

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2014, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor G McAndrew (Chairman).
Councillors D Abbott, D Andrews, W Ashley,
P Ballam, E Bedford, R Beeching, S Bull,
M Carver, Mrs R Cheswright, K Crofton,
A Dearman, L Haysey, Mrs D Hollebbon,
A Jackson, G Jones, J Jones, G Lawrence,
J Mayes, M McMullen, M Newman,
P Phillips, M Pope, P Ruffles, S Rutland-
Barsby, R Sharma, N Symonds, J Taylor,
M Tindale, J Thornton, A Warman,
K Warnell, G Williamson, J Wing, M Wood,
C Woodward, B Wrangles and J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Jeff Hughes	- Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

547 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed the press and public to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

The Chairman referred to the “Battle of the Bands” event held on 1 February 2014, at Hertford Theatre, which had been well attended. He thanked Members for their support and advised that the competition had been won by Freman College, Buntingford.

The Chairman reminded Members of the forthcoming Civic Dinner. Finally, he advised that Members would be receiving invitations to the raising of the Commonwealth flag on 10 March 2014.

548 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2014, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

549 EAST & NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE NHS TRUST: UPDATE AND FORWARD LOOK

Nick Carver and Sarah Brierley, East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust, gave a presentation, “Changing Times in the NHS”. They outlined the ongoing change programme and highlighted the investment in hospital facilities. They also referred to future improvements and the impact all these would have on reducing mortality rates. Finally, they referred to the positive outcome of the unannounced inspection of the Care Quality Commission in September 2013.

In response to Members’ questions, Nick Carver and Sarah Brierley stated that there was some flexibility at Lister Hospital to handle additional demand arising from anticipated future population growth. They advised that cardiac services would be extended to weekend opening from April 2014 and the McMillan refurbishments at the Lister would be completed in time for opening in June 2014.

550 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 4 FEBRUARY 2014

In respect of Minutes 551 – 555, which were all items relating to the Council’s budget for 2014/15, the Executive Member for

Finance gave a presentation.

The Executive Member commented on the Council's efforts in reducing the tax burden for residents and referred to the impending council tax freeze proposed for 2014/15 and 2015/16. The Executive's proposal to reduce the projected increase in 2016/17 and 2017/18 from 2% to 1% would require further savings to be identified. The Executive Member referred to the impact of these on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The Executive Member commented on the uncertainties of New Homes Bonus funding, the continuing need to maximise investment returns and the outcome of the pension fund triennial valuation review. He referred to the freeze on car parks charges since 2010 and separate proposals that would be considered at the next Executive to restructure charges with a view to encouraging more shopping visits. Finally, the Executive Member commented that, despite the financial pressures on the Council, service improvements, such as recycling, had still being implemented.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 4 February 2014 be received.

(see also Minutes 551 – 556)

551 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT
2014/15

RESOLVED – that (A) the 2014/15 Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators for East Herts Council be approved; and

(B) the Policy on Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) be approved.

(see also Minute 550)

552 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14 (REVISED) TO 2016/17

RESOLVED - that (A) the comments of the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees of 14 January 2014, be received; and

(B) the new Capital Programme for the period 2013/14 (Revised) to 2016/17, be approved.

(see also Minute 550)

553 FEES AND CHARGES 2014/15

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments made by the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees of 14 January 2014 be received; and

(B) the increases in fees and charges as detailed in Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ of the report submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 550)

554 REVENUE ESTIMATES, SERVICES - 2013/14 PROBABLE, 2014/15 ESTIMATE

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments of the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees of 14 January 2014 be received; and

(B) the probable Revenue Estimates for 2013/14 and the draft Revenue Estimates for 2014/15, as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 550)

555 CONSOLIDATED BUDGET REPORT 2014/15 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The Chairman advised that impending new legislation would require all Councils to take a recorded vote on budget

matters. Although not yet implemented, the Government had encouraged Councils to do so for this year's budget. Therefore, a recorded vote was taken on this matter, the results being:

FOR:

Councillors D Abbott, D Andrews, W Ashley, P Ballam, E Bedford, R Beeching, S Bull, M Carver, Mrs R Cheswright, H Crofton, A Dearman, L Haysey, Mrs D Hollebbon, A Jackson, G Jones, J Jones, G Lawrence, J Mayes, G McAndrew, M McMullen, M Newman, P Phillips, M Pope, P Ruffles, S Rutland-Barsby, R Sharma, N Symonds, J Taylor, J Thornton, M Tindale, A Warman, K Warnell, G Williamson, C Woodward, B Wrangles, J Wyllie.

AGAINST:

Councillors J Wing, M Wood.

For: 36

Against: 2

Abstentions: 0

The Executive's recommendations in respect of Minute 511 – Consolidated Budget Report 2014/15 and Medium Term Financial Plan were declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the probable outturn for 2013/14 be approved and it be agreed that any variation at outturn showing an improved position against the underspending now submitted, be put to the cost of the priority spend reserve;

(B) the revenue budget for 2014/15 be approved and, in support of the 2014/15 budget, a one-off payment be made from the reserves of £1.008m to fund a one-off payment to the Pension fund to cap the increased deficit repayments to £600k pa for future years;

(C) the medium term financial plan to 2017/18 be approved, subject to the amendment of the projected council tax increase for 2016/17 and 2017/18 being reduced from 2% to 1%; and

(D) there be no increase in Council Tax for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

(see also Minute 550)

556 HERTFORD THEATRE SEATING REFURBISHMENT

RESOLVED – that the tender price for seating refurbishment at Hertford Theatre, as contained in the report, be approved, and capital provision of up to £109,000 be made available for this project.

(see also Minute 550)

557 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 30 JANUARY 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Management Committee meeting held on 30 January 2014, be received.

558 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: MINUTES - 5 FEBRUARY 2014

In respect of Minute 522 – Minutes: 30 January 2014, Councillor G Jones gave notice of his intention to seek to amend the wording at the next Development Management Committee meeting.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Management Committee meeting held on 5 February 2014, be received.

559 JOINT MEETING OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEES: MINUTES - 11 FEBRUARY 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees held on 11 February 2014, be received.

560 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2014/15

The Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services submitted a report containing the recommendations of the Council’s Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) following its review of Members Allowances.

Council approved the recommendations as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) Basic Allowance be increased by 1% to £5,218, including the consolidation of the previous communications allowance;

(B) application of the multipliers to arrive at the SRAs payable shall be to the Basic Allowance (as amended), less the consolidated communications allowance of £424 (£420, plus 1%); and

(C) the size of the Independent Remuneration Panel be decreased from 7 to 6 members (with the existing appointees).

The meeting closed at 8.14 pm

Chairman
Date