

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 10 JANUARY 2012, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor A Jackson (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors M Alexander, M Carver and
L Haysey.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, R Beeching,
E Buckmaster, Mrs R Cheswright, J Demonti,
G Jones, J Mayes, M McMullen, T Page,
J Ranger, C Rowley, N Symonds and
C Woodward.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Alan Madin	- Director of Internal Services
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services

539 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor M Tindale.

540 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed the press to the meeting and wished everyone a happy new year. He also advised that he had agreed to accept onto the agenda as an urgent matter, an

item relating to Gascoyne Way Car Park Passenger Lifts, on the basis that urgent safety works were required.

541 **MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - NOVEMBER 2011 (1)**

The Leader submitted a report setting out the finance and performance monitoring of the Council for November 2011.

The Executive recommended the re-profiling of the capital programme, as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that £132,000 of the Town Centre Environmental Enhancements capital budget be re-profiled from 2011/12 into 2012/13.

(see also Minute 546 below)

542 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 6 December 2011, be approved and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

543 **CAR PARKING FEES AND CHARGES 2012/13**

The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Economic Development submitted a report on car parking pay and display charges for 2012/13. He referred to the need to balance the needs of the retail economy, town centre workers and the pressures on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The Executive was reminded that charges had not been increased in 2011/12 and that the 2.5% VAT increase in January 2011 had not been passed on, thereby resulting in a reduction of income. He also commented that the MTFP had budgeted for inflation at 2%, when in fact the current rate was running at 4.8%.

The Executive Member also reminded Members that the

Transport and Parking Strategy would be completed shortly and reported to Members in spring 2012. Therefore, given these factors, he proposed no increase in charges for now, but that further consideration be given in September 2012.

In response to questions, the Leader emphasised that, given the current budgetary shortfall and the factors detailed by the Executive Member, there would be a need to review and perhaps increase charges in September 2012.

Various Members expressed support for this proposal.

The Executive approved the proposal now detailed.

RESOLVED – that for now, no increase in car parking pay and display charges be proposed for the 2012/13 budget, subject to further review in September 2012, taking into account, the VAT increase yet to be included in the charging regime, inflationary pressures and the outcome of the impending Transport and Parking Strategy.

544 CASTLE WEIR MICRO HYDRO SCHEME - UPDATE

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Environment submitted an update on the capital investment proposal for the installation of a micro hydro generation scheme at Castle Weir, Hertford.

He expressed his frustration at the delays in the project caused by lengthy negotiations with the Environment Agency, who were required to approve the scheme formally, before any works could start. Details of the protracted discussions were set out in the report now submitted.

The Executive Member set out a revised business case and timeframe in the report now submitted.

The Executive approved the revised business case as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the revised business case for the

design and build of a micro hydro scheme at Castle Weir, Hertford, as now detailed, be approved.

545 COMMUNITY GRANTS - AMENDED POLICY

The Executive Member for Health, Housing and Community Support submitted a report proposing amendments to the community grants policy.

The Community Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 22 November 2011, had set up a task and finish group to look at simplifying the various grants “pots” and to consider how the policy could be refocused to better achieve the Council’s corporate priorities. The group had also considered amending the grants criteria to take account of the Olympics and Queen’s Jubilee.

The Executive Member detailed the proposed amendments in the report now submitted. Various Members welcomed the proposals, in particular, the idea of advising the local ward Member of any grant awards. In response to a suggestion by Councillor R Beeching, the Executive Member undertook to look at including the local County Council ward Member in this.

The Executive approved the proposals as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the simplification of the grants “pots” and the amendments to the community grants policy, as now detailed at paragraph 2.1 of the report submitted, be approved.

546 MONTHLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - NOVEMBER 2011 (2)

The Leader submitted a report setting out the finance and performance monitoring of the Council for November 2011.

RESOLVED – that the budgetary variances set out at paragraph 2.1 of the report submitted, be noted.

(see also Minute 541 above)

547 GASCOYNE WAY CAR PARK PASSENGER LIFTS

The Executive considered an urgent report seeking a waiver of the Council’s Procurement Regulations in order that urgent safety improvement works could be authorised for the passenger lifts at Gascoyne Way car park.

The Leader detailed the current position resulting in the passenger lifts being taken out of service on safety grounds. He explained the reason for the report being submitted at short notice in that, if approved, the works could be undertaken at short notice, which would ensure that the best service possible was provided to car park users.

The Executive approved the proposals as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that in accordance with Procurement Regulation 12.1, DAB Lifts be instructed to carry out further improvement works to the passenger lifts in Gascoyne Way car park.

The meeting closed at 7.46 pm

Chairman
Date