

# **1 : BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire County Council convened and held on Thursday, 22 February 2001 in the Council Chamber at County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.00 am and concluding at 4.25 pm when the following members of the Council were present

Mr K I Ross in the Chair;

Mr B G Allen, Mr M C Appleyard, Mrs C M Aston, Mrs M A M Aston, Mrs P M Bacon, Mrs A R Bainbridge, Mr I S Bates, Mr M E Brand, Mr R H StG Carey, Mr J W Cartwright, Mr W J Y Chapple, Mrs M P Clayton, Mr P A Cochrane, Mrs P M Crawford, Mrs P M A Dewar, Mr T J Fowler, Mr C Graeff, Mr D A B Green, Mr M J Greenburgh, Mrs S D Hodgkinson, Mrs B H Jennings, Mr C Jones, Mr S Kennell, Mr P M Lawrence, Mrs E M Lay, Mrs S J Lee, Mr R Lingham-Wood, Mrs C C Martens, Mr M B Oram, Mr J H McB Page, Mr A J Plumridge, Mr R C Pushman, Mrs F D Roberts MBE, Mr C F Robinson OBE, Mr D J Rowlands, Mr R S Royston, Mr J S Ryman, Mr D A C Shakespeare, Dr B R Stenner, Mr F V J Sweatman, Mr M W Taylor, Mrs C S Willetts, Mr H G W Wilson, Mr R K Woollard and Mr R J Worrall

## **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs M A Baldwin, Mr D C T Graves, Mr T L Jones and Julia D Wassell.

## **1 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 23 November 2000, were confirmed subject to the following amendment:

Members of the Council present to include “Mr K I Ross in the Chair”.

## **2 PETITIONS**

The following petitions were received:-

Mr D J Rowlands on behalf of 855 residents regarding the need for an upper school in the north of Aylesbury.

Mr C Jones on behalf of residents of Aylesbury regarding the need for speed control measures in Camborne Avenue, Aylesbury.

## **3 COMMUNICATIONS**

The Chairman of the Council was pleased to report that he had held two receptions for Parish Councils.

The Chairman of the Council reported that a Youth Achievers’ Reception had been held where certificates of achievement were presented to individuals who had made significant accomplishments, not only in terms of academic achievement but also overcoming personal difficulties.

## **4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were made:-

Mr M J Greenburgh whose wife works for the Education Authority.

Mr I S Bates whose wife works for the Education Authority.

## **5 COMMITTED TO QUALITY: STRATEGIC AIMS AND BUDGET PROPOSALS – OVERVIEW**

The Council considered the report of the Cabinet on the Council’s Strategic Aims and Budget proposals. The Leader of the Council formally proposed the following recommendation to the Council, which was seconded by Mr W J Y Chapple:-

“To agree the Council Plan 2001–04 Strategic Aims and Supporting Policies”.

Mrs P M Crawford proposed a total of 26 amendments to the Council Plan 2001–04 Strategic Aims and Supporting Policies. The following two were moved and seconded:-

Aim 1 – Delete (a) and replace with:

“Produce a rolling 3 year Council Plan which provides strategic direction, leading to a rolling Local Performance Plan specifying measurable outcomes and financed by a medium term budget”.

On a vote being taken the amendment was lost.

Aim 1 – Amend (e) by adding:

“implementing 2% efficiency savings where possible but ensuring these do not produce service cuts.

On a vote being taken the amendment was lost.

It was then proposed by Mr M J Greenburgh and duly seconded, that under Standing Order 11, 24b “the question be now put”.

On being put to the vote the proposal was agreed by 33 to 6.

It was then proposed that the Council should adjourn for a short period. This was agreed and the Council adjourned from 11.05 am to 11.20 am.

On the resumption, the Leader of the Council moved:

“That the Council Plan 2001–04 Strategic Aims and Supporting Policies be agreed with the proviso that the Cabinet consider individually the proposals made by Mrs P M Crawford and submit a report to the next meeting of the Council on 22 March 2001.

The substantive motion was then put and was carried by 33 votes to 6.

**RESOLVED: That the Council Plan 2001–2004 Strategic Aims and Supporting Policies be agreed with the proviso that the Cabinet consider individually the proposals made by Mrs P M Crawford and submit a report to the next meeting of the Council on 22 March 2001.**

## **6 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS**

The Council considered the report of the Cabinet on the Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2001/02. The Leader of the Council formally proposed the following recommendations to the Council, which were seconded by Mr W J Y Chapple:-

- 1 To approve a net revenue budget requirement of £364.903m, as set out at Appendices 1 and 2, and that this will produce a Band D Council Tax, for County Council spending of £680.51p;
- 2 To approve the Capital Programme as set out at Appendix 5;
- 3 To approve the following borrowing limits for 2001/02:
  - i an overall borrowing limit of £245m;
  - ii a temporary borrowing limit of £50m;
  - iii a maximum proportion of interest on borrowing at variable rates of 20%.

The Council then considered Agenda Item 6B, the report of the Select Committee on Corporate Performance. The recommendations in the report were moved by Mrs P M Crawford and seconded by Mr P M Lawrence.

**RESOLVED: 1 That there should be further examination by the Select Committee of the strategic aims, their priorities and resources once these have been agreed and that the Corporate Performance Select Committee should be invited to scrutinise the action plans to ensure that they are measurable and that performance can be monitored;**

- 2 That having regard to the significance of information communications technology to the Council Plan and the business needs of the authority, the new ICT strategy, and the resources required to deliver it, be presented to the Council at the earliest opportunity;
- 3 That the Corporate Performance Select Committee be consulted on the Council's revenue and capital book for the next financial year with sufficient time for a proper scrutiny;
- 4 That the Cabinet publish, no later than 22 March, its timetable for the preparation of the medium-term plan so that the Select Committee can ensure that it allows sufficient time for adequate scrutiny of the plan and its financial implications.

The Council then returned to the main debate on the budget and the following amendment was proposed by Mrs P M Crawford, seconded by Mr S Kennell:-

That the revenue budget (Appendix 1) is amended by:-

- i increasing the Social Service budget by £709,000 to £69.914m thus avoiding service reductions;
- ii increasing the Environmental Services budget by £656,000 to £28.175m enabling the service to take full advantage of new capital allocations;
- iii reducing the RCCR by £1m to £6.422m (including R & M) and amending the capital budget accordingly;
- iv increasing the Council Tax to 5.7% thus increasing the available revenue by £364,000 over the proposed.

On a vote being taken the amendment was lost.

The following amendments were proposed by Mr M E Brand, seconded by Mrs C S Willetts:-

- i that within the Schools Direct budget of £158.756m (Education Appendix 2) the ISB is increased by £300,000;
- ii that within the Schools Support/Learning Support budget of £17.919m the County Council's contribution to Standards Funds qualifying as non-delegated is reduced to £300,000 and £300,000 is retained centrally to enable the 14.2 FTE Primary Learning Support Team to continue to be employed directly from September onwards;
- iii that Council notes that agreeing this amendment would not affect the 85% delegated budget requirement.

On a vote being taken the amendment was lost.

The substantive motion was then put and was carried by 25 votes to 7.

- RESOLVED:**
- 1 That a net revenue budget requirement of £364.903m, as set out at Appendices 1 and 2 be approved, and it be noted that this will produce a Band D Council Tax, for County Council spending, of £680.51p;
  - 2 That the capital programme as set out at Appendix 5 be approved;
  - 3 That the following borrowing limits for 2001/02 be approved:
    - i an overall borrowing limit of £245m;
    - ii a temporary borrowing limit of £50m;
    - iii a maximum proportion of interest on borrowing at variable rates of 20%.

## **7 LOCAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2001**

The report of the Deputy Leader was received and noted by the Council.

## **8 REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT PANEL ON MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

The Council considered the report of the Independent Panel on Members' Allowances.

Mr R S Royston withdrew from the meeting room while this item was being discussed as he declared that he knew Mr Rodney Brooke a member of the Panel.

- RESOLVED:**
- 1 That the Panel be thanked for their report;**
  - 2 That the following specific recommendations set out in the report be accepted in full:**
    - **Basic allowance to be increased to £8,500;**
    - **All remaining attendance allowances still being paid to cease;**
    - **Special responsibility allowances to be adjusted to the new rates given on page 16 of the report;**
    - **In the case of Cabinet members, differential rates within the recommended range be set on the advice of the Leader of the Council to reflect the relative workload and complexity of each portfolio;**
    - **The practice of only paying one special responsibility allowance to an individual member to be continued;**

- **Allowances to be adjusted for inflation each year, in line with the average increase for officers agreed under the local pay bargaining machinery;**
- **Job descriptions to be prepared for each of the different roles performed by members as soon as possible;**
- **Performance targets to be set for members of the Cabinet. All other members to be required to account for their activities through a reporting mechanism to be agreed by the Cabinet.**

- 3 Keep under review the question of special responsibility allowances being paid to the Vice-Chairmen of Select Committees;**
- 4 Introduce the basic allowance, as set out above, as soon as the new Council has been appointed after 3 May elections, with the special responsibility allowances taking effect as soon as each post holder is appointed at, or following, the first meeting of the new Council on 24 May 2001;**
- 5 Refer all remaining recommendations set out in the report (concerning the timing of meetings and information and support to members etc) to the Cabinet to consider and bring forward recommendations on how each of these might be implemented.**

**CHAIRMAN**

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