

SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Meeting - 27 February 2007

Present: Mr Adams (Chairman), Mr Dhillon (Vice-Chairman), Miss Arnold, Mr Binns, Mr Busby, Mr Capel, Mr Cooper, Mr Dawkins, Mr Harding, Mr Hardy, Mr Hartwell, Miss Hazell, Mr Hollis, Mrs Holloway, Mr Jones, Mr Lidgate, Mr Oxley, Mr Reed, Mr Rigby, Mrs Royston, Mr Sandy, Dr Scott, Mrs Simmonds, Mr Tilbey, Mrs Tofari, Mr Walters and Mrs Woolveridge.

Apologies: Mr Bowater, Mrs Evans, Mrs Fea, Mr Houdret, Mrs Lowen-Cooper, Mr Mountford, Mr Smith and Mr Thomson.

76. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reported on recent functions and events attended on behalf of the Council and mentioned in particular the Citizens Advice Bureau launch following the opening of the service from Capswood, a visit to Pinewood Studios accompanied by the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire and the Chairman of Buckinghamshire County Council, and his own Chairman's Reception held on 23 February which had been successful and well attended.

77. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23 January 2007 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

78. CABINET MEETING

The Leader, Mr Hardy, presented the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 February 2007. Each minute of the Cabinet was introduced by the relevant Portfolio Holder respectively.

With reference to minute 91 [Budget and Council Tax report], the Leader introduced proposals for the Council's Revenue Budget and for the recommended level of Council tax in the District, which included the setting of the District tax at £128.90 for a band D household, an increase of 4%. He also presented a further report containing final information from the precepting authorities leading to the total Council tax for the area, which the Council was required to approve at the meeting. The recommended net expenditure budget of £6,896m represented an increase over the previous year of only 2.8%, which was less than inflation. This low level of increase had been achieved by the Council continuing to deliver on its planned programme of savings and efficiency measures that was put in place in 2006, and by maximising the income from its cash reserves. The recommended budget had also been able to identify new resources for a few key developments, such as increasing the Council's capacity to monitor and enforce its planning decisions, and increased spending on street sweeping. The recommendations on budget and Council tax were put forward despite a very low rise in the proportion funded by central government. The increase in grant of £21,000 had not kept pace with inflation, amounting to an increase of just 0.7% over the previous year.

In considering the report and recommendations, members asked questions and received clarification in relation to:

- Growth items placed in category 2, where no new money was available.
- The reasons growth items had been so classified.
- The potential for future savings offered by working together with other Bucks authorities in the Pathfinder bid.

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- The precepts set by Thames Valley Police and the Bucks and Milton Keynes Fire Authority and the expenditure by each.

At the conclusion of the debate, the Leader moved the recommendations (in 10 parts) contained in minutes of the Cabinet, together with the additional recommendations contained in this Council tax report, which included information from the precepting bodies. All recommendations were agreed and adopted.

With reference to minute 92 [Heathrow - 2M Group] the Council noted the inauguration of this new group of local authorities formed for the purpose of acting as a common voice about the impacts of Heathrow Airport, including in particular those related to a possible third runway. The appointment of a nominated deputy for the Leader would be clarified following the Annual meeting.

With reference to minute 95 [Planning Policy Portfolio Holder report] the Council considered a series of recommendations relating to the ongoing Local Development Framework (LDF) preparation. These included the adoption of the Statement of Community Involvement, a number of actions aimed at achieving a high quality, sound Core Strategy, and the approval of a submission to GOSE for the Local Plan policies to be saved beyond September 2007.

Two matters were discussed in relation to recommendations in minute 96 [Environment Portfolio Holder Report]. Regarding the proposed transfer of Stoke Common to the Corporation of London, the Council noted the reasons that this had been recommended. Consultations had taken place with Stoke Poges Parish Council at a recent meeting and the Parish had indicated its approval. A similar consultation with Fulmer Parish Council was due shortly. Regarding the review of car park charges, in considering the recommendations for approval, the Council noted there would be an opportunity for further review of the overall structure of charges in the coming year.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the report of the Cabinet be received and adopted;
- (2) further to the recommendations on the budget and Council tax:
 1. That it be noted that at its meeting on 12 December 2006 the Council calculated the amounts for 2007/2008 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33 (5) of the local Government Finance Act 1992:
 - a) 31,101 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax Base for the year.
 - b) The amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amount of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items (i.e. Parish precepts) relate, are shown below.

Council Tax Base 2007/2008	
Beaconsfield	5,829
Burnham	5,003
Denham	3,239
Dorney	369
Farnham Royal	2,902
Fulmer	344
Gerrards Cross	4,201

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Council Tax Base 2007/2008	
Hedgerley	414
Iver	4,664
Stoke Poges	2,249
Taplow	942
Wexham	945
TOTAL	31,101

2. That the Council calculates the following amounts for 2007/2008 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
- a) £27,139,205 being the aggregate expenditure which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) to (e) of the Act (including the General Fund and Parish Precepts);
 - b) £18,822,190 being the aggregate income which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3) (a) to (c) of the Act.
 - c) £8,317,015 as its budget requirement for the year including Parish Precepts being the amount by which the aggregate expenditure at 4(a) above exceeds the aggregate income at 4(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act;
 - d) £2,887,120 being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates, and Revenue Support Grant decreased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year to its Collection Fund from its General Fund in accordance with Section 97(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Council Tax Deficit of £ 32,224).
 - e) **£174.58** as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, being the budget requirement at 4(c) above less the amount of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates and Revenue Support Grant at 4(d) above, all divided by the Council Tax Base for the year (31,101) at 3(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act.
 - f) £1,420,845 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (i.e. Parish Precepts, there being no other special items).
 - g) **£128.90** as the basic amount of its Council Tax for dwellings in its area, excluding Parish Precepts, being the amount at 4(e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 4(f) above by the amount at 3(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act.
 - h) The amounts given by adding to the amount at 4(g) above the amounts of the Parish Precepts for the relevant Parish divided in each case by the Council Tax Base for the Parish at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in each Parish is:

2007/2008 BASIC COUNCIL TAX	
	£
Beaconsfield	167.61
Burnham	223.24
Denham	154.53
Dorney	163.45
Farnham Royal	151.30
Fulmer	173.67
Gerrards Cross	165.92
Hedgerley	160.00
Iver	186.15
Stoke Poges	153.41
Taplow	157.05
Wexham	160.65

i) The amounts given by multiplying the basic amounts for each Parish 4(h) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

3. That it be noted that for the year 2007/08 the main precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with s40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Band	Bucks County Council Precept £	Bucks & Milton Keynes Fire Authority Precept £	Thames Valley Police Authority £	Total Preceptors £
A	650.02	34.89	92.79	777.70
B	758.36	40.70	108.26	907.32
C	866.69	46.52	123.72	1,036.93
D	975.03	52.33	139.19	1,166.55
E	1,191.70	63.96	170.12	1,425.78
F	1,408.38	75.59	201.05	1,685.02
G	1,625.05	87.22	231.98	1,944.25
H	1,950.06	104.66	278.38	2,333.10

4. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts of the District's and preceptors requirements, in accordance with s30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets amounts of the Council tax for the year 2007/08 for each category of dwelling as follows. The Council tax for each category of dwelling by parish is shown in Appendix A to the report.

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Band	District & Parishes Council Tax £	Preceptors £	Total 2007/08 Council Tax £
A	116.39	777.70	894.09
B	135.78	907.32	1,043.10
C	155.18	1,036.93	1,192.11
D	174.58	1,166.55	1,341.13
E	213.38	1,425.78	1,639.16
F	252.17	1,685.02	1,937.19
G	290.97	1,944.25	2,235.22
H	349.16	2,333.10	2,682.26

5. To approve as required by the Local Government Act 2003, the prudential indicators set out in Section 5 of this report.

79. **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- (1) Part I of the report of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17 January 2007 was presented.

With reference to the determination of planning applications under delegated powers, a question was raised as to what steps the Council took to review such decisions, particularly where they could be perceived as being subjective or qualitative in nature. The Chairman of the Committee responded that decisions on permissions for development were currently reviewed on an ad hoc basis only, but it was proposed to formalise this with a more systematic system of visits in future.

RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

- (2) Part I of the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14 February 2007 was presented.

Arising thereon, a question was raised regarding the progress in obtaining a parking survey across the District, in order to provide evidence to resist inappropriate development where parking standards could be shown as insufficient. The Chairman of the Committee confirmed that this was in hand and a report would be made to the April meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

80. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The report of the meeting of the overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5 February 2007 was presented.

With reference to minute 36 [Performance and Improvement Framework] it was noted that a report on the new appraisal process would be considered after the next round of appraisals had been completed in March/April 2007. With reference to minute 37 [External Services - Value for Money (VFM) Profiles] it was noted that further information had been requested on the costings for Development Control service prior to further consideration of whether an in-depth the VFM review would be of benefit.

RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

81. **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 29 January 2007 was presented.

RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

82. **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

The report of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 16 January 2007 was presented.

RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

83. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Act.

Cabinet meeting (Part II) - 13 February 2007 - as set out in minute 98;

Planning Committee (Part II) - 17 January 2007 - as set out in minute 89; and

Planning Committee (Part II) - 14 February 2007 - as set out in minute 97.

84. **CABINET MEETING**

The Leader, Mr Hardy, presented the Part II report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 February 2007.

With reference to minute 99 [Land North of Pyebush Roundabout, Beaconsfield] it was noted that in order to allow time for completion of the remediation of the land, the Cabinet had approved an extension of the agreement with the owners covering the works. This would entail further testing of the material by the Council's consultants, Atkins, and it was requested that authority be confirmed for an extension of the contract with Atkins without the need to seek quotations. The Cabinet had accepted that an extension of the contract could be approved, as an exemption to contract procedure rules, to cover the further testing work required. The further testing would be carried out at the expense of the owner.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the report be received and adopted; and
- (2) authority be granted for the contract with the Council's consultants Atkins to be extended, as an exemption to contract procedure rules, in order to carry out further testing required by the Environment Agency.

85. **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

(1) The Part II report of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 17 January 2007 was presented.

RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

- (2) The Part II report of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 14th February 2007 was presented.

The Chairman of the Committee referred the very careful consideration that had been given to the report referred to in minute 100 [Pinstone Way, Tatling End, Denham]. The difficult decision reached had been taken only in the light of the significant changes in circumstances since the Council's previous decisions relating to the application for planning permission (for use as a gypsy caravan site) and the unauthorised development at Pinstone Way, Tatling End, Denham. As a result of the decision of the Committee, the enforcement notice relating to the site had been withdrawn and the Public Inquiry due to be held at the end of March into the appeal had now been cancelled. The Chairman of the Committee further reported that he had received a positive response to his invitation to the County Council Portfolio Holder responsible for gypsy site matters to attend to speak to Members and further information would be circulated as soon as a convenient time and date had been finalised.

RESOLVED that the report be received and adopted.

86. **TERMINATION OF MEETING**

The meeting terminated at 7.30 p.m.