

CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the CHILTERN DISTRICT CDC COUNCIL

held on **28 FEBRUARY 2017**

PRESENT: Councillor M Harker - Chairman of the Council
P N Shepherd - Vice-Chairman of the Council

Councillors:	A K Bacon	Councillors:	C J Jackson
	S P Berry		C M Jones
	D J Bray		P M Jones
	J A Burton		J E MacBean
	J Cook		P E C Martin
	I A Darby		C J Rouse
	M Flys		M W Shaw
	C J Ford		L M Smith
	A J Garth		M R Smith
	J L Gladwin		M J Stannard
	A S Hardie		H M Wallace
	M J Harrold		E A Walsh
	P J Hudson		F S Wilson

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors E A Culverhouse, G K Harris, R J Jones, D J Lacey, S A Patel, D W Phillips, N M Rose, J J Rush, M W Titterington, D M Varley, N I Varley and C J Wertheim

174 PRESENTATION FROM CHILTERN MS CENTRE

The Chairman welcomed Robert Breakwell (Chief Executive - Chilterns MS Centre) and Catherine Golds (Public Relations Manager - Chilterns MS Centre) to the meeting.

Members received a presentation covering the following key points:

- Formation of the charity
- Mission statement
- Membership – 550 members
- Facilities and treatments available
- Challenges
- Support and fundraising required

Following the presentation Members were then invited to ask questions.

Councillor F Wilson praised the Chilterns MS Centre for the amazing support that they provided.

Councillor C Ford also paid tribute to the charity's work and went onto ask what was being done to encourage people with MS to visit the Centre who hadn't yet done so.

Catherine Golds advised that the Chilterns MS Centre was initially very small and had developed significantly since the charity was created. The Centre, located in Wendover, was now very well equipped and provided a much larger range of services, including more social activities. There were larger numbers of young people using the facilities and there was a greater awareness of the Centre due to fundraising activities. For example, Wycombe Wanderers Football Club provided support and also used the hypobaric chamber at the Centre. NHS nurses also visited to understand more about the help available.

After noting that the facilities at the Centre were not available, or funded, by the NHS it was asked whether people were required to pay for the services provided. Robert Breakwell advised that it was important that the facilities and services were available to everyone. The facilities and services available at the Centre were free, but everyone who attended for treatment were asked to donate if they were able to. The donations only covered approximately one fifth of the Centre's overall budget so volunteering and fundraising were also very important.

The Chairman then thanked Richard Breakwell and Catherine Golds for attending the meeting for the presentation and for the wonderful work that the MS Centre was doing.

Note 1: Councillors M Harrold and H Wallace entered the meeting at 6.35pm and 6.43pm respectively.

175 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held on 10 January 2017, and the Extra Ordinary Council meeting held on 16 January 2017 were agreed as a correct record, and were signed by the Chairman.

176 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that all Members had been previously granted a dispensation under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 in relation to the setting of Council Tax.

There were no additional declarations of interest.

177 ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Chairman's Engagements

A list of Engagements carried out by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council between 26 December 2016 and 17 February 2017 was noted.

(b) Chairman's Announcements

Members were reminded that the Chairman's Reception would be held on Friday 3 March.

(c) Announcements from the Leader of the Cabinet

The Leader reminded Members that a Joint Member Briefing on Values and Behaviours, which formed part of the Phase 3 (Stronger in Partnership) joint working programme, would be held on Thursday 2 March at Capswood.

(d) Announcements from the Head of Paid Service

The Chief Executive kindly requested that Members complete and return the Related Parties Transactions forms that had been circulated at the meeting.

(e) Petitions

No petitions were submitted.

178 PLANNING SHARED SERVICE REVIEW - CHILTERN & SOUTH BUCKS JOINT COMMITTEE - 23 JANUARY 2017

At a meeting of the Chiltern & South Bucks Joint Committee, held on 23 January 2017, Members considered the Business Case for a shared Planning service and endorsed all the recommendations in the report. The Council were now asked to formally adopt those same recommendations. The SBDC Council would consider a similar report at the meeting on 1 March 2017.

Councillor P Martin expressed thanks to all Members and officers involved in the working group meetings that had helped develop the proposed joint Planning service. The proposed joint service would help to deliver greater financial savings and an improved service to residents.

It was moved by Councillor Martin, seconded by Councillor I Darby and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the case for a shared Planning service is proven, and that both Councils should proceed to establish a shared Planning Service.**
- 2. That subject to consultation with staff and a formal agreement between the Councils, the services of staff in Chiltern District Council's Planning service be put at the disposal of South Bucks District Council under Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 so they can work across the two local authority areas.**
- 3. That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Cabinet Leader and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to finalise the terms of any legal documentation required to give effect to recommendation 2 above.**

179 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS - AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 26 JANUARY 2017

Consideration was given to a report on the Appointment of External Auditors that had been considered and recommended by the Audit & Standards Committee meeting held on 26 January 2017.

It was moved by Councillor J Burton, seconded by Councillor C Jackson and

RESOLVED:

That the Council opts in to the appointing person arrangements made by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the appointment of external auditors.

180 CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE - AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 26 JANUARY 2017

Consideration was given to a report on the Code of Corporate Governance that had been considered and recommended by the Audit & Standards Committee meeting held on 26 January 2017.

It was moved by Councillor J Burton, seconded by Councillor C Jackson and

RESOLVED:

That the Council agrees and adopts the new Joint Code of Corporate Governance.

181 BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX REPORT 2017/18

Councillor I Darby, Leader of the Council, presented the budget to the Council. The budget was forward thinking and aimed to serve the interests of residents by providing excellent value for money services to all. Councillor Darby reflected on the previous year and outlined a number of key achievements.

The Council continued to champion local communities against HS2 and mitigate its impact. In this regard thanks were expressed to Councillors: Rose, Gladwin, Martin, P Jones, Berry and L Smith and officers for their support.

The Council continued to work jointly with South Buck District Council to produce a joint Local Plan which aimed to secure the best way to enable residents to control the type and pace of change in both districts, and to resist pressure for inappropriate and unsustainable development.

Joint working between Chiltern and South Bucks District Councils continued to be developed further. All services would be delivered by joint teams before the end of 2017, producing around £1.85M in annual savings to the Councils. All staff were now on the same terms and conditions, and both Councils' IT networks and systems were unified.

The next phase on joint working had started. This was about developing a single culture of values and behaviours for all staff to deliver services that are digitally agile, customer focused with a culture of continuous improvement. This would provide a solid basis to continue to reduce costs further and improve services to residents.

Planning had commenced on two key capital investment projects: Amersham Multi-Storey Car Park extension and the redevelopment of the Chiltern Pools.

Resources had been set aside to support affordable housing provision and the Council had established a Members' Working Group working group to focus on this key challenge.

The Council had achieved this only through strong team work, and as the debate on local government structure in Buckinghamshire continued, the Council continued to work with District colleagues and engage with partners on the districts' proposal pending the Secretary of State's "minded to" decision later in March. All Members and officers were thanked for their efforts over the last year.

The Leader of the Council then spoke on the budget for 2017/18. The Council would no longer receive a Revenue Support Grant (RSG), and by 2019/20 would be subject to a "negative RSG". The Council had therefore put in place measures to meet this challenge. Councillor Darby paid tribute to the Deputy

Leader, Councillor M Stannard, for his careful scrutiny of the budget which had maintained the Council's sound finances. Careful control of expenditure and increases to income had resulted in over £1M of additional funding to go to the Capital Programme in 2017/18. It was considered prudent to increase Council Tax by £5 (3% increase) which equated to 10p per week for a Band D property.

The Deputy Leader spoke on the Budget for 2017/18, and in doing so reflected on the changes made since the 2014/15 revenue budget. Since that time, due to Members' and officers' hard work, expenditure had reduced from £11M to £9.2M, and a £2.1M deficit had been turned into a surplus. This had been achieved with no reduction in service quality. In addition to this, money had also been allocated to implement capital projects that would help generate additional future income. The Council would continue to manage its finances carefully in forthcoming years to defer the forecast deficit in 2019/20.

The Deputy Leader requested that his thanks be placed on record to all officers for enabling the Council to be forward focused and deliver the best for the residents of Chiltern. Particular thanks were expressed to Rodney Fincham, Head of Finance, and his team.

Councillor P Jones highlighted that the budget would in future depend upon funding from the New Homes Bonus, and that the implication of this would be greater numbers of homes being built. Residents could be faced with the threat of development in the Green Belt. Councillor Jones sought assurance that Members were robustly challenging the Government on their pressure to develop in the Green Belt. The Councils were also congratulated on the level of responses received to the Green Belt preferred options public consultation.

Councillor Jones welcomed the development of an Economic Development Strategy and highlighted the importance of attracting investment into the area. It was suggested that there were opportunities arising from the close proximity of Heathrow airport.

Reference was made to the financial outturn and the Council's activity in relation to challenging HS2 and mitigating its effects to local communities. It was suggested that in light of the Government's commitment to delivering HS2 that the Council should now also explore opportunities to use HS2 to benefit the local economy.

Councillor Jones then paid tribute to the Leader and her colleagues on the significant work carried out on behalf of the Council.

The Leader thanked Councillor Jones for his comments and stressed the importance of continuing to develop Councils' Joint Local Plan for adoption to help protect against the risk of inappropriate development.

Councillor S Berry expressed thanks to the Leader and acknowledged the significant work the Council had done to mitigate the negative effects of HS2. The Government's reduction, and eventual cessation, of the Council's Revenue Support Grant was highlighted, and it was asked what the Council was doing in relation to this. This was the third year that the Council proposed to increase Council Tax, by the maximum amount before a referendum was required, and it was asked what circumstances would be required to avoid any increase in Council Tax.

In response to the question regarding Council Tax increases, the Deputy Leader advised that Council Tax had been increased because the Council faced enormous financial challenges in the medium term. Council Tax increases could be avoided if the Government increased financial support for local government services. The Council's decision to increase Council Tax in recent years had enabled the Council to defer the point at which additional significant financial savings were required.

The Deputy Leader, in responding to the question regarding discussions with the Government on local government funding, reassured the Council that Members continued to pressure the Department for Community and Local Government regarding this issue. Members had however taken a realist view in developing the Medium Term Financial Strategy in light of the uncertainty regarding central government funding. Members were hopeful that the Council's tax burden would be reduced in future.

Councillor C Ford referred to the budget scrutiny carried out by the Resources Overview Committee and Support Services Policy Advisory Group, and expressed particular thanks to the Leader and Deputy Leader for their assistance in that process. Their intelligent, realistic and prudent approach was praised.

It was moved by Councillor Darby and seconded by Councillor Stannard and

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Revenue Budget for 2017/18 be approved as summarised in the table in paragraph 5.15 of the report.**
- 2) That no support is provided to CDC parishes in respect of the impact of Council Tax Support on their tax bases for 2017/18 as the authority no longer receives Revenue Support Grant.**

- 3) That the following use of earmarked reserves for 2017/18 be agreed:
 - Local Development Plan £268k
- 4) That the following additions to earmarked reserves for 2017/18 be agreed:
 - Capital – Funding replacement refuse vehicles, £394k
 - Capital – Funding of capital programme, £1,028k
 - HS2, £150k
 - Elections, £20k
 - Planning Digitalisation, £105k.
- 5) That a budget requirement of £10,747,000, be approved, which will result in a District council tax of £175.62 for a Band D property.
- 6) That the level of fees and charges for 2017/18 (Appendix C) be confirmed.
- 7) That the advice of the Director of Resources (Appendix A) be noted.
- 8) That the comments on the Council's financial position in respect of the years following 2017/18 contained in the report be noted.

Note 2: Councillor A Garth left the meeting at 7.20pm

182 ADDITIONAL SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT: COUNCIL TAX 2017/18

The Council considered an additional supplementary report that took the Cabinet's recommended 2017/18 budget (Minute 181 refers), together with information from each of the precepting bodies, to produce recommendations for setting the Council Tax for the area.

The Local Authorities Regulations 2014 required a recorded vote to take place when the Council set Council Tax.

It was moved by Councillor Darby, and seconded by Councillor Stannard.

On being put to the recorded vote the recommendations were agreed, with the votes being cast as follows:

For (26): Councillors A Bacon, D Bray, J Burton, J Cook, I Darby, M Flys, C Ford, J Gladwin, A Hardie, M Harker, M Harrold, P Hudson, C Jackson, C Jones, P Jones, J MacBean, P Martin, C Rouse, M Shaw, N Shepherd, L Smith, M Smith, M Stannard, H Wallace, E Walsh and F Wilson.

Against (0)

Abstained (1): Councillor S Berry

RESOLVED:

1) That it be noted that the following amounts for 2017/18 have been determined under delegated authority and in accordance with regulations made under the local Government Finance Act 1992:

a) 43,918.01 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 2017/18	
Amersham	6,694.74
Ashley Green	465.46
Chalfont St Giles	3,121.55
Chalfont St Peter	6,483.58
Chartridge	826.58
Chenies	143.05
Chesham	7,996.28
Chesham Bois	1,633.29
Cholesbury	504.91
Coleshill	329.07
Great Missenden	4,889.31
Latimer & Ley Hill	508.06
Little Chalfont	3,196.74
Little Missenden	3,146.54
Penn	2,359.62
Seer Green	1,209.57
The Lee	409.66
	43,918.01

- 2) That the Council calculates the following amounts for 2017/18 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011):
- a) £45,391,835 being the aggregate expenditure which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act (including the General Fund and Parish Precepts).
 - b) £34,865,710 being the aggregate income which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act.
 - c) £10,526,125 as its council tax requirement for the year including Parish Precepts being the amount by which the aggregate expenditure at 2(a) above exceeds the aggregate income at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act.
 - d) £239.68 as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, being the council tax requirement at 2(c), divided by the Council Tax Base for the year (43,918.01) at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act.
 - e) £2,813,244 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).
 - f) £175.62 as the basic amount of its Council Tax for dwellings in its area, excluding Parish Precepts, being the amount at 2(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2(e) above by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act.
 - g) The amounts given by adding to the amount at 2(f) above the amounts of the Parish Precepts for the relevant Parish divided in each case by the Council Tax Base for the Parish at 1(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:

2017/18 BASIC COUNCIL TAX £		
	Parish Amount	CDC + Parish Amount
Amersham	87.87	263.49
Ashley Green	35.45	211.07
Chalfont St Giles	65.34	240.96
Chalfont St Peter	55.92	231.54
Chartridge	13.31	188.93
Chenies	46.35	221.97
Chesham	110.93	286.55
Chesham Bois	39.24	214.86
Cholesbury	19.41	195.03
Coleshill	30.39	206.01
Great Missenden	39.45	215.07
Latimer & Ley Hill	34.44	210.06
Little Chalfont	72.22	247.84
Little Missenden	29.85	205.47
Penn	25.43	201.05
Seer Green	37.20	212.82
The Lee	32.22	207.84

h) The amounts given by multiplying the basic amounts for each Parish 2(g) 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 2017/18 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	Police & Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley	Total Preceptors
	£	£	£	£
A	812.05	40.59	113.52	966.16
B	947.40	47.35	132.44	1,127.19
C	1,082.74	54.12	151.36	1,288.22
D	1,218.08	60.88	170.28	1,449.24
E	1,488.76	74.41	208.12	1,771.29
F	1,759.45	87.94	245.96	2,093.35
G	2,030.13	101.47	283.80	2,415.40
H	2,436.16	121.76	340.56	2,898.48

- 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 2017/18 for each category of dwelling as follows.

Band	District & Parishes Council Tax	Total Preceptors	Total 2017/18 Council Tax
	£	£	£
A	159.79	966.16	1,125.95
B	186.42	1,127.19	1,313.61
C	213.05	1,288.22	1,501.27
D	239.68	1,449.24	1,688.92
E	292.94	1,771.29	2,064.23
F	346.20	2,093.35	2,439.55
G	399.47	2,415.40	2,814.87
H	479.36	2,898.48	3,377.84

The council tax for each category of dwelling by parish is as follows.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Amersham	1,141.82	1,332.13	1,522.43	1,712.73	2,093.33	2,473.95	2,854.55	3,425.46
Ashley Green	1,106.87	1,291.36	1,475.84	1,660.31	2,029.26	2,398.23	2,767.18	3,320.62
Chalfont St Giles	1,126.80	1,314.60	1,502.41	1,690.20	2,065.80	2,441.40	2,817.00	3,380.40
Chalfont St Peter	1,120.52	1,307.28	1,494.03	1,680.78	2,054.28	2,427.80	2,801.30	3,361.56
Chartridge	1,092.11	1,274.14	1,456.16	1,638.17	2,002.20	2,366.25	2,730.28	3,276.34
Chenies	1,114.14	1,299.83	1,485.53	1,671.21	2,042.59	2,413.97	2,785.35	3,342.42
Chesham	1,157.19	1,350.06	1,542.93	1,735.79	2,121.52	2,507.26	2,892.98	3,471.58
Chesham Bois	1,109.40	1,294.30	1,479.21	1,664.10	2,033.90	2,403.70	2,773.50	3,328.20
Cholesbury	1,096.18	1,278.88	1,461.58	1,644.27	2,009.66	2,375.06	2,740.45	3,288.54
Coleshill	1,103.50	1,287.42	1,471.34	1,655.25	2,023.08	2,390.92	2,758.75	3,310.50
Great Missenden	1,109.54	1,294.47	1,479.39	1,664.31	2,034.15	2,404.01	2,773.85	3,328.62
Latimer & Ley Hill	1,106.20	1,290.57	1,474.94	1,659.30	2,028.03	2,396.77	2,765.50	3,318.60
Little Chalfont	1,131.39	1,319.95	1,508.52	1,697.08	2,074.21	2,451.34	2,828.47	3,394.16
Little Missenden	1,103.14	1,287.00	1,470.86	1,654.71	2,022.42	2,390.14	2,757.85	3,309.42
Penn	1,100.19	1,283.56	1,466.93	1,650.29	2,017.02	2,383.76	2,750.48	3,300.58
Seer Green	1,108.04	1,292.72	1,477.39	1,662.06	2,031.40	2,400.76	2,770.10	3,324.12
The Lee	1,104.72	1,288.84	1,472.97	1,657.08	2,025.32	2,393.56	2,761.80	3,314.16

5) Determine that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2017/18 is not excessive, in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, [and thus there is no need to hold a Council Tax referendum].

183 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND REPAIRS & RENEWALS PROGRAMME 2017/2018

The Deputy Leader introduced a report on the Capital Programme and Repairs & Renewals Programme 2017/18 to 2020/21 which aimed to maintain and improve the Councils existing assets and provide additional infrastructure that would produce additional income in future. It was noted that to achieve this the Council would move from being debt free to undertaking prudential borrowing.

It was moved by Councillor Stannard and seconded by Councillor Darby and

RESOLVED:

That the Council agrees:

- **The Capital Programme for 2017/18 – 2020/21 as set out in Appendix A.**
- **The Repairs & Renewals Programme for 2017/18 – 2020/21 as set out in Appendix B.**
- **The Capital Strategy as set out in Appendix C.**
- **And, notes the implication for the Financial Strategy of the proposed programme.**

184 ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2017/18

The Deputy Leader introduced the Treasury Management Strategy and related policies for 2017/2018. It was noted that the Council sought to maximise income from investments despite the historically low interest rates. The significance of Appendix 1C was highlighted in light of the Council's projected borrowing, and the Asset Life Method (option 3) was recommended as the proposed minimum revenue provision.

It was moved by Councillor Stannard and seconded by Councillor Darby and

RESOLVED:

That Council approves the Treasury Management Strategy (Appendix 1), including approving its appendices below:

- **Appendix 1A - Annual Investment Strategy Policies**
- **Appendix 1B - Prudential Indicators including the borrowing limits**
- **Appendix 1C - the MRP method to be used in 2017/18.**

185 VERBAL REPORTS FROM THE LEADER, CABINET MEMBERS OR CHAIRMAN OF A COMMITTEE

a) Councillor I Darby – HS2

Members noted that HS2 had now received Royal Assent. Councillor Darby was grateful that the Rt Hon Cheryl Gillan MP spoke at the debate in Parliament. It was felt that Councils should be compensated for the expenditure that they incurred in relation to HS2 related work. The project was now moving to new phase and that it would be a difficult time for those effected. The Council would continue to work closely with communities to support them and explore opportunities arising from HS2.

Councillor P Jones advised that some residents felt let down by the Parliamentary process and those representing them since the project was still going ahead.

b) Councillor F Wilson – Business Rate Revaluation

The Council received an update on the changes to non-domestic rates (business rates) arising from the impending revaluation. In Chiltern 2600 businesses were subject to business rates, and the Council was currently assessing how the changes would impact local businesses.

The rateable value would be doubled from 6,000 to 12,000 which meant that just over half of businesses (1,342) in the district would qualify for Small Business Rate Relief in 2017/18, representing an increase of 48%.

Some of the larger increases in rateable value were mainly to larger properties. Overall the changes represented an approximate 7% increase. Further information would be available once the billing cycle had been completed.

There was still some uncertainty regarding any additional changes that may be announced by the Government. For example there may be further mitigation for smaller businesses announced by the Government in the Budget which may delay billing by a week or more.

There were recent media reports that some local authorities had chosen to take large numbers of businesses to court for non-payment. It was confirmed that Chiltern had issued a summons to less than 7% of businesses as a last resort, and only 4.5% actually went to court and had liability orders granted.

There would be a briefing for all Members once further information was available following the Budget. It was noted that businesses would need to apply for relief and that despite the Council's best efforts to communicate the changes some businesses may not have realised that they could be eligible for up to 100% relief.

Councillor P Jones requested that the Council contacts local businesses to ensure they were aware of the rate relief available as media coverage suggested that small businesses were negatively affected by the changes. This item was also suggested as a topic for any annual meeting with local businesses.

In response it was advised that the Council wrote to businesses in November with information about the changes. There was also a link to a website that provides further information, including valuations. Many small businesses were eligible for rate relief and the Council would send them an application

form to help them apply. Resources were already in place to help deal with a potential larger volume of queries from businesses.

In response to a question from Councillor Berry, regarding figures on those businesses facing a significant increase, Councillor Wilson advised that further information would be provided after the billing cycle. Some businesses would pay more, including the Council, but detailed figures were not available at this stage.

c) Councillor P Martin – Government White Paper: “Fixing our broken housing market”

Councillor Martin advised Council on the publication of a Government White Paper on proposed changes to improve access to housing. The date of the consultation on the proposed changes had not been confirmed. The Buckinghamshire Planning Group and District Councils had already written to the Housing Minister regarding the Government’s proposals. In the meantime, the Council continued to progress the development of the joint Local Plan, and would seek further assurances from Government that there would be no further changes that would affect the development of this.

Note 3: Councillor P Jones left the meeting at 7.45pm.

186 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

There were no questions.

187 PETITIONS (IF ANY)

None received.

188 JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS (IF ANY)

As reported at the Community, Health and Housing Policy Advisory Group meeting held on 30 January 2017, the Council was asked to agree that Councillor J Cook replaces Councillor J Wertheim as the Reserve Member on the Buckinghamshire Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee.

It was moved by Councillor I Darby and seconded by Councillor N Shepherd and

RESOLVED:

That Councillor J Cook replaces Councillor J Wertheim as the Reserve Member on the Buckinghamshire Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee.

189 MOTIONS (IF ANY)

No Motions had been received.

190 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2017/18

The Deputy Leader introduced the report and sought the Council's agreement to agree Option 1, that in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme, agreed by Council on 26 February 2014, that the Scheme for 2016/17 automatically adjusts by 1% to create the Scheme for 2017/18.

Members noted that when the Scheme was last reviewed it was agreed that the Scheme automatically adjusts according to the Consumer Prices Index and be capped at the average increase in staff pay for the previous year. Each year since then the Council had agreed to freeze the automatic increase in allowances because it was considered inappropriate to increase allowances in light of the financial constraints facing the Council and as no increase had been made to staff pay. Officers had received an average pay increase of 1% in 2016 so Council were asked to agree the automatic adjustment of 1%.

It was noted that the Independent Review of Members Allowances Panel was due to meet in autumn 2017 to review the Scheme. It was suggested that it would be sensible to agree a Scheme that could be fixed for a further 4 year term to avoid the Scheme having to be reviewed each year.

It was moved by Councillor M Stannard, and seconded by Councillor I Darby, and

RESOLVED:

That the Council confirms (option 1) that the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2017/18 be based on the automatically uplifting by 1% of the 2016/17 Scheme.

191 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2017/18

It was moved by Councillor E Walsh, and seconded by Councillor J Burton, and

RESOLVED:

That the Calendar of Meetings for 2017/18 be agreed.

192 VOTE OF THANKS

The Chairman advised that this would be her last meeting before the meeting of Annual Council on 16 May 2017 when a new Chairman of the Council would be elected. Councillor M Harker expressed thanks to Members and officers for all their hard work during her term of office.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm