

MINUTES

**EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, 14 AUGUST 2008
2.00 PM**



PRESENT

Councillor Mike Exton Chairman

Councillor Bob Adams
(Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Ray Auger
Councillor Pam Bosworth
Councillor Christine Brough
Councillor Robert Broughton
Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor George Chivers
Councillor Michael Cook
Councillor Alan Davidson
Councillor Stuart Farrar
Councillor John Harvey
Councillor Robert Hearmon
Councillor Bryan Helyar
Councillor Trevor Holmes
Councillor Reginald Howard
Councillor Ian Stokes
Councillor Mrs Maureen Jalili
Councillor Sam Jalili
Councillor Kenneth Joynson

Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown
Councillor Jock Kerr
Councillor Albert Victor Kerr
Councillor Reg Lovelock M.B.E.
Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew
Councillor Stuart McBride
Councillor Andrew Moore
Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal
Councillor Alan Parkin
Councillor Mrs Margery Radley
Councillor Susan Sandall
Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Mrs Maureen Spencer-Gregson O.B.E.
Councillor Michael Taylor
Councillor Jeffrey Thompson
Councillor Andrea Webster
Councillor Tom Webster
Councillor Graham Wheat
Councillor Mike Williams
Councillor Raymond Wootten

OFFICERS

Acting Chief Executive
Strategic Director (BA)
Interim Corporate Head, Finance
(S.151. Officer)

OFFICERS

Legal Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)
Democracy Services Manager

"Listening Learning Delivering"

Before the start of formal business, the Chairman mentioned that Councillor Avril Williams was recovering in hospital from a recent operation. Councillor Mike Williams was asked to convey to his wife the best wishes of the Council for a speedy recovery.

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bisnauthsing, Miss Channell, Craft, Dawson, Mrs Gaffigan, Higgs, Jock Kerr, Russell, Bob Sandall, Scott, John Smith, Mrs Judy Smith, Turner, Avril Williams, and Wood.

40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wootten declared a personal interest in minute 41 by virtue of his membership of the National Association of Retired Police Officers and the Grantham East Police Panel.

Councillor McBride declared a personal interest in minute 41 as he is a working Police Community Support Officer.

41. REVISED COUNCIL TAX 2008/09 AND RE-BILLING

DECISION: To approve the reduction in council tax payable of £69.57 per annum for an equivalent Band D property arising from the Government's decision to cap the budget and council tax requirement of the Lincolnshire Police Authority.

Members had previously been circulated with report number CHFR114 which was presented by the Assets and Resources portfolio holder. The portfolio holder thanked the Interim Corporate Head of Finance for his work on preparing the document before Council and proposed the recommendations contained therein. The motion was seconded.

The Corporate Head explained that the Government's decision to cap Lincolnshire Police Authority's (LPA) budget and council tax requirement for 2008/09 impacted on the amount to be collected from the district's council tax payers. Lincolnshire Police Authority had set a council tax increase of 78.9% to meet its budget requirement. The Government served formal notice on the LPA on 10 July, and this Council as billing authority, that the LPA budget requirement should not exceed 26% increase. The LPA had subsequently revised its precept to 25.9%.

Section 31 (1) b of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 states that the

billing authority must set the council tax following notification of a major precepting authority (in this case LPA) of a substitute amount. There is no change in the council tax requirement for South Kesteven and that of Lincolnshire County Council reported to Council on 3 March 2008. Overall, council tax bills will reduce by £69.57 which is equivalent to £1.34 per week for an equivalent Band D property.

The revised amounts of the LPA precept across each category of dwelling are:

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
110.52	128.94	147.36	165.78	202.62	239.46	276.30	331.56

Members were advised that a re-billing project plan had been prepared in order to issue substitute council tax demands. It was anticipated that the revised bills would be distributed during the first two weeks of September. Payment advice to customers would be issued. In accordance with Section 31 (5) of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992, the Council will be recovering the administrative expenses in respect of the re-billing process from the LPA.

Several members indicated their wish to speak. The first speaker said he had received comments from residents of his ward expressing both relief and anger; relief at the reduction of their council tax bill but anger at the Government's refusal to adequately fund the Lincolnshire Police. The cost of re-billing for Lincolnshire is estimated at £250,000. This amount could have funded 12 full time police officers for one year. This reduction in police resources, he said, would be hard to explain to those recent victims of crime in Harrowby ward.

Another member referred to the reasons behind why this council had to convene this meeting which was at some considerable cost to the people of Lincolnshire. He suggested that the LPA set a precept which it knew would be capped by the Government, asserting that this was a gesture of politics of the worst kind by both the LPA and central Government. The member expressed the view that this Council ought to send a message to the LPA and the Government that it deplores the actions of the LPA in setting a precept it knew would almost certainly be thrown out and the to the latter for refusing to allow the capped adjustment to be carried forward as a credit to 2009/10 precepts to avoid the costs of re-billing. Accordingly he proposed the following addendum to the motion:

South Kesteven District Council, in setting a revised Band D council tax of £165.78 for the year 2008/09, takes note that this decision is necessitated by the failure of Lincolnshire Police Authority and the Secretary of State to agree a budget to deliver effective policing in Lincolnshire. In acknowledging the cost to the people of Lincolnshire of this failure to be in the order of £1 million, South Kesteven District Council:

- (a) *invites members of the Lincolnshire Police authority to consider their fitness to continue as members of the authority;*
- (b) *requests the Secretary of State to recognize the particular problems*

associated with policing and policing costs in Lincolnshire.

After other speakers had expressed their concern at the cost of this process and the impact on officer time, the mover of the original motion was asked whether she was prepared to accept this addendum to her motion.

As the mover of the motion had previously been unaware that this addendum was to be put, she requested the Chairman to agree to an adjournment for her group to consider the matter.

Accordingly the Chairman announced that there would be a short adjournment from 2.20pm to 2.25pm.

At the resumption of the meeting, the mover of the motion indicated she was not prepared to accept the addendum to her motion as she did not feel it helpful to criticise the LPA. This, she said, was not the role of this Council today.

In response, a member expressed concern at the necessity to have this recess given that the proposer of the addendum was not criticising the LPA, rather the process. The point of the addendum being that it was the least this Council could do to satisfy its residents that it took its job very seriously.

The mover of the addendum then confirmed he now wished this to be presented as a formal amendment to the motion. The amendment was seconded.

A vote was taken on the amendment and subsequently lost.

A vote was taken on the original motion and carried.

The meeting closed at 2.35p.m.