase in garage rents of 3.1%
- t.) increase service charges by 3.1%
- u.) approve the Housing Revenue Account for the year 2010/11 and indicative years 2011/12 and 2012/13 shown at Appendix A page 9
- v.) approve the setting of a cash releasing efficiency target in respect of the Housing Revenue Account

PART B: Council Tax setting 2009/10:

DECISION;

That the Council passes the following resolution to set the level of council tax for 2010/11 based on an increase of 2.5% excluding special expenses (and 1.20% including special expenses):

1. That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2010/11 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)

Grantham	166.50
Stamford	191.88
Bourne	153.81
Deeping St James	162.81
Market Deeping	217.71
Allington	164.43
Ancaster	166.14
Aslackby & Laughton	147.51
Barholme & Stow	131.22
Barkston & Syston	152.73
Barrowby	167.94
Baston	142.74

Belton & Manthorpe	126.36
Billingborough	149.31
Bitchfield & Bassingthorpe	122.76
Boothby Pagnell	126.63
Braceborough & Wilsthorpe	139.23
Burton Coggles	130.59
Careby,Aunby & Holywell	130.77
Carlby	155.52
Carlton Scroop & Normanton	174.96
Castle Bytham	143.46
Caythorpe	164.16
Claypole	143.28
Colsterworth, Gunby, Stainby and	
North Witham	154.80
Corby Glen	147.33
Counthorpe & Creton	122.76
Denton	135.90
Dowsby	157.05
Dunsby	129.15
Edenham	144.90
Fenton	128.88
Folkingham	146.34
Foston	157.50
Fulbeck	145.26
Greatford	146.43
Great Gonerby	153.54
Great Ponton	160.20
Haconby	125.37
Harlaxton	167.85
Heydour	148.59
Honington	122.76
Horbling	122.76
Hougham	140.49
Hough-on-the-Hill	153.00
Ingoldsby	133.47
Irnham	125.55
Kirkby Underwood	135.09
Langtoft	164.61
Lenton,Keisby & Osgodby	126.54
Little Bytham	155.79
Little Ponton & Stroxtion	131.52
Londonthorpe & Harrowby Without	136.08
Long Bennington	162.63
Marston	149.04

Morton	136.80
Old Somerby	139.95
Pickworth	129.24
Pointon & Sempringham	132.66
Rippingale	167.58
Ropsley, Humby, Braceby & Sapperton	140.22
Sedgebrook	154.44
Skillington	157.32
South Witham	168.21
Stoke Rochford & Easton	145.53
Stubton	138.96
Swayfield	141.84
Swinstead	149.40
Tallington	141.03
Thurlby	141.21
Toft, Lound & Manthorpe	122.76
Uffington	132.39
Welby	141.18
Westborough & Dry Doddington	131.22
West Deeping	145.17
Witham-on-the-Hill	142.74
Woolsthorpe	156.42
Wyville-cum-Hungerton	143.46

being calculated by adding to the amount at (g) above the amounts of special item relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area, divided in each case by the individual tax bases as recorded in minute 49 in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which special item relates.

- i.) The amounts on the attached schedule (Appendix A to Part B), being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at g) above and h) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band 'D', calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.
- j.) That it be noted that for the year 2010/11 Lincolnshire County Council has stated the following amounts as a precept issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Valuation Band

A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
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710.46	828.87	947.28	1065.69	1302.51	1539.33	1776.15	2131.38
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k.) That it be noted that for the year 2010/11 Lincolnshire Police Authority has stated the following amounts as a precept issued to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Valuation Band

A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
119.52	139.44	159.36	179.28	219.12	258.96	298.80	358.56

I.) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at i), j) and k) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts in Appendix B to part B as the levels of Council Tax for the year 2010/11 for the categories of dwellings shown in Appendix A to part B of report CHFCS90.

The Council had previously been circulated with a copy of report number CHFCS90, the purpose of which was to present the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2010/11 for both revenue and capital expenditure together with indicative budgets for 2011/12 and 2012/13. The report also covered the potential use of reserves, the treasury management strategy for the Council, a risk analysis of the budget proposals and the Priority Theme Action Plan and the level of recommended revised fees and charges. Members were advised by the Section 151 officer on the robustness of the budget proposals and adequacy of balances and reserves as required by the Local Government Act 2003.

The second part of the report dealt with the setting of the Council tax for 2010/11 in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements. An addendum to this report was circulated at the meeting detailing the figures for the valuation bands following receipt of the Lincolnshire Police Authority precept.

The Portfolio Holder for Assets and Resources, Councillor Taylor, presented the report on behalf of the Cabinet, proposing the recommendations contained therein. In so doing, he thanked the Corporate Head of Finance and Customer Services, Mr Richard Wyles, and his team for their diligent work in preparing what had been a difficult budget to balance in the current economic climate. He said that the Cabinet was acutely aware of the financial circumstances facing the residents of South Kesteven and that the economic downturn had affected revenue from fees and charges. In addition, some service areas (such as Revenues and Benefits and Tenancy Services) had experienced a sharp upturn in demand for their services. Looking ahead, there was real concern, the Government had indicated that there would be cuts in Government grant from next year, but the level of this was uncertain.

Councillor Taylor advised that the level of Council Tax proposed had been considered very

carefully by the Cabinet and the budget proposals had been built on a proposed Council Tax increase of 2.5%. This level of increase had been supported by the public when they had been consulted at the local forum meetings. With regard to the Housing Revenue Account, a 1.78% average rent increase was proposed as against a government guideline of 3.1%.

The motion was seconded by the Chairman of the Resources Policy Development Group, Councillor Craft.

The Corporate Head of Finance and Customer Services referred Members to the addendum to report CHFCS90, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The addendum included the Lincolnshire Police Authority precept which had been set on 23 February 2010.

Councillor Maureen Jalili offered a formal vote of thanks to the Section 151 officer, his staff and also the Resources PDG for all their hard work in providing the draft budget. Overall she supported this, but would like to see consistency in the application of fees and charges across the district.

Councillor Wood proposed a number of amendments to the recommendations before the Council, although these would not result in an increase in the Council Tax. The proposed amendments moved by Councillor Wood were:-

- 1) amend recommendation e) as follows:- add “and (a) commission a feasibility study for the introduction of charging in respect of non-charging car parks; and (b) that car park charges be frozen for a three month period following a full scale review of the charges;
- 2) amend recommendation i) as follows:- add “This review programme to include Building Control and Development Control in the first tranche. The review programme should also include an energy efficiency review”;
- 3) add an additional recommendation o) as follows:- “Approve an additional budget of £174,000 (58 Members @ £3,000 each) for each Member to allocate to community projects in their ward. Procedures and protocols to be established to control the expenditure”.

The amendments were seconded by Councillor Davidson, who spoke on the amendments and in particular on the fact that there were no charges for car parking in Bourne and Deeping St James.

The Chief Executive advised that, as amendments had been put forward, the Section 151 officer would have to rule on their robustness. The Section 151 officer advised that any use of reserves was not sustainable in the longer term and that any deferral of charges would impact on the budget now before the Council, therefore he could not advise that the amendments were robust.

After further debate, the three amendments were put to the vote and LOST.

Council now debated the substantive motions before them and a number of questions were asked which were answered by the Section 151 officer.

In summing up, Councillor Taylor advised that when he faced the Scrutiny Committee in November 2009, he had been asked does the Council provide value for money. He was able to say yes I believe we do and we continue to give value for money.

After the Assets and Resources Portfolio Holder had summed up a vote on Part A of the budget was taken and carried. (Councillor John Smith left the meeting during the vote on the capital programme, having previously declared a personal and prejudicial interest on that part of the capital programme relating to the Bourne Core Area).

(A refreshment break took place between 3:35 and 3:50 pm)

On resumption of the meeting, the Assets and Resources Portfolio Holder moved the recommendations a) to l) contained in the revised addendum to Part B of report CHFCS90. The motion was seconded by the Chairman of the Resources PDG, Councillor Craft, and following a vote was carried.

84. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting concluded at 3:54 pm.