

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 13 JUNE 2023, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor B Crystall (Leader)
Councillors C Brittain, B Crystall,
M Goldspink, A Daar, J Dumont, V Glover-
Ward, S Hopewell, T Hoskin and C Wilson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, E Buckmaster,
M Butcher, T Clements, C Redfern, T Stowe
and G Williamson.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Steven Linnett	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Nick Phipps	- Service Manager - Community Wellbeing and Partnerships
Rhys Thomas	- Theatre Director and Arts Advisor

42 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

43 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader reminded Members that the meeting was being webcast and to use their microphones when speaking.

44 MINUTES - 14 FEBRUARY 2023

Councillor Buckmaster requested an amendment to the minutes at minute number 345. He requested that 'with the' be added between 'Council Tax' and 'increase' to more closely reflect the statement made.

Councillor Buckmaster and Councillor McAndrew who were at the last Executive meeting, confirmed to the current Executive that the minutes of the last meeting were accurate.

Councillor Dumont proposed, and Councillor Glover-Ward seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2023 with the amendment requested by Councillor Buckmaster be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Leader. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2023 as amended be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

45 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

46 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (RIPA)
POLICY REVIEW

The Executive Member for Corporate Services presented the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy report. He said that RIPA allowed local authorities to conduct covert surveillance to prevent and detect certain crimes and the council were required to have the policy in place on the use of these powers.

Councillor Dumont said that the council's policy had been inspected by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) who were complimentary of the policy but did recommend some updates. The updates had been made to the policy and the Executive were asked to agree the new updated policy.

Councillor Goldspink said that she was glad that the council were so carefully regulated on surveillance as she was worried about individual rights to privacy. She thanked Officers for setting out such a clear report.

Councillor Daar asked the Executive Member for Corporate Services if the policy had been through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny and comments from other Members.

Councillor Dumont confirmed this was correct.

Councillor Dumont proposed, and Councillor Goldspink seconded a motion supporting the recommendations in the report. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That (A) the Executive considers the content of the report and provides any observations to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services; and

(B) The revised Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) Policy at Appendix B be adopted.

47 HERTFORD THEATRE - PRICING STRATEGY

The Leader reminded Members that Appendix C was restricted and if Members wished to ask questions or comments on the appendix, then the meeting would need to pass a resolution to exclude the press and public.

The Executive Member for Wellbeing presented the Hertford Theatre Pricing Strategy report. She said that the Hertford Theatre project was on track for opening in Spring 2024 and the Leader and herself had visited the site for a tour a few weeks ago. She said the Executive needed to agree a pricing strategy as the theatre was already getting interest for bookings. The report had been considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 31 May 2023.

Councillor Buckmaster said it was good to see the progress being made at the theatre and it would be an important facility for Hertford and the whole District. He provided some context to the project and said that the last administration could not foresee the impact of the pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the

increase in inflation. He said that the project board did run through the business plan and said it was good to see it still in use to enable the theatre to be successful in the future.

The Leader thanked the previous administration who drove the project forward.

Councillor Goldspink said that her and her Liberal Democrat colleagues had misgivings about the theatre project in the past as they were worried about the cost and the amount of borrowing involved. She said that as the project was nearing completion, her group did not wish to be obstructive. She thanked the Officers for detailed costings and the business plan and said the Executive must support the report so bookings at the theatre could start. Councillor Goldspink said it was important that the whole situation was kept under review.

Councillor McAndrew echoed the comments of Councillor Buckmaster and said it was refreshing to hear support from Councillor Goldspink. He referred to paragraph 2.15 of the report which said an annual report would be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee annually. He asked when the first report would be presented.

The Theatre Director and Arts Advisor said the programme would start in May 2024 so a report would be presented to the Committee on the first 12 months in June 2025.

Councillor Wilson echoed the comments from Councillor Goldspink and said he was concerned that the starting point for the projects were how much money it needed to

make. He said he was reassured that there would be a day-to-day view on the ground to see if the strategy was working or not.

Councillor Hopewell proposed, and Councillor Glover-Ward seconded a motion supporting the recommendations in the report. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That (A) the comments from the Audit and Governance Committee be reviewed;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Operations in

consultation with the portfolio for future changes to pricing in the context of inflation, market rates, full cost recovery principles;

(C) authority be delegated to the Theatre Director to negotiate and agree ticket pricing for productions and events, ensuring that these are in-line with the business plan; and

(D) authority be delegated to the Head of Operations for

agreeing Food and Beverage pricing ensuring these are in line with the business plan.

48 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 7.16 pm

Chairman
Date