

# MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL

1 FEBRUARY 2017

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place please see the webcast which can be found at:

<http://www.aylesburyvaledc.publici.tv/core/portal/home>

**PRESENT:** Councillor J Bloom (Chairman); Councillors S Renshell (Vice-Chairman), B Adams, C Adams, P Agoro, M Bateman, J Blake, N Blake, A Bond, S Bowles, C Branston, B Chapple OBE, S Chapple, J Chilver, A Christensen, A Cole, S Cole, M Collins, M Edmonds, B Everitt, B Foster, N Glover, M Hawkett, K Hewson, T Hunter-Watts, T Hussain, A Huxley, P Irwin, S Jenkins, R Khan, R King, S Lambert, A Macpherson, T Mills, L Monger, G Moore, H Mordue, C Paternoster, G Powell, M Rand, E Sims, M Smith, Sir Beville Stanier Bt, R Stuchbury, D Town, J Ward, W Whyte and M Winn

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors J Brandis, P Cooper, P Fealey, A Harrison, N Lewis, C Poll, B Russel, A Southam, M Stamp and P Strachan.

## WEBCASTING

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chairman reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet and be capable of repeated viewing.

Members of the audience who did not wish to be on camera were invited to move to a marked area at the side of the chamber.

## 1. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 16 January, 2017, be approved as a correct record.

## 2. ANNOUNCEMENTS

### The Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council informed Members that following an extensive selection process the following Assistant Director appointments had recently been made:-

- Customer Fulfilment – Jeff Membery.
- Community Fulfilment – Will Rysdale.
- Business Support and Enablement – Isabel Edgar Briancon.
- Business Strategy and Digital – Andy Barton.
- Commercial Property and Regeneration – Teresa Lane.

## 3. BUDGET 2017/18 AND THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Council received a report, similar to that submitted to Cabinet on 10 January, 2017, summarising the rationale behind Cabinet's budget proposals for 2017/18 and beyond. The report also contained the Chief Financial Officer's report on the robustness of the budget proposals and the adequacy of reserves. Both the Cabinet report and the Council report had been posted on the Council's website. The report covered:-

- The detail of Cabinet's budget proposals and budget recommendation.
- The position with Government Grant.
- The New Homes Bonus position, including information on how the scheme would now work for the next 3-4 years.
- Retained Business Rates.
- Business Rates Pooling – to continue with the arrangement that had benefited the Council in the last financial year
- Budget Pressures (including information at Appendix E).
- Pension Fund.
- Aylesbury Vale Estates.
- Fees and charges changes (including information at Appendix F).
- Savings and Income identification options (including information at Appendix D).
- The position with reserves and working balances.
- The approach being taken regarding Commercial AVDC.
- The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP): 2018/19 and after (including information at Appendices B1 and B2).
- Council Tax Strategy.
- Aylesbury Special Expenses (including information at Appendix G)..
- Risk Assessment and Scrutiny on budget proposals.

The Council report updated Members on the national policy regarding Council tax which had shifted away from the desire to see Council tax levels frozen to an acceptance of minimal tax increases. The 4 year settlements offered to Councils now assumed that Council tax would be increased by Councils by the maximum permissible amount, short of requiring a referendum, and Government was reducing the amount of grant awarded to Councils by an equivalent amount.

While Councils with responsibility for adult social care were able to precept for an additional 2% above the existing 1.99%, District Councils had been given the flexibility to increase Council tax by 1.99% or £5, whichever was the greater. The budget proposal included for a £5 increase at Band D, which represented a 3.59% increase in the Band D Council tax for AVDC to £144.06.

Having outlined the rationale behind the budget proposals, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Compliance proposed the adoption of the recommendations contained in the Council report. This was seconded by Councillor Mrs Glover.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules, each of the Leaders of the political groups represented on the Council made a statement in connection with the budget proposals after which the budget proposal was opened up for debate. Councillor Hunter-Watts spoke on behalf of the Independent Group in the absence of Councillor Cooper.

Before the budget recommendations were opened up to debate Members were informed that Council Procedure Rules required the names of Members voting for, against or abstaining from voting on any decision at a budget meeting of the Council, including amendments, to be recorded in the Minutes.

It was thereupon proposed by Councillor Lambert and seconded by Councillor Stuchbury that the following recommendation be added to the budget recommendations:-

“That a report be prepared for this Council to end the Parish Special Expenses precept by handing the assets and precept to Aylesbury Town Council.”

The additional recommendation was then debated, at the conclusion of which it was put to the meeting and declared to be **LOST**. Voting was as follows:-

**FOR:** Councillors B Adams, C Adams, Agoro, Bateman, Christensen, Hunter-Watts, Hussain, Huxley, Khan, Lambert, Monger, Smith and Stuchbury.

**AGAINST:** Councillors J Blake, N Blake, Mrs Bloom, Bond, Bowles, Branston, B Chapple OBE, Mrs S Chapple, Chilver, A Cole, S Cole, Collins, Edmonds, Everitt, Foster, Mrs Glover, Hawkett, Hewson, Irwin, Mrs Jenkins, King, Mrs Macpherson, Mills, Moore, Mordue, Mrs Paternoster, Powell, Rand, Mrs Renshell, Sims, Sir Beville Stanier, Mrs Ward, Whyte and Winn.

**ABSTENTION:** Councillor Town

It was then proposed by Councillor C Adams and seconded by Councillor Huxley that the following recommendation be added to the budget recommendations:-

“That Members’ allowances be reduced by 10% for the forthcoming year.”

The additional recommendation was then debated, at the conclusion of which it was put to the meeting and declared to be **LOST**. Voting was as follows:-

**FOR:** Councillors B Adams, C Adams and Huxley.

**AGAINST:** Councillors Agoro, J Blake, N Blake, Mrs Bloom, Bond, Bowles, Branston, B Chapple OBE, Mrs S Chapple, Chilver, Christensen, A Cole, S Cole, Collins, Edmonds, Everitt, Foster, Mrs Glover, Hawkett, Hewson, Hunter-Watts, Hussain, Irwin, Mrs Jenkins, Khan, Lambert, Mrs Macpherson, Mills, Monger, Moore, Mordue, Mrs Paternoster, Powell, Rand, Mrs Renshell, Sims, Smith, Sir Beville Stanier, Town, Mrs Ward and Whyte.

**ABSTENTIONS:** Councillors Bateman, Stuchbury and Winn.

The original budget recommendations were then debated, at the conclusion of which they were put to the meeting and declared to be **CARRIED**. Voting was as follows:-

**FOR:** Councillors J Blake, N Blake, Mrs Bloom, Bond, Bowles, Branston, B Chapple OBE, Mrs S Chapple, Chilver, A Cole, S Cole, Collins, Edmonds, Everitt, Foster, Mrs Glover, Hawkett, Hewson, Hunter-Watts, Irwin, Mrs Jenkins, Mrs Macpherson, Mills, Moore, Mordue, Mrs Paternoster, Powell, Rand, Mrs Renshell, Sims, Sir Beville Stanier, Town, Mrs Ward, Whyte and Winn.

**AGAINST:** Councillors B Adams, C Adams, Agoro, Bateman, Christensen, Mrs Harrison, Huxley, Khan, Lambert, Monger and Smith.

**ABSTENTIONS:** There were none.

Accordingly it was,

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the content of the Statement of the Chief Financial Officer, attached as an Appendix to the Council report, be noted.
- (2) That in respect of the General Fund Budget and associated issues:-
  - (a) Council Tax be increased by the maximum permissible £5.00 (3.59%) at Band D for District Councils with effect from 1 April, 2017.
  - (b) Approval be given to a General Fund Budget package that will result in net expenditure of £14,771,300 and a District Precept of £10,243,300.
  - (c) Approval be given to expenditure totalling £845,800 and a precept of £828,100 in respect of Aylesbury Special Expenses, giving an unchanged Band D Special Expense Council Tax of £45 for 2017/18.
- (3) That the following General Fund net expenditure be used for the years indicated as the basis of future budget planning:-
  - 2018/19: £14,742,200
  - 2019/20: £14,663,400
  - 2020/21: £14,593,800
  - 2021/22: £14,531,800
- (4) That approval be given to the Director with responsibility for finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Compliance, to use revenue working balances in 2017/18, should a potential adjustment be necessary following the final Grant numbers expected to be announced in mid February 2017.
- (5) That approval be given to the Director with responsibility for finance, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Compliance, to make a lump sum contribution towards the Pensions Fund deficit prior to 31 March 2017, with an appropriate proportion of the resultant reductions in Employers Pension Contributions then repaid to Reserves.