



MINUTES

COUNCIL
THURSDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2005
2.00 PM

PRESENT

Councillor Graham Wheat Chairman

Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Teri Bryant
Councillor Charles Fred Burrows
Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor Elizabeth Channell
Councillor George Chivers
Councillor Robert Conboy
Councillor Nick Craft
Councillor Brian Fines
Councillor Donald Fisher
Councillor Mrs Joyce Gaffigan
Councillor Alan Galbraith
Councillor Yvonne Gibbins
Councillor Stephen Hewerdine
Councillor Reginald Howard
Councillor John Hurst
Councillor Fereshteh Hurst
Councillor Mrs Maureen Jalili
Councillor Kenneth Joynson
Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown
Councillor Albert Victor Kerr

Councillor John Kirkman
Councillor Reg Lovelock M.B.E.
Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew
Councillor Mano Nadarajah
Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal
Councillor John Nicholson
Councillor Stephen O'Hare
Councillor Alan Parkin
Councillor Stanley Pease
Councillor Bob Sandall
Councillor John Smith
Councillor Mrs Judy Smith
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Michael Taylor
Councillor Gerald Taylor
Councillor Jeffrey Thompson
Councillor Frank Turner
Councillor George Waterhouse
Councillor Mrs Mary Wheat
Councillor John Wilks
Councillor Mike Williams
Councillor Avril Williams
Councillor Mrs Azar Woods

OFFICERS

Chief Executive
Director of Finance and Strategic Resources
Public Finance Accountant

OFFICERS

Corporate Manager Democratic & Legal
Services
Corporate Manager Human Resources &
Organisational Development
Member Services Manager
Support Officer

102. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

(2.00p.m. – 2.07p.m.)

Prior notice in accordance with Council Procedure rule 10.3 had been given of

the following questions put by members of the public:-

**Question: Rob Shorrocks, Grantham Town Centre Residents Group, 4
Lauder Terrace, Grantham**

Put in Mr Shorrocks's absence by the Chairman, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.7.

The Highways and Planning Policy Working Group of LCC are meeting on the 7th March to discuss a proposal to introduce decriminalised parking arrangements county wide. Given that powers of enforcement was a key barrier to implementing residential street parking in central Grantham (see Report to Cllr R Auger Jan 2005) does the Council welcome this proposal?

Response: Councillor Mrs Linda Neal

This Council has in recent years shown an interest in the subject of decriminalisation and indeed is the first Council in Lincolnshire to have commissioned a report on the subject to determine the impact of decriminalisation of on-street parking in the area. We have asked Lincolnshire County Council as the highways authority for a policy statement on this matter so this latest development is to be welcomed. Decriminalisation can only be progressed in Lincolnshire with the support of the County Council.

Question: Rob Shorrocks

Put in Mr Shorrocks's absence by the Chairman.

In the spirit of empowering communities, will the portfolio holder set up a working group with the Grantham Town Centre Residents Group to explore the options on developing and implementing a residential parking scheme in Grantham Town Centre?

Response: Councillor Ray Auger

The Council is always willing to work with local residents' groups on issues which are of concern to them. Indeed, the Council has worked with residents' groups in Stamford for a number of years. Therefore, I am happy to work with the residents' group in Grantham to agree a way forward with respect to resident parking schemes.

103. ORDER OF AGENDA

The Chairman advised that the Policy Framework Proposal on the 2005/2006 Budget would be considered prior to Communications, given the importance of this item of business. Members were also reminded of the additional urgent item on Re-allocation of Seats on Council Committees and Panels, which would be considered as agenda item 9a.

104. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bisnauthsing, Mrs Dexter, Neil Dexter, Genever, Helyar, Morris, Mrs Percival, Mrs Radley, Norman Radley, Selby and Wood.

A member informed the Council that Councillor Dexter had now returned home from hospital. The Chairman added that he had spoken to Councillor Dexter and had wished him well on behalf of the Council.

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

106. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27TH JANUARY 2005 (ENCLOSURE)

Subject to the amendment of "descent" to "dissent" on page 10 of the Questions Without Discussion appended to the minutes, the minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2005 were confirmed as a correct record.

107. BUDGET 2005/06 (POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL)

DECISION:

- (1) That the 2005/2006 Budget of revenue income and expenditure, the capital expenditure programme and Statement by Chief Financial Officer on the Robustness and Adequacy of Budget and Reserves as presented, be approved;**
- (2) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2005/2006 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended):-**

(a) the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act:	£63,224,000
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(b) the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act:	£49,059,000
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(c) the amount as calculated under Section 32(4) of the Act by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above.	£14,165,000
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(d) the aggregate of the sums which the Council

estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of re-distributed non-domestic rates and revenue support grant increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its collection fund to its general fund in accordance with Section 97(3) and 98(4) of the 1988 Act.

£8,421,000

- (e) the amount at (c) above less the amount at (d) above, all divided by 43,396.2 (the Council's tax base for 2005/2006) as recorded in Minute 83 of the meeting on 6 December 2004 being the basic council tax for the year

£132.36

- (f) the aggregate of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.

£1,369,600

- (g) the amount at (e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (f) above by 43,396.2 (the Council's council tax base) in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act being the basic amount of its council tax for the year.
For dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates

£100.80

- (h) the amounts, as recorded in Column B in the schedule below, given by adding to the amount at (g) overleaf the amounts of special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area specified in Column A of that schedule divided by the council tax base for the relevant part of the Council's area is recorded in Minute 83 of the meeting on 6 December 2004 being the base amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which special items relate:

Column A

Column B

Part of the Council's area

Grantham	136.89
Stamford	149.76
Bourne	124.56
Deeping St James	129.42
Market Deeping	159.03
Allington	128.25
Ancaster	143.10
Aslackby & Laughton	123.39

Barholm & Stow	109.08
Barkston & Syston	118.89
Barrowby	136.08
Baston	112.32
Belton & Manthorpe	104.40
Billingborough	122.04
Boothby Pagnell	105.66
Braceborough & Wilsthorpe	117.63
Careby, Aunby & Holywell	105.75
Carlby	129.69
Carlton Scroop & Normanton	149.67
Castle Bytham	113.49
Caythorpe	128.70
Claypole	120.60
Colsterworth, Gunby & Stainby	131.40
Corby Glen	121.59
Denton	119.34
Dowsby	131.31
Dunsby	106.83
Edenham	118.44
Fenton	107.55
Folkingham	127.62
Foston	124.02
Fulbeck	120.96
Greatford	115.11
Great Gonerby	122.94
Great Ponton	137.34
Haconby	102.24
Harlaxton	136.08
Heydour	115.20
Hougham	115.65
Hough-on-the-Hill	120.96
Ingoldsby	109.53
Irnham	104.31
Kirkby Underwood	113.04
Langtoft	145.71
Lenton, Keisby & Osgodby	103.32
Little Bytham	118.98
Little Ponton & Stroxton	110.79
Londonthorpe & Harrowby Without	111.87
Long Bennington	122.13
Marston	120.51
Morton	114.66
North Witham	114.57
Old Somerby	114.39
Pickworth	118.35
Pointon & Sempringham	126.36
Rippingale	137.07
Ropsley, Humby, Braceby & Sapperton	113.76
Sedgebrook	119.07

Skillington	124.74
South Witham	143.46
Stoke Rochford & Easton	112.77
Stubton	114.48
Swayfield	113.94
Swinstead	118.44
Tallington	117.36
Thurlby	124.92
Uffington	113.85
Welby	113.67
Westborough & Dry Doddington	110.07
West Deeping	119.97
Witham-on-the-Hill	113.94
Woolsthorpe	119.52
Wyville-cum-Hungerton	121.59

- (i) the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (g) 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 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 Act being the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of dwellings listed in different valuation bands for the parts of the Council's area is now scheduled:-

- (3) That it be noted that for the year 2005/2006 Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) Lincolnshire Police Authority (LPA) have stated the following amounts in precepts is to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

<u>Valuation Band</u>	<u>LCC</u> <u>Amount</u> <u>£</u>	<u>LPA</u> <u>Amount</u> <u>£</u>
A	599.88	
B	699.86	
C	799.84	
D	899.82	
E	1,099.78	
F	1,299.74	
G	1,499.70	
H	1,799.64	

*To be resolved on 28 February 2005 at the Extraordinary meeting.

*LPA to meet on 25th February 2005 to confirm its budget.

- (4) That, having calculated the aggregate in each category of the amounts at 2(a-i) and

above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act hereby sets the following amounts at the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2005/2006 for each of the categories of dwellings in the following table:-

To be resolved on 28 February 2005 at the Extraordinary meeting.

PARISH	BAND @ £	BAND A £	BAND B £	BAND C £	BAND D £	BAND E £	BAND F £	BAND G £	BAND H £
Grantham	76.05	91.26	106.47	121.68	136.89	167.31	197.73	228.15	
Stamford	83.20	99.84	116.48	133.12	149.76	183.04	216.32	249.60	
Bourne	69.20	83.04	96.88	110.72	124.56	152.24	179.92	207.60	
Deeping St James	71.90	86.28	100.66	115.04	129.42	158.18	186.94	215.70	
Market Deeping	88.35	106.02	123.69	141.36	159.03	194.37	229.71	265.05	
Allington	71.25	85.50	99.75	114.00	128.25	156.75	185.25	213.75	
Ancaster	79.50	95.40	111.30	127.20	143.10	174.90	206.70	238.50	
Aslackby & Laughton	68.55	82.26	95.97	109.68	123.39	150.81	178.23	205.65	
Barholm & Stow	60.60	72.72	84.84	96.96	109.08	133.32	157.56	181.80	
Barkston & Syston	66.05	79.26	92.47	105.68	118.89	145.31	171.73	198.15	
Barrowby	75.60	90.72	105.84	120.96	136.08	166.32	196.56	226.80	
Baston	62.40	74.88	87.36	99.84	112.32	137.28	162.24	187.20	
Belton & Manthorpe	58.00	69.60	81.20	92.80	104.40	127.60	150.80	174.00	
Billingborough	67.80	81.36	94.92	108.48	122.04	149.16	176.28	203.40	
Bitchfield & Bassingthorpe	56.00	67.20	78.40	89.60	100.80	123.20	145.60	168.00	
Boothby Pagnell	58.70	70.44	82.18	93.92	105.66	129.14	152.62	176.10	
Braceborough & Wilsthorpe	65.35	78.42	91.49	104.56	117.63	143.77	169.91	196.05	
Burton Coggles	56.00	67.20	78.40	89.60	100.80	123.20	145.60	168.00	
Careby, Aunby & Holywell	58.75	70.50	82.25	94.00	105.75	129.25	152.75	176.25	
Carlby	72.05	86.46	100.87	115.28	129.69	158.51	187.33	216.15	
Carlton Scroop & Normanton	83.15	99.78	116.41	133.04	149.67	182.93	216.19	249.45	
Castle Bytham	63.05	75.66	88.27	100.88	113.49	138.71	163.93	189.15	
Caythorpe	71.50	85.80	100.10	114.40	128.70	157.30	185.90	214.50	
Claypole	67.00	80.40	93.80	107.20	120.60	147.40	174.20	201.00	
Colsterworth, Gunby & Stainby	73.00	87.60	102.20	116.80	131.40	160.60	189.80	219.00	
Corby Glen	67.55	81.06	94.57	108.08	121.59	148.61	175.63	202.65	
Counthorpe & Creeton	56.00	67.20	78.40	89.60	100.80	123.20	145.60	168.00	
Denton	66.30	79.56	92.82	106.08	119.34	145.86	172.38	198.90	
Dowsby	72.95	87.54	102.13	116.72	131.31	160.49	189.67	218.85	
Dunsby	59.35	71.22	83.09	94.96	106.83	130.57	154.31	178.05	
Edenham	65.80	78.96	92.12	105.28	118.44	144.76	171.08	197.40	
Fenton	59.75	71.70	83.65	95.60	107.55	131.45	155.35	179.25	
Folkingham	70.90	85.08	99.26	113.44	127.62	155.98	184.34	212.70	
Foston	68.90	82.68	96.46	110.24	124.02	151.58	179.14	206.70	
Fulbeck	67.20	80.64	94.08	107.52	120.96	147.84	174.72	201.60	
Greatford	63.95	76.74	89.53	102.32	115.11	140.69	166.27	191.85	
Great Gonerby	68.30	81.96	95.62	109.28	122.94	150.26	177.58	204.90	
Great Ponton	76.30	91.56	106.82	122.08	137.34	167.86	198.38	228.90	
Haconby	56.80	68.16	79.52	90.88	102.24	124.96	147.68	170.40	
Harlaxton	75.60	90.72	105.84	120.96	136.08	166.32	196.56	226.80	
Heydour	64.00	76.80	89.60	102.40	115.20	140.80	166.40	192.00	
Honington	56.00	67.20	78.40	89.60	100.80	123.20	145.60	168.00	
Horbling	56.00	67.20	78.40	89.60	100.80	123.20	145.60	168.00	
Hougham	64.25	77.10	89.95	102.80	115.65	141.35	167.05	192.75	
Hough-on-the-Hill	67.20	80.64	94.08	107.52	120.96	147.84	174.72	201.60	

Ingoldsby	60.85	73.02	85.19	97.36	109.53	133.87	158.21	182.55
Irnham	57.95	69.54	81.13	92.72	104.31	127.49	150.67	173.85
Kirkby Underwood	62.80	75.36	87.92	100.48	113.04	138.16	163.28	188.40
Langtoft	80.95	97.14	113.33	129.52	145.71	178.09	210.47	242.85
Lenton, Keisby & Osgodby	57.40	68.88	80.36	91.84	103.32	126.28	149.24	172.20
Little Bytham	66.10	79.32	92.54	105.76	118.98	145.42	171.86	198.30
Little Ponton & Stroxtun	61.55	73.86	86.17	98.48	110.79	135.41	160.03	184.65
Londonthorpe & Harrowby With't	62.15	74.58	87.01	99.44	111.87	136.73	161.59	186.45
Long Bennington	67.85	81.42	94.99	108.56	122.13	149.27	176.41	203.55
Marston	66.95	80.34	93.73	107.12	120.51	147.29	174.07	200.85
Morton	63.70	76.44	89.18	101.92	114.66	140.14	165.62	191.10
North Witham	63.65	76.38	89.11	101.84	114.57	140.03	165.49	190.95
Old Somerby	63.55	76.26	88.97	101.68	114.39	139.81	165.23	190.65
Pickworth	65.75	78.90	92.05	105.20	118.35	144.65	170.95	197.25
Pointon & Sempringham	70.20	84.24	98.28	112.32	126.36	154.44	182.52	210.60
Rippingale	76.15	91.38	106.61	121.84	137.07	167.53	197.99	228.45
Ropsley, Humby, Braceby & Sapperton	63.20	75.84	88.48	101.12	113.76	139.04	164.32	189.60
Sedgebrook	66.15	79.38	92.61	105.84	119.07	145.53	171.99	198.45
Skillington	69.30	83.16	97.02	110.88	124.74	152.46	180.18	207.90
South Witham	79.70	95.64	111.58	127.52	143.46	175.34	207.22	239.10
Stoke Rochford & Easton	62.65	75.18	87.71	100.24	112.77	137.83	162.89	187.95
Stubton	63.60	76.32	89.04	101.76	114.48	139.92	165.36	190.80
Swayfield	63.30	75.96	88.62	101.28	113.94	139.26	164.58	189.90
Swinstead	65.80	78.96	92.12	105.28	118.44	144.76	171.08	197.40
Tallington	65.20	78.24	91.28	104.32	117.36	143.44	169.52	195.60
Thurlby	69.40	83.28	97.16	111.04	124.92	152.68	180.44	208.20
Toft, Lound & Manthorpe	56.00	67.20	78.40	89.60	100.80	123.20	145.60	168.00
Uffington	63.25	75.90	88.55	101.20	113.85	139.15	164.45	189.75
Welby	63.15	75.78	88.41	101.04	113.67	138.93	164.19	189.45
Westborough & Dry Doddington	61.15	73.38	85.61	97.84	110.07	134.53	158.99	183.45
West Deeping	66.65	79.98	93.31	106.64	119.97	146.63	173.29	199.95
Witham-on-the-Hill	63.30	75.96	88.62	101.28	113.94	139.26	164.58	189.90
Woolsthorpe	66.40	79.68	92.96	106.24	119.52	146.08	172.64	199.20
Wyville-cum-Hungerton	67.55	81.06	94.57	108.08	121.59	148.61	175.63	202.65

- (5) That for 2005/2006, 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 the Council's limit for external debt be for each year at £30,000,00, the limit of £30,000,000 for 2004/2005 continues and to authorise the Director of Finance & Strategic Resources within the total limit to effect movement between the separately agreed limits for borrowing and other long term liabilities, in accordance with option appraisal and best value for money for the authority;
- (6) That for 2004/2005 the Operational Boundary for external debt continues at £9,000,000, for 2005/2006, 2006/2007 and 2007/2008, the Operational Boundary for external debt be set at £7,000,000, £5,000,000 and £4,000,000 respectively and to authorise the Director of Finance & Strategic Resources within the total Operational Boundary for any individual year to effect movement between the separately agreed figures for borrowing and other long term liabilities;

(7) That an upper limit be set on the Council's fixed interest rate exposures for 2006/07 and 2007/08 of 75% of the net outstanding principal sums;

(8) That an upper limit be set on the Council's variable interest rate exposures for 2006/07 and 2007/08 of 25% of the net outstanding principal sums;

(9) Upper and lower limits for the maturity structure of the Council's borrowings be set at

Under 12 months	11%
12 months and within 24 months	11%
24 months and within 5 years	33%
5 years and within 10 years	16%
10 years and above	28%

The Leader presented the 2005/2006 Budget (as contained within the Director of Finance & Strategic Resources' report number FIN226) on behalf of the Cabinet and the Administration. During her supporting speech, she commented on the transparency of the budget preparation process as a reflection of the community's priorities and, although the government settlement may have been higher than expected, it had not addressed the issues of the "Lincolnshire's Missing Millions" campaign, which would be continued. She proposed acceptance of the budget and the recommendations presented in the Director's report, which was then seconded by the Deputy Leader. Many members expressed their appreciation of the work and professionalism undertaken by the Director of Finance & Strategic Resources and his team, especially given the immense amount of work completed under intense pressure.

The Chairman of the Capacity & Resources Development & Scrutiny Panel (DSP) spoke in support of the proposed budget, which had been prepared with considerable input from the cross-panel working group led by his DSP. He commented on the requirement to keep the council tax increase below 3% and praised the work done to achieve this.

The proposed budget was met with general support but during debate, members voiced various concerns. These included the unsustainable policy of reducing general reserves alongside increasing service costs which decreased income from assets. The Director responded that the proposed budget was in line with the Council's medium-term financial strategy and although reserves could not be infinite, he acknowledged the potential problem for future years in respect to interest recharges. However, the Council had consulted with the public and identified priorities which required capital expenditure for relevant projects. The Director continued that he was grateful for the work of the Capacity & Resources DSP led working group which had scrutinised the general fund, housing revenue account and external issues in some detail. He also reported further on this year's anticipated capping, the increase of special expense area (SEA) charges and the incorporation of service charges and the scale of charges in the budget document. As the responsible financial officer, he had identified major areas of risk as being Pest Control, which would require regular review, and the Support for People Grant, as explained in his report. Because the Lincolnshire Police Authority would not meet to confirm their budget until 25th February 2005, an additional meeting of the Council had been arranged for 28th February 2005 to confirm their precept.

Other concerns raised included the apparent sense of members' complacency regarding the budget and its possible irrelevance to those in poverty. There was a need for a longer-term financial strategy in addition to an annual budget, to maximise resources for the needs of the community because the problem was not the "missing millions" but a too strong a focus on the short term financial position.

comment concerning the “missing millions” was not met with agreement by other members and it was suggested that even more pressure be put on the government because as capping continued without accounting for the level of council tax, the difference in income between different authorities would increase to the disadvantage of this Council. With regard to SEAs, members raised various points and it was suggested that Langtoft SEA be considered at the Deepings Local Area Assembly. There was also some concern that the increase in service costs may have been reduced if the recommendations from the DSP had been adopted by Cabinet. Parish precepts were also discussed with concern expressed on the lack of control over their precept-setting and it was suggested that parishes be allowed to develop longer term capital schemes, which should balance out fluctuations in their precepts. The Welland partnership was also discussed and clarification was sought of the Industrial Provident Society, whilst suggesting that project management be applied from the outset to large schemes. The Director acknowledged the concerns raised and provided clarification where necessary.

In closing the debate, the Leader also responded to a number of the issues raised by other members and expressed her personal thanks to each member of the accountancy team. A vote was taken on the recommendations and was subsequently carried.

108. COMMUNICATIONS (INCLUDING CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS) (ENCLOSURE)

The Chairman reported that he had received a letter from Councillor Genever, which he read. Councillor Genever thanked members for all their kind thoughts and words and he would be sorry to miss out on the “mischief making”. His brother was continuing to improve and was of a cheerful disposition despite his handicap. The Chairman added that he would send a suitable reply on behalf of the Council.

The schedule of Chairman’s engagements was noted.

The Chief Executive had circulated to each member a timetable for delivery of the development programme for members and a scrutiny questionnaire to be completed and returned accordingly.

109. NOTICES OF MOTION GIVEN UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 12:-

(1) By Councillor Yvonne Gibbins

DECISION: To not support the motion proposed by Councillor Gibbins.

The following motion had been proposed by Councillor Gibbins:

“Given the facts that;

- (1) Members with “special responsibilities” have higher allowances and have recently been given an increase in their allowances, and
- (2) CPA gave SKDC only a “fair” status,

I therefore propose that; all cabinet members, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen declare their suitability for these posts and allowances, by informing all members of SKDC orally of their qualifications, experience and training, which make them the most appropriate person for their positions, and that they will regularly attend courses/workshops pertinent to their portfolios/panels remit”

In supporting her motion, Councillor Gibbins referred to professional organisations, where it was usually required to continually update knowledge and provide evidence to gain promotion. She considered that if the Council wished to raise its CPA score, its members should be prepared to undertake these two requirements. In seconding the motion, a member suggested that positions of responsibility were sometimes appointed because of personal ambitions rather than a member’s suitability to a position. Some members expressed agreement with this, mainly because of the need of members to be professional and accountable. The majority, however, did not support the motion and it was suggested that members were accountable to the electorate via elections and that experience and ability to interpret evidence were of more importance than qualifications. The motion was subsequently lost following a vote.

(2) By Councillor John Hurst

DECISION: To not support the motion proposed by Councillor John Hurst.

The following motion had been proposed by Councillor John Hurst:

“This Council considers that a Shadow Cabinet, enshrined in the Constitution, would enrich the developing democracy of the District, to the general good. Such Shadow Cabinet, in accordance with statute, must have objectives and processes that do not duplicate those of the DSPs or Cabinet.

The Shadow Cabinet will have the following remit:

1. to recommend to the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, subjects that could be included in the future work programme of the Development and Scrutiny Panels
2. to advocate to the Cabinet, issues and concerns that it perceives to be relevant to the people of the District
3. to proffer expertise and advice to the Executive
4. to offer an alternative perspective to the Cabinet on consultation documents
5. the Shadow Cabinet does not have the power of call-in.”

Councillor Hurst began his supporting speech by reporting that the remit proposed for the Shadow Cabinet had been formed in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer. The Chief Executive confirmed that

it complied with the Local Government Act 2000. Councillor Hurst continued that his motion was not intended to be offensive or provocative but to enrich democracy at this authority by enshrining the Shadow Cabinet in the Constitution. He referred to the view of democracy expressed by Lord Hailsham and suggested that it would be courteous to support his motion. He added that whilst the Development and Scrutiny Panels were supported by his group, a number of other Councils embraced a Shadow Cabinet as well which, rather than causing harm, was very beneficial to the authority and democracy of the area.

In seconding the motion, a member acknowledged the important role played by opposition parties at all levels of government, particularly at local level, because these members had a duty to challenge, criticise and hold to account the administration. Opposition could also articulate community interests as well as suggest alternative policies. The member also acknowledged that scrutiny panels formed an essential function but they focussed on detailed examinations of policies whereas a Shadow Cabinet would review the work of the Cabinet as a whole and present a collective opposition view.

Those in support of the motion suggested that democracy was eroding fast and that if the administration's policies were robust, it would withstand a Shadow Cabinet and that it would exist regardless of its inclusion in the Constitution. The Council was reminded that the Shadow Cabinet required no financial support but was a channel in which to feed suggestions.

In opposing the motion, it was suggested that democracy had been removed by the Local Government Act 2000, a Shadow Cabinet would not remedy this and the Act would have included a requirement for a Shadow Cabinet if it was considered necessary. Another member commented that there was no longer any need for a Shadow Cabinet because chairmanships had been offered to opposition parties which had prompted the previous Shadow Cabinet's disbandment. Because it was causing such a split amongst the Council, a Shadow Cabinet should not be allowed to cause further damage. This was disputed by some members because it was believed that the chairmanships had been offered following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, not as a result of being offered chairmanships, although the motion's proposer explained that he believed there had been an agreement with the administration to wind-up the previous Shadow Cabinet because of an overpowering force. This was also disputed by another member.

On being put to the vote, the motion was lost.

(3) By Councillor Stephen O'Hare

DECISION:

(1) To not support the motion proposed by Councillor Stephen O'Hare;

(2) That this Council confirms its resolve to carry out the training that has already been suggested and discussed at length in the Chief

Executive's report that has been put to the Cabinet, Chairmen's Group and Group Leaders and encourages all Council members to take part in this far reaching, far sighted and much needed training which not unsurprisingly includes a session on financial training.

The following motion had been proposed by Councillor O'Hare:

"That this Council believes that in relation to the multi million pound annual expenditure of this Council

1. It is financially sensible to ensure that all members of the Cabinet have received appropriate external formal training;
2. Where practicable it is financially sensible to ensure that any Councillor appointed to the Cabinet has received such training before appointment to the Cabinet;
3. Any existing Cabinet member who has not received such training by the end of 2005 should seriously consider resigning from the Cabinet."

In presenting the motion, Councillor O'Hare referred to decisions made by portfolio holders which sometimes concerned significant sums of money. He made specific reference to a portfolio holder's decision made within the last six months which involved £1.95m of expenditure and had been based on information contained on two sides of A4 paper. He considered that appropriate external training would help reduce any risk of mistakes by members and, because it would be external, would lessen the officer-led culture identified by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. He believed that these benefits would outweigh the financial implications of external training. This motion was seconded.

In proposing an amendment to this motion, a member indicated the costs of external training and the roles of officers to deliver clear, transparent and potent arguments to members on which to base their decisions. This received a seconder and a vote was then taken on the following amendment: "That this Council confirms its resolve to carry out the training that has already been suggested and discussed at length in the Chief Executive's report that has been put to the Cabinet, Chairmen's Group and Group Leaders and encourages all Council members to take part in this far reaching, far sighted and much needed training which not unsurprisingly includes a session on financial training." This was carried and a further vote on the substantive motion was also carried.

(4) By Councillor Stephen O'Hare

DECISION: To not support the motion proposed by Councillor O'Hare.

The following motion had been proposed by Councillor O'Hare:

"That this Council believes that the format of Local Area Assemblies should be changed so as to allow members of the public to ask questions after the end of each item on the agenda and not be forced to wait until the very end of the

meeting to be involved.”

In proposing his motion, Councillor O’Hare explained that it was apolitical and he thought that, if carried, his motion would provide a much-needed flexibility which would encourage public involvement at no additional cost. This was seconded. Those in support of the motion agreed that there was a need to harness the public interest in the Local Area Assembly meetings by not requiring members of the public to wait until the end of the meeting to pose their questions.

Members opposing the motion considered it too prescriptive and it was explained that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group had already discussed the issues raised in the motion with members of the Cabinet and a report by the Scrutiny Officer would be presented shortly. Councillor O’Hare was therefore asked to withdraw his motion. The motion was not withdrawn and on being put to the vote, was lost.

110. 2005/06 REVIEW OF CORPORATE PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS

DECISION:

(3) That the articulation of the Council’s vision of pride as set out in the five booklets available on the intranet be approved;

(4) To approve in principle the new ambitions and consequential adjustments to Development & Scrutiny Panel remits, as per report CEX281, so that appointments to these Panels can be made at the Council’s Annual General Meeting in April 2005.

The Chief Executive presented his report number CEX281 whose recommendations were proposed for acceptance, seconded and then carried on being put to the vote.

111. CHANGE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

DECISION: To approve the 2005/06 South Kesteven Change Management Action Plan.

The Chief Executive presented report number CEX280 which he had prepared with the Leader. Approval of the Action Plan was proposed and this received a seconder. Although the content of the Plan was generally agreeable to members, it was suggested that too much change was embraced too quickly and there was concern that, in order to implement change, the necessary financial and human resources may not be available. It was one member’s view that staff morale was considerably low and it was important to acknowledge staff to underpin the implementation of such action plans. A number of members were concerned that an unreasonable number of projects had to be undertaken by the Council otherwise it would receive financial penalties from

the Government. This was acknowledged but these members were reminded by others that the Council could not afford to risk losing out on government finance and it was therefore the responsibility of the Council to embrace the proposed Action Plan. On being put to the vote, the proposed approval of the Action Plan was carried.

112. RE-ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND PANELS

DECISION: To approve the following membership changes and nominations:

- (5) The new Non-Aligned Group be entitled to one representative on the Development Control Committee and the Administration Group lose one seat on this Committee;**
- (6) Councillor Mrs Woods be nominated to remain on the Development Control Committee as a representative of the Non-Aligned Group;**
- (7) The new Non-Aligned group be entitled to one seat on one of the five Development and Scrutiny Panels;**
- (8) Councillor Mrs Woods to surrender her seat on the Environment Development and Scrutiny Panel;**
- (9) Councillor Wilks to surrender his seat on the Capacity & Resources Development and Scrutiny Panel;**
- (10) Councillor Mrs Woods be nominated to serve on the Capacity & Resources Development and Scrutiny Panel;**
- (11) That Councillor Pease be nominated to serve on the Environment Development and Scrutiny Panel.**

The Chief Executive presented his report number CEX282 which, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act to deal with the reallocation of seats as soon as practicable, the Chairman had allowed as a late report. It was proposed and seconded that the report's recommendations be accepted with the additional nomination of Councillor Pease to serve on the Environment DSP. On being put to the vote, this was carried.

113. GENERIC EQUALITIES SCHEME

DECISION: To adopt the revised Generic Equality Scheme.

The Corporate Manager of Human Resources & Organisational Development presented his report number HR&OD76 which included a revised Generic Equality Scheme and Action Plan. The reasons for amending the current scheme were outlined in the report. The Corporate Manager spoke about the difficulties of embedding equalities in services and policy making, especially

within a mainly rural district, and it was intended the revised scheme would address this. The officers were congratulated and thanked for the considerable work undertaken on the scheme and it was proposed for adoption. This received a seconder and was carried following a vote.

114. AMENDMENT TO REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT POLICY

DECISION: Subject to minor amendment, to adopt the revised Policy Practice and Compliance Procedures for use for all Council investigations where an authority under the Regulations of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 is required.

The Corporate Manager of Democratic & Legal Services presented his report number DLS17, which had been deferred from the last Council meeting. It now contained copies of authorisation forms and the Code of Practice for the Council's CCTV services. The Corporate Manager gave further explanation of the legislative background which necessitated certain revisions to the Council's existing policy document. A member asked for the reference to "paragraph 6" in paragraph 8 of the CCTV Code of Practice be amended to "paragraph 1.6", paragraph 10.1 to be amended to the past tense and, with regard to the main policy document, "draft" be removed from the appended authorisation form and for the restricted form not to be used until it is completed. Another member asked for clarification on the impact of this document on statutory human rights to which the Corporate Manager replied that he was unable to offer his assurance that it would not impact on human rights.

Adoption of the revised document was proposed. This was seconded and carried on being put to the vote.

115. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

DECISION:

(12) To approve report FIN227 clarifying members' allowances from 28th April 2005 and the amount of travelling and subsistence allowances which can be claimed by members, subject to the amendment of paragraphs 9 and 2 of the notes to travelling expenses and subsistence expenses respectively, to reflect the current Development & Scrutiny Panel and Quasi-Judicial Committee system;

(13) To establish a working group to investigate and report to a future meeting of the Council the issue of members attending more than one meeting on one day being entitled to subsistence expenses rather than being required to return home between meetings, at a potentially greater cost to the Council.

The Corporate Director of Finance & Strategic Resources presented his report

number FIN227 which clarified the amount of travelling and subsistence allowances claimable by members. Acceptance of the report was proposed and seconded but some members were concerned that the report required clarification on members' rights to subsistence expenses when attending a number of meetings in one day. It was agreed with the proposer and seconder to include in the proposal the establishment of a working group to investigate this matter. On being put to the vote, this was carried.

116. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES: INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARDS

DECISION: To approve the following nominations:

(14) Councillor Kirkman to serve on the Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board;

(15) Councillors Kerr and Radley to serve on the Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board;

(16) Councillors Auger, Joynson, Helyar, Howard and Pease to serve on the Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board.

The Chief Executive presented report number DLS25 by the Member Services Manager. Nominations were invited for a representative to serve on the Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board. It was proposed and seconded that Councillor Kirkman continue his appointment. This was carried following a vote. For the two seats on the Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board, nominations were received and seconded for Councillors Norman Radley, Kerr and Craft. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 16.7, a vote for each member was taken individually and a majority of votes were cast for Councillors Norman Radley and Kerr. It was proposed that the current members serving on the Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board continue their service. This received a seconder and on being put to the vote, was carried.

In accordance with Council Procedure rule 9, as the meeting was nearing being in progress for three hours, the majority of members present voted for the meeting to continue.

117. QUESTIONS WITHOUT DISCUSSION.

Four questions had been submitted prior to the meeting.

Verbatim details of the questions, together with supplementary questions and their responses are set out in the appendix to the minutes.

118. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 5.28p.m.

APPENDIX TO COUNCIL MINUTES: 24TH FEBRUARY 2005

MINUTE 117: QUESTIONS WITHOUT DISCUSSION

(1) Question 1 (Councillor Teri Bryant)

Could the Leader please advise me how much money has been saved by this Council's decision to support your proposal over councillors remuneration at its last meeting viz -:

- A. To reduce the level of increase in remuneration we receive from the 23%+ recommended by the independent review panel to a figure of just above 3% (in line with RPI)
- B. By voting not to give ourselves access to the Local government pension scheme if all members took the maximum benefit
- C. By voting not to give ourselves access to the Local government pension scheme last year (again if all members took the maximum benefit) I note in passing that, on a recorded vote that I called for last year, Cllr Bisnauthsing voted for entry into the pension scheme and not, as he stated at the last Council meeting, against entry into the scheme.
- D. By not accepting anywhere near in full all the other recommendations that the independent remuneration Panel made following its extensive parity survey.
- E. Am I correct that we have to write to the remuneration board and advise them of why the council was minded not to accept their considered recommendation and has this been done!

Response: Councillor Mrs Linda Neal

I thank Councillor Bryant for this question because it gives me the opportunity to give the figures, the costs that would have been incurred by the Council taxpayer had the Remuneration Panel's recommendations been approved. In response to question A: £45,700; question B: £19,500; question C: £17,201; and question E: legislation requires us to publish the findings to the public but does not provide for informing the Panel of any decisions taken by members.

Supplementary Question: Councillor Teri Bryant

I welcome that. I am a little surprised that, adding all those up together comes to £82,400 that we turned down from our own pay. Can you confirm that that is about 2% on a Band D that we are saving? I am a little bit concerned that what we are saying gets reported accurately in the press and actually gets reported accurately in election leaflets that come out in the very near future; I hope nobody distorts things.

Response: Councillor Mrs Linda Neal

Yes, I can confirm that what Councillor Bryant is saying does equate to just over 2% on the Council tax.

(2) Question 2 (Councillor Stephen O'Hare)

Part of the answer given by Councillor Bryant on 27th January 2005 to my Question Without Discussion on the CAB internal audit report included statements that he had read all the available papers and that the information in that report – being the CAB internal audit report -was clearly available to any Councillor who asked for it.

At the cabinet meeting of 8th November 2004 Councillor Bryant stated in public that, and I quote:

“to be helpful if Cllr O’Hare actually wants a copy of the audit report I can obviously make it available to him like I did to all the Administration and the Cabinet but it is not for publication because it is an internal document because it is to be a background paper”

I was the same day provided with 2 pages part of which had been blanked out.

Was the provision by him to a fellow councillor of just one and half pages out of 21 pages of that internal CAB audit report his idea of ensuring that the information in that report was made available to any Councillor who asked for it?

Response: Councillor Teri Bryant

No, but as by the end of the day Councillor O’Hare did not take up my helpful offer and seemed to have lost all interest in the matter and I thought he had a duty to read the auditor’s recommendations as a minimum, I provided just that: the auditor’s recommendations.

Councillor Stephen O’Hare:

Well, first of all, Mr Chairman, I would actually like an answer to the question asked because of course, a supplementary can be based either upon the question already asked or the answer given. Therefore, it limits my choice in respect of a supplementary if the question is not answered. I ask you to direct Councillor Bryant to answer the question.

Chairman:

The Chairman, or anyone, cannot direct, by advice from the Chief Executive, what the answer will be or directing what an answer may be.

Supplementary Question: Councillor Stephen O’Hare

As Councillor Bryant has admitted to giving copies of a document this Council does not possess (being the CAB internal audit report) to certain Councillors but not, I note, to all members of the Labour, Liberal Democrat and the then Independent groups on this Council, was he distributing to the chosen, the foreword and the twenty one page document or the one and a half page version?

Response: Councillor Teri Bryant

I thought I answered that before by saying: at the Cabinet meeting, I advised Councillor O'Hare the twenty one page document was available from me as a helpful opportunity if he came to see me. He walked past the Cabinet room whilst I was sitting there. As he did not come into see me, as he has not contacted me – he has not contacted me since the election in actual fact – I turned round and made sure, as I said before, that he ought to read the auditor's recommendations, which is a summary. Rather than send him the twenty one pages, I sent him the two pages which were the recommendations.

(3) Question 3 (Councillor Mike Williams)

The front of Grantham Guildhall, Abbey Gardens and St. Peter's Hill Green are attacked almost nightly by litter louts, graffiti artists, skate boarders and vandals. How are we to convince the general public that we are getting to grips with anti social behaviour when we don't seem able to address the problem on our own front doorstep.

Response: Councillor Ray Auger

The Council will respond to litter louts and graffiti artists as part of the commitment to the street scene. That is via CCTV, PSCOs, Police officers, etc. Skate boarders and vandals are antisocial/crime and disorder events and are currently being addressed by Alan McWilliams, our recently appointed Community Safety Officer.

Supplementary Question: Councillor Mike Williams

When?

Response: Councillor Ray Auger

As I just stated, Mr McWilliams has only recently been appointed. I spoke to him yesterday and he is in conversation with the various partnerships on crime and disorder to address this. Litter louts and graffiti is already part of our street scene action plan and is ongoing as you can see in the Grantham Journal.

(4) Question 4 (Councillor Fereshteh Hurst)

In the light of recent strong indications from the Government that much greater help is planned for local authorities for social and affordable housing initiatives, will Councillor Martin-Mayhew urgently review his current hopelessly inadequate policy in this area?

Response: Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew

Thank you to Councillor Fereshteh Hurst for her interest in our affordable housing policy. I would ask you to take account of recent policy developments relating to sustainable communities and in particular, the need to take a strong view on the

Homes for All document from the Government Office. In light of what I have just said, we are at the moment requesting a review to be undertaken of the Council's affordable housing policy.

Supplementary Question: Councillor Fereshteh Hurst

We better do something about it; as a Cabinet, you have to do something about it otherwise it is out of our hands and we won't get any help from the Government if we don't do something about it. Are you going to do something about it, definitely? Because, we have been saying this for two years and you have not done anything about it.

Response: Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew

Well, what can I say? Fereshteh Hurst just has to look at the paperwork, the protocols, the strategies and everything else that has been coming out and we have been following them to the 'T' and we are up to about fifty affordable homes each year and as we can see if we read the Grantham Journal, there are properties up the road with the Housing Association. There are many properties in there that will become affordable homes. We have all sorts on the ball; just read the paperwork – it's all there. If she wishes, I will get her some of this paperwork and policies so that she can look at exactly what this authority is doing. It is 100% at the moment and we cannot do anymore because of limits from the Government, unfortunately.