

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2016, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor L Haysey (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors E Buckmaster, A Jackson,
G Jones, G McAndrew, S Rutland-Barsby
and G Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, P Ballam, R Brunton,
K Brush, M Casey, M Freeman, J Goodeve,
J Jones, P Moore, T Page, M Pope and
P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Philip Gregory	- Head of Strategic Finance
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services
David Thorogood	- Environmental Co- Ordinator
Liz Watts	- Chief Executive

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BUDGET REPORT AND MTFP 2016/17 – 2019/20

The Executive considered a report setting out the
Council's budget proposals for 2016/17, which included:

- the 2015/16 Revenue Budget Forecast
Outturn;
- the 2016/17 Revenue Budget;
- the 2016/17 Schedule of Charges;
- the 2015/16 (Revised) to 2019/20 Capital

- Programme;
- the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2016/17 – 2019/20 ; and
- the Council's Reserves.

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services emphasised that he was proposing a balanced budget that did not require any cuts in service or increase in council tax. It was noted that the Scrutiny Committees, at their joint meeting held on 19 January 2016, had supported the proposals without making any specific comment.

The Executive supported the proposals now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the comments of the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees be received;

(B) the 2015/16 Forecast Outturn as set out in Section 4 of the report submitted, including the proposed contributions to and from Reserves, be approved;

(C) the forecast 2015/16 revenue underspend transfer to the Transformation Reserve, as now detailed at paragraph 4.11 of the report submitted, be approved;

(D) the 2016/17 Revenue Budget, including:

- Budget Growth set out in Section 6, paragraph 6.2 of the report submitted;
- Budget Savings set out in Section 6, paragraph 6.3 of the report submitted;
- Contingency budget set in Section 8, paragraph 8.3 of the report submitted;
- use of Earmarked Reserves, as set out in section 9 of the report submitted;
- consideration of the advice from the Director of Finance & Support Services on the levels of reserves and robustness of the forecasts in setting the budget as required by Section

**25 of the Local Government Act 2003
(section 15);**

be approved;

(E) the proposed 2016/17 Schedule of Charges, as detailed at section 7 of the report submitted, be approved;

(F) the East Herts Council element of the Council Tax Demand, as now detailed in paragraph 11.3 of the report submitted, be approved;

(G) the Capital Programme for the period 2015/16 (Revised) to 2019/20, the funding of the programme and the consequential revenue budget implications as set out in section 12 of the report submitted, be approved;

(H) the Medium Term Financial Plan covering 2015/16 (Revised) to 2019/20 as set out in section 13 of the report submitted, be approved; and

(I) the Reserves Policy as set out in Section 14 of the report submitted, be approved.

539 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2016/17

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report seeking approval for the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2016-17 including the 2016-17 Prudential Indicators.

The Executive noted that the Scrutiny Committees, at their joint meeting on 19 February 2016, and the Audit Committee, at its meeting held on 20 January 2016, had supported the proposals without making specific comments.

The Executive supported the recommendations now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the comments of the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees and the Audit Committee be received;

(B) the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy, as now submitted, be approved;

(C) the Prudential Indicators, as now submitted, be approved; and

(D) the counterparty and approved countries listing , as now submitted, be approved.

540 **GREAT AMWELL CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support submitted a report on the Great Amwell Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation. She detailed the outcome of the public consultation in the report now submitted.

The Appraisal identified the special character of the Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detracted from the identified character. Once adopted by the Council, the Appraisal would become a ‘material consideration’ in the process of determining planning applications. It would also link into the development of neighbourhood planning.

The Executive Member also updated Members on the ongoing progress with other Conservation Area Appraisals and thanked Officers for their efforts.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer

responses and proposed changes to the Great Amwell Conservation Area Appraisal be supported;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the Appraisal which may be necessary; and

(C) the Great Amwell Conservation Area Appraisal be adopted.

541 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed Members and the public to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

542 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 5 January 2016, be approved as correct record and signed by the Leader.

543 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In respect of Minute 547 – Transfer of Freehold Interest of Waste Disposal site, Watermill Industrial Estate, Buntingford, Councillor G Williamson declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in that the matter involved his employer, Hertfordshire County Council. He left the chamber whilst the matter was considered.

544 ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY

The Executive received a report detailing those issues referred to it by the Scrutiny Committees, which were noted. Issues relating to specific reports for the Executive were considered and detailed at the relevant report of the Executive Member.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

545 FUEL POVERTY STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report seeking the Executive's approval for a new Fuel Poverty Strategy. He advised of the publication in the previous year of the Fuel Poverty Strategy for England 2015, the guiding principles of which the proposed Strategy was based on. He detailed the potential range of local actions aimed at reducing fuel poverty within East Herts. The Executive Member highlighted that the Strategy was one of the first to be developed by a local authority following the publication of the new National Strategy.

The Environmental Strategy and Development Manager provided the latest update on the comments received in the consultation process. In response to various Members' comments and questions, the Environmental Strategy and Development Manager referred to advice on energy switching schemes and the Council's role in signposting residents to energy efficiency schemes, including grants for insulation works.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing commented that, whilst the Council would continue to liaise with registered social landlords on their role in energy efficiency measures, most fuel poverty occurred in the private sector. Thus the Strategy was focused on this sector, where home insulation tended to be more inefficient.

In response to comments that the Strategy did not address the full extent of problems identified, the Leader reminded Members that this was one of the first such strategies to be developed by a local authority in the light of the publication of the Fuel Poverty Strategy for England 2015. As such, this would provide a platform to build on and develop further ideas. She suggested that the Strategy be monitored and reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in a year's time with any further actions identified being referred to the Executive for determination.

The Executive approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the draft Fuel Poverty Strategy for East Herts as appended to the report submitted, be approved;

(B) information on oil buying clubs as detailed in Challenge 6 action (d) of the draft Fuel Poverty Strategy be disseminated to all Parish Councils and local Members; and

(C) progress on the Fuel Poverty Strategy be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in a year's time with any further required actions being reported to the Executive for determination.

546 REQUEST FOR AREA DESIGNATION FOR
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING - HERTINGFORDBURY
PARISH

The Executive gave consideration to a report detailing an application by Hertingfordbury Parish Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area, as detailed on the plan attached to the report submitted.

The Executive considered the application and the consultation undertaken, including the comments on the proposed neighbourhood boundary that had been submitted. The report submitted detailed the main areas of consideration in determining the application in accordance with Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011.

The Leader commented on the objection made in respect of the inclusion of Panshanger Park and Birchall Garden Suburb sites within the neighbourhood plan area designation. She believed that the area designation should follow the parish boundary and reminded Members that this approach had been taken with previous applications for neighbourhood area designations.

The Executive supported the application.

RESOLVED - that the application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area, submitted by Hertingfordbury Parish Council, be supported.

547 TRANSFER OF FREEHOLD INTEREST OF WASTE DISPOSAL SITE, WATERMILL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, BUNTINGFORD

The Executive considered a report seeking approval to transfer the title deeds for the freehold interest of land at the Household Waste site, Watermill Industrial Estate, Buntingford to Hertfordshire County Council. The Council owned the title to part of the land that formed the household waste site which was managed and operated by the County Council. As the authority with responsibility for waste disposal the County Council had user rights to the land.

In response to Members' comments and questions, Officers confirmed that the land had no intrinsic value as the Council was prohibited from making alternative use of it for any other purpose than a waste site. This restriction on the use of the land would continue after the proposed transfer. Officers also confirmed that any contamination liabilities would also be transferred.

Officers undertook to respond to Councillor J Jones in respect of the ownership of the access road to the site.

The Executive approved the recommendation now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the title for the freehold interest in the Household Waste Site at Watermill Industrial Estate be transferred to Hertfordshire County Council on the terms detailed in the report now submitted.

548 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of Minute 549 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in

paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

549 SOUTHERN MALTINGS, WARE

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report seeking authority to grant a leasehold interest in the land and buildings known as Southern Malting, New Road, Ware. He detailed the action taken by Officers in considering the various options available, including the disposal of the freehold interest in the site.

In response to Members' comments and questions, the Executive Member acknowledged the risks as detailed in the report submitted, but that on balance, given the potential community benefits, there was merit in granting a lease to the Ware Arts Centre Ltd.

The Executive considered the options set out in the report submitted and approved the recommendation as now detailed.

RESOLVED - that, subject to agreeing mutually acceptable terms, the Council grants a 30 year lease in Southern Malting to Ware Arts Centre Ltd on the terms detailed in the report submitted.

The meeting closed at 7.58 pm

Chairman
Date