

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 18 MAY 2011, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor S Rutland-Barsby (Chairman)
Councillors D Abbott, M Alexander,
D Andrews, W Ashley, P Ballam, S Basra,
E Bedford, R Beeching, E Buckmaster,
S Bull, A Burlton, M Carver,
Mrs R Cheswright, K Crofton, J Demonti,
P Gray, L Haysey, T Herbert,
Mrs D Hollebon, Mrs D Hone, A Jackson,
G Jones, G Lawrence, J Mayes,
G McAndrew, M McMullen, P Moore,
W Mortimer, M Newman, T Page, P Phillips,
M Pope, N Poulton, R Radford, J Ranger,
C Rowley, P Ruffles, N Symonds, J Taylor,
M Tindale, A Warman, G Williamson,
N Wilson, J Wing, M Wood, C Woodward,
B Wrangles and J Wyllie.

ALSO PRESENT:

Ex-Councillor A Dodd.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Anne Freimanis	- Chief Executive
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Jeff Hughes	- Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Alan Madin	- Director of Internal Services

Lois Prior	- Head of Strategic Direction (shared) and Communications Manager
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services

1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman (ex-Councillor A Dodd) opened the meeting by reminding Members that the meeting was being webcast live and that they should remain seated when speaking.

The Chairman asked Members to stand and observe a minute's silence in memory of ex-Councillors J Hedley and D Peek.

He thanked Members and Officers for their support to him throughout the previous year and paid particular tribute to the support he had received from Francesca Dust. He was pleased to announce that his two charities, Isabel Hospice and Vale House, would benefit by approximately £6800.

He referred to the fulfilling year and the privilege of serving as Chairman. He had represented the District at hundreds of engagements throughout the year and believed that the Council was held in high esteem. He concluded by wishing all Members a beneficial and enjoyable time ahead.

Councillors A Jackson and M Wood each paid tribute to the Chairman. They both referred to the Chairman's service as an elected representative for 20 years at all three tiers of local government and wished him well for the future.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor S Rutland-Barsby, presented the Chairman his Past Chairman's badge and small gifts for him and his consort.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2011/12

It was moved by Councillor A Jackson and seconded by Councillor M Alexander that Councillor S Rutland-Barsby be elected Chairman of the Council to hold office for the civic year 2011/12.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, Councillor S Rutland-Barsby was elected Chairman of the Council for the civic year 2011/12.

RESOLVED - that Councillor S Rutland-Barsby be elected Chairman of the Council and hold office for the civic year 2011/12.

The Chairman made the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office, and took the Chair.

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2011/12

It was moved by Councillor W Ashley and seconded by Councillor N Poulton that Councillor J Taylor be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council to hold office for the civic year 2011/12.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, Councillor J Taylor was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council for the civic year 2011/12.

RESOLVED - that Councillor J Taylor be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council and hold office for the civic year 2011/12.

The Vice-Chairman made the statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office. She thanked Members and looked forward to supporting Councillor S Rutland-Barsby.

4 FURTHER CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman (Councillor S Rutland-Barsby) thanked Members for electing her. She advised that her chosen charities for the year ahead would be Isabel Hospice and St Elizabeth's Centre.

She congratulated Members on their election to the Council and welcomed all new Members. She reminded Council that there were a number of former Chairmen in the chamber and requested them to wear their Past Chairman badges at future Council meetings.

The Chairman reminded Members that they had to complete their Notice of Registrable Interests form within 28 days of their election and return them to the Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services as soon as possible. Members were also reminded to return the various forms contained within the induction pack as soon as possible.

She also reminded Members that there would be a joint meeting of committees at the conclusion of Annual Council and so all Members were requested to remain seated until all the business was concluded.

Finally, the Chairman invited all Members and Officers to receive light refreshments at the conclusion of the meetings.

5 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 2 March 2011, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Question 1

Councillor R Cheswright asked the Executive Member for Resources and Internal Support if he could confirm what level of IT allowance would be paid and what it was supposed to

cover.

In reply, the Executive Member confirmed that Members would be eligible for reimbursement of expenses of up to £35 per month and not £20 as stated elsewhere. This represented £15 for telephone line rental and calls, £15 for broadband connection and £5 for consumables, such as printer cartridges, paper, etc.

The Executive Member stated that this new method of supporting Members would result in less administration and lower overhead costs for the Council. It would also assist in the Council's aims for reducing the volume of paper used.

In response to a supplementary question, the Executive Member confirmed that these expenses were taxable and that Members should make their own arrangements.

7 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 8 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 8 March 2011, be received.

8 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENFORCEMENT POLICY

RESOLVED - that the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy as now submitted, be approved.

9 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 22 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 22 March 2011, be received.

10 HERTFORDSHIRE WASTE PARTNERSHIP INTER -
AUTHORITY AGREEMENT

RESOLVED – that (A) the Draft Hertfordshire Waste Partnership Inter-Authority Agreement, as now submitted, be approved; and

(B) the Director of Customer and Community

Services, in consultation with Executive Member for Environment and Conservation, be authorised to approve minor changes on behalf of the Council.

11 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

(A) DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE
- 9 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Control Committee meeting held on 9 March 2011, be received.

(B) LICENSING COMMITTEE - 10 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Licensing Committee meeting held on 10 March 2011, be received.

(C) ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
- 15 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 15 March 2011, be received.

(D) COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
- 21 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Community Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 21 March 2011, be received.

(E) CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
- 22 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 22 March 2011, be received.

(F) AUDIT COMMITTEE - 23 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 23 March 2011, be received.

(G) DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE
- 24 MARCH 2011

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Development Control Committee meeting held on 24 March 2011, be received.

12 DECISION-MAKING ARRANGEMENTS

The Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services submitted a report reviewing the Council's decision-making structure. He advised that Council was required to approve the size of the proposed committees and the allocation of seats to political groups. Council noted that three political groups had been formed and their nominations to the seats on committees were detailed in the report now submitted.

The Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services also advised that Council was required to appoint a Leader for the life of the Council and it would be the Leader's responsibility to determine the size of the Executive, portfolio arrangements and appointments.

Councillor M Wood expressed concern with the proposal that the size of the Development Control Committee be reduced to 12 Members, on the basis of the workload required.

Councillor J Ranger expressed concern that the proposed size of the scrutiny committees were not large enough, as he believed that all Members who were not on the Executive should be on at least one scrutiny committee. He requested that this be looked at over the coming year with a view to increasing their size for 2012/13.

Councillor G McAndrew proposed, and Councillor Mrs D Hollebon seconded, that Councillor A Jackson be appointed

Leader of the Council for the life of the Council.

After being put to the meeting, and a vote taken, Councillor A Jackson was appointed Leader of the Council for the life of the Council.

The Leader thanked Members for his appointment and spoke of the privilege of serving as Leader of the District Council. He looked back at the Council's achievements of the previous term and highlighted the refurbishment of Hertford Theatre, the C3W programme, the Green Flag awards, the publication of the Bishop's Stortford 20:20 Vision and the implementation of the Alternate Refuse and Recycling scheme. The Leader also referred to the various activities that had strengthened partnerships in a number of areas. He reminded Members that council tax had been frozen this year with the intention of there being no increase next year.

The Leader looked forward to the challenges facing the Council over the next four years and the need to provide direction and leadership. He outlined some of the major issues that would need to be tackled, such as economic development, the Transport Strategy and the Community Safety Review. He believed that the role of the District Council would change and be strengthened over the next few years and become a coordinator of the place.

Finally, the Leader outlined the critical role of ward councillors as community leaders and looked forward to working with all Members in a constructive way. He referred to the need for his group to use their large majority in a responsible manner and to engage with and involve all Members as far as possible.

Council approved the proposals as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that (A) the following Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and Joint Member Panel be appointed, with the number of voting Members stated:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>No. of Members</u>
Community Scrutiny	10
Corporate Business Scrutiny	10
Environment Scrutiny	10
Audit	7
Development Control	12
Human Resources	7
Licensing	15
Highways Joint Member Panel (8 from Hertfordshire County Council 8 from this Council)	16

(B) the allocation of seats to political groups be as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'C' of the report now submitted;

(C) the allocation of seats on the Highways Joint Member Panel (8) to political groups be as follows:

Conservative	7
Liberal Democrats	1

(D) the membership of Scrutiny Committees, Regulatory Committees and the Highways Joint Member Panel be as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'D' of the report now submitted, with Members being appointed in accordance with the wishes of the political groups to whom the seats on these bodies have been allocated;

(E) Councillor A Jackson be appointed as Leader of the Council for the life of the Council;

(F) to note that the number of Executive Members to be appointed to the Executive, as advised by the

Leader, will be 4 (in addition to the Leader) and the portfolio responsibilities as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'B' of the report submitted;

(G) the Council's Standards Committee be appointed for the ensuing civic year consisting of four independent Members, four District Councillors (of whom at least one should be from each political party with four or more Members), one Town Council Member, two Parish Council Members and the following be appointed:

District Council

Councillors A Burlton, M Carver, N Poulton and M Wood.

Town/Parish

Mr J Jones, Mr C Marks and Mrs E Woods.

Independents

Mr S Bouette, Mr D Farrell, Mr J Morphew and Mr T Vickers.

(H) the programme of Council meetings, as detailed at paragraph 6.1 of the report submitted, be approved;

(I) the Director of Internal Services be authorised to make changes in the standing membership of committees and panels in (A) above, in accordance with the wishes of the political groups to whom seats on these bodies have been allocated; and

(J) the action to be taken by the Director of Internal Services, in consultation with the Leader, under delegated authority, concerning the appointment of representatives to outside bodies, be noted.

13 REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report setting out proposed amendments to the Constitution on a range of issues:

- Development Control Fees
- Fees and Charges
- Land Drainage Functions
- Council Email Addresses
- Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010

In response to a question by Councillor E Buckmaster, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that existing Environmental Health staff would be trained to undertake duties in respect of the new sunbeds regulations.

Various Members referred to the use of Council email addresses and the circumstances in which they should be used. A number of suggestions for alternative wordings were made and it was agreed that these be considered further by the Monitoring Officer and be reported back to Council.

Council approved the proposed amendments, except for that relating to Council email addresses.

RESOLVED – that (A) a further report on Council email addresses be submitted to a future Council meeting;
and

(B) subject to (A) above, the amendments to the Constitution, as now submitted, be approved.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm

Chairman
Date