

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Council held on
Thursday, 25 February 2016 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Sue Ellington – Chairman
Councillor David McCraith – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: David Bard, Val Barrett, Henry Batchelor, Anna Bradnam, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Graham Cone, Pippa Corney, Christopher Cross, Kevin Cuffley, Simon Edwards, Andrew Fraser, Jose Hales, Roger Hall, Philippa Hart, Tumi Hawkins, Roger Hickford, Mark Howell, Caroline Hunt, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Douglas de Lacey, Janet Lockwood, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, Raymond Matthews, Cicely Murfitt, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Robin Page, Alex Riley, Deborah Roberts, Tim Scott, Ben Shelton, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Richard Turner, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, Aidan Van de Weyer, David Whiteman-Downes, John Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright

Officers:	Alex Colyer	Executive Director, Corporate Services
	Jean Hunter	Chief Executive
	Shirley Tracey	Interim Monitoring Officer
	Graham Watts	Democratic Services Team Leader

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Grenville Chamberlain, Simon Crocker, Neil Davies, Lynda Harford, James Hockney and Des O'Brien.

Councillor Sue Ellington, Chairman, welcomed Shirley Tracey to her first meeting of the Council in her new role as Interim Monitoring Officer.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Brian Burling declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item number 8(d) as a rate payer and indicated that he would leave the meeting upon consideration of this item.

3. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

The Chairman reminded Members that they needed to update their register of interests whenever their circumstances changed.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 January 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to typographical corrections at minute numbers 2 and 5 and the inclusion of the correct reference to the New Communities Joint Strategic Needs Assessment at minute number 12(b).

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, reminded Members that a report on the Local Development Plan would be considered at the Planning Portfolio Holder Meeting on 14 March 2016 and subsequently an extraordinary meeting of the Council on 23 March 2016. This would provide the Council with an opportunity to consider the results of the consultation that had been carried out regarding proposed modifications and agree what the Council sent back to the Inspectors. It was noted that the report for the Portfolio Holder Meeting would be published on 4 March 2016.

Councillor Manning also reported that extensive discussions were currently ongoing between the Government and Leaders of local Councils regarding devolution. He invited Members of the Council to join him for an informal question and answer session at the close of the meeting.

6. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

No questions from members of the public had been received.

7. PETITIONS

No petitions for consideration by the Council had been received since the last meeting.

8. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

8 (a) Members' Allowances 2016/17

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, proposed the recommendations contained within the report following a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme undertaken by the Independent Remuneration Panel. Councillor Simon Edwards, Deputy Leader of Portfolio Holder for Finance and Staffing, seconded the proposal.

Councillor Anna Bradnam queried Appendix B to the report which set out proposed changes to Officer Employment Procedure Rules. It was noted that the changes set out in the appendix had already been approved at a previous meeting of the Council and were included within the report to assist in explaining the new role of the Independent and Deputy Persons with regard to the appointment and dismissal of the Council's Chief Officers. Councillor Bradnam, in acknowledging the process for Chief Officers, asked why reference had not been included to Executive Directors in the appendix. It was agreed that a response to this query would be provided directly to Councillor Bradnam.

Council unanimously **AGREED**:

- (1) Pending the next review of South Cambridgeshire District Council's Members' Allowance Scheme, that any changes to current Special Responsibility Allowance payments deemed necessary to reflect changes in Member roles and responsibilities should be made by a re-allocation of current Special Responsibility Allowance payments without increasing the Council's overall Special Responsibility Allowance cost envelope.
- (2) That the Members' Basic Allowance be increased by the equivalent percentage amount that the Council agrees to apply to the pay rates of Council staff, effective from 1 April 2016, and that thereafter the Basic Allowance is increased annually on the same indexed basis pending the next review of the Members' Allowance Scheme.

- (3) That where a Councillor in receipt of the allowance fails to attend 50% of the meetings for which that allowance is paid in any six-month period, that Councillor be invited to repay an appropriate sum of the allowance received during that period.
- (4) That there should be no increase to the Independent Person's or their Deputy's annual allowance payment, given that the additional commitment involved is intrinsically ad hoc and may never be performed during their period of office.

8 (b) Corporate Plan Priorities 2015-2020 (Cabinet, 11 February 2016)

Councillor Peter Topping, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Staffing, proposed that the Council approved the Corporate Plan, setting out the Council's vision, objectives and actions for 2016-2021, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor Roger Hickford, Chairman of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, seconded the proposal.

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley made reference to the intention of the Council's housing company, Ermine Street Housing Ltd, to act as an ethical landlord and was of the view that this implied other private landlords acted unethically. Councillor Mark Howell, Portfolio Holder for Housing, said that this related to the additional support the housing company would offer, as much as it could, to those tenants who were experiencing difficulties, such as financial difficulties, for example. He acknowledged that there were excellent private landlords operating in the district, some of which offered similar services.

Councillor Douglas de Lacey proposed an amendment to the Corporate Plan objective 'homes for our future', stated in the document as being to 'secure the delivery of a wide range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future communities'. His amendment was to include the words 'in line with the Council's Local Plan' and add a new paragraph (i) under the objective to read 'reaffirm the Council's requirement for 40% of affordable homes'.

Councillor Deborah Roberts seconded the amendment.

Councillor John Williams moved an amendment to Councillor de Lacey's original amendment, to add the word 'emerging' so that it read 'in line with the Council's emerging Local Plan'.

Councillor de Lacey accepted this amendment to his original amendment.

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, said that the Council's policy on affordable housing was included in other documents and that it would not be appropriate to include such reference within this high level Corporate Plan. He also reminded Members that the Council's policy in respect of affordable housing was 40%, subject to viability. Councillor Simon Edwards, Deputy Leader and Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder, supported this view and felt it would be unwise to commit to a value for affordable housing in the Corporate Plan. Councillor Topping agreed that this level of detail was not appropriate for inclusion in the Plan.

Councillor Anna Bradnam proposed removing the paragraph in relation to affordable housing from the amendment, which Councillor de Lacey accepted. The substantive amendment therefore became to add the words 'in line with the Council's emerging Local Plan' after the words 'secure the delivery of a wide range of housing to meet the needs of existing and future communities' in respect of the 'homes for our future'

objective.

Voting on the substantive amendment, with 17 votes in favour and 34 votes against, the amendment was lost.

Enough Members as prescribed in Council's Standing Orders requested a recorded vote. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors Henry Batchelor, Anna Bradnam, Nigel Cathcart, Jose Hales, Philippa Hart, Tumi Hawkins, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Douglas de Lacey, Janet Lockwood, Cicely Murfitt, Robin Page, Deborah Roberts, Bridget Smith, Edd Stonham, Aidan Van de Weyer and John Williams.

Against

Councillors David Bard, Val Barrett, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Graham Cone, Pippa Corney, Christopher Cross, Kevin Cuffley, Simon Edwards, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Roger Hall, Roger Hickford, Mark Howell, Caroline Hunt, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, Raymond Matthews, David McCraith, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Alex Riley, Tim Scott, Ben Shelton, Hazel Smith, Peter Topping, Richard Turner, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, David Whiteman-Downes, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright.

Councillor Cathcart was of the opinion that something should be included within the Corporate Plan to reflect that the Local Development Plan should be adopted as a matter of urgency, as this was something that the Council needed to progress as quickly as possible. He also felt that reference to the protection of conservation and the natural environment had been omitted from the document. Councillor Topping reiterated that this was a high level document but welcomed the comments.

Voting on the original motion, with 31 votes in favour, 5 against, 13 abstentions and 2 not voting, Council **APPROVED** the Corporate Plan setting out the Council's vision, objectives and actions for 2016–2021, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Enough Members as prescribed in Council's Standing Orders requested a recorded vote. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors David Bard, Val Barrett, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Graham Cone, Christopher Cross, Kevin Cuffley, Simon Edwards, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Roger Hickford, Mark Howell, Caroline Hunt, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, Raymond Matthews, David McCraith, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Alex Riley, Tim Scott, Ben Shelton, Peter Topping, Richard Turner, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, David Whiteman-Downes, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright.

Against

Councillors Jose Hales, Philippa Hart, Peter Johnson, Robin Page and Aidan Van de Weyer.

Abstention

Councillors Henry Batchelor, Anna Bradnam, Nigel Cathcart, Tumi Hawkins, Sebastian Kindersley, Douglas de Lacey, Janet Lockwood, Cicely Murfitt, Deborah Roberts, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Edd Stonham and John Williams.

Not voting

Councillors Pippa Corney and Roger Hall.

8 (c) **Medium Term Financial Strategy (General Fund budget 2016/17 including Council Tax setting), Housing Revenue Account (including housing rents), Capital Programme 2016/17-2020/21 and Treasury Management Strategy (Revised 2015/16 and 2016/17) (Cabinet, 11 February 2016)**

Councillor Simon Edwards proposed recommendations (a) to (x) as set out in the agenda, subject to Appendix G in recommendation (i) referring to Appendix G(1), together with the wording of the statutory resolution in respect of the Council Tax for 2016/17 that had been circulated in the revised supplement.

Councillor Edwards highlighted the following aspects of the proposed budget to Members, which had been produced following significant changes announced as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement:

- the Revenue Support Grant would reduce by 48.7% from 2015-16 to 2016-17, by a further 75.2% in 2017-18 and to nil in 2018-19. The reduction to nil had been anticipated, but not as early as 2018-19;
- the basic principles of retained business rates would remain, however, an adjustment to the tariff deduction imposed by the Government would be introduced in 2019-20;
- the Government was proposing changes to the New Homes Bonus scheme and modelling in the report outlined the scheme changing from a six year scheme to a four year scheme from 2017-18. The Government was consulting on other reforms to New Homes Bonus, including:
 - withholding new New Homes Bonus allocations in areas where no Local Plan had been produced;
 - reducing payments for homes built on appeal;
 - only making payments for delivery above a baseline representing 'deadweight';
- beyond 2017-18 it was possible that some of these other reforms could have adverse implications for the amount of New Homes Bonus that the Council may receive;
- £5 million of New Homes Bonus funding as a contribution towards the A14 infrastructure improvement scheme was still allocated in the Council's budget for 2020-2021;
- all Councils had the ability to raise Council Tax by £5 as opposed to increasing Council Tax by any amount up to 2% without triggering a referendum. Three options for the District Council in terms of Council Tax increases had been set out in paragraphs 19, 20 and 23 of the original report, with each having a different impact on the savings or additional income that the Council would be required to make. The table in paragraph 19 of the original report summarised the impact of the different options that had been modelled. The option proposed was an increase in Council Tax of £5 this year and for every year of this parliament, with an increase of 2% year on year thereafter;
- significant savings had already been achieved in some areas, such as those through the shared waste service;

- the successful pilot of Ermine Street Housing Ltd had seen the company provide an income stream for the Council, with other projects such as the commercialisation programme anticipated to provide other sources of income;
- the Rural Services Grant had been increased from £32,261 to £129,850 in 2016-17 and from £46,457 to £104,848 in 2017-18. A new Transition Grant would also be available of £75,842 in 2016-17 and £75,575 in 2017-18;
- of the precautionary items listed in Appendix B2 of the report, specific reference was made to an increase of £250,000 for homelessness for 2016-17. This was a particular risk for the Council and would be monitored to establish how this aspect of the budget could be modelled in the future;
- the Capital Programme showed a General Fund allocation for capital receipts but was essentially a loan to fund Ermine Street Housing Ltd;
- in terms of the Housing Revenue Account capital expenditure, this had reduced by a third as a result of the imposed reduction in rents;
- local authority landlords and registered providers were now required to apply a 1% reduction in rent levels across each of the next four years. Legislation was still going through Parliament, but it was anticipated that the draft Housing and Planning Bill 2015 would be passed in March for implementation in April 2016. This actually equated to a 4% reduction in view of the fact that 3% rent increase had originally been accounted for in the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan;
- Appendix G(1) set out a Housing Revenue Account based on those in sheltered housing also receiving a 1% rent reduction. This was the option proposed, to ensure equality for all Council tenants.

Councillor Mark Howell, Portfolio Holder for Housing, seconded the proposal.

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of the Opposition, was heartened that the proposal included a rise in Council Tax which would protect the services that residents and communities depended upon. She said that this was the right thing to do and that the proposal reflected a responsible budget which she would be able to support.

Councillor Tumi Hawkins highlighted the risks to the Council as a result of changes the Government was imposing with regards to social housing, which she said would be compounded by changes to private housing. Councillor Hawkins was particularly concerned about the pressure these changes would place on the authority's budget and the impact on the welfare of residents.

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley was pleased to see that additional funding had been earmarked in the list of precautionary items in respect of homelessness. He referred to an increase in traveller pitches from £68 per week to £78 which he thought was a high percentage increase and felt it necessary to highlight. Councillor Kindersley also supported provision of the Robson Court scheme in Gamlingay included in the new built and redevelopment programme.

Councillor Mark Howell, Portfolio Holder for Housing, reiterated that the 1% reduction in rent actually equated to a 4% reduction year on year due to the fact that the original Housing Revenue Account business plan had factored in a 3% rent increase. In terms of homelessness, Councillor Howell explained that additional funding had been identified in the list of precautionary items in case it was needed and further consideration would be given to making more provision available for homelessness in the Council's future budgets. He emphasised, however, that prevention work was key to addressing homelessness in the district and asked all Members to inform anyone who they thought may be at risk to contact the Council.

Voting on recommendations (a) to (x) as set out on the agenda, subject to Appendix G in recommendation (i) referring to Appendix G(1), with 48 votes in favour, 2 abstentions and 1 not voting Council:

- (a) **APPROVED** the General Fund Capital Programme and the associated funding up to the year ending 31 March 2021, as set out in Appendix A1 of the report as submitted.
- (b) **APPROVED** the revenue estimates for 2016-17 as submitted in the General Fund summary, as set out in Appendix B1 of the report.
- (c) **APPROVED** the precautionary items for the General Fund, as set out in Appendix B2 of the report.
- (d) **APPROVED** the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund, as set out in Appendix B3 of the report, based on the assumptions set out in the report.
- (e) **APPROVED** the fees and charges proposed for 2016-17, as set out in Appendix B4 of the report.
- (f) **RESOLVED** that the Executive Management Team be instructed to identify additional income/ savings of £300,000 in 2016-17, rising to £930,000 from 2017-18.
- (g) **RESOLVED** that the Council Tax requirement for 2016-17 is £7,852,090.
- (h) **RESOLVED** that the Council sets the amount of Council Tax for each of the relevant categories of dwelling in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 on the basis of a District Council Tax for general expenses on a Band D property of £130.31 plus the relevant amounts required by the precepts of Parish Councils, Cambridgeshire County Council, the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority, details of those precepts and their effect as set out in the statutory resolution below.
- (i) **APPROVED** the Housing Revenue Account revenue budget, summarised in the Housing Revenue Account Summary Forecast 2015-16 to 2020-21, as set out in Appendix G(1) of the Housing Revenue Account budget setting report, in the context of the updated 30 Year Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
- (j) **AGREED**, subject to resolution (x) below, council dwellings rents for existing tenants be reduced by 1%, in line with legislative requirements, anticipated to be introduced as part of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015, with effect from 4th April 2016.
- (k) **APPROVED** the inclusion of an ongoing savings target for Housing Revenue Account services for the period from 2017-18 to 2020-21, at the initial rate of £250,000 per annum, recognising the financial constraints placed upon the Housing Revenue Account by changes in national housing policy.
- (l) **APPROVED** inflationary increases of 1.4% in garage rents for 2016-17, in line with the base rate of inflation for the year assumed in the Housing Revenue Account Budget Setting Report.

- (m) **APPROVED** proposed service charges for Housing Revenue Account services and facilities provided to both tenants and leaseholders, as set out in Appendix B of the Housing Revenue Account budget setting report.
- (n) **APPROVED** the charge for the cost of the provision of the alarm service in sheltered housing being set at £3 a week.
- (o) **APPROVED** the latest budget, spend profile and funding mix for each of the schemes in the new build programme, as set out in Section 5 and Appendix E of the Housing Revenue Account budget setting report.
- (p) **APPROVED** to earmark the required level of additional funding for new build investment between 2016-17 and 2020-21 to ensure that commitments can be met in respect of the investment of all right to buy receipts retained by the authority, up to the end of December 2015.
- (q) **APPROVED** the revised Housing Capital Investment Plan, as set out in Appendix H of the Housing Revenue Account budget setting report, in the context of the updated 30 Year Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.
- (r) **RESOLVED** to grant delegation to the Executive Director (Corporate Services) in consultation with the Leader, to allow the Self-Build Vanguard scheme to proceed during 2016-17, should the business case presented be financially viable for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.
- (s) **APPROVED** the borrowing and investment strategy for the year to 31 March 2017, as set out in Appendix D1 of the report.
- (t) **APPROVED** the prudential indicators required by the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities for the year to 31 March 2017, as set out in Appendix D2 of the report.
- (u) **APPROVED** the Capital Strategy 2016-17 to 2020-21 and Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016-17 to 2020-21, as set out in Appendices D4 and D5.
- (v) **RESOLVED** that any unspent New Homes Bonus money allocated to the City Deal be approved to roll forward to 2017-18.
- (w) **RESOLVED** that the Executive Director (Corporate Services) be given delegated authority to issue the final version of the Estimates Book, incorporating the amendments required from Council's decisions.
- (x) **NOTED** The Government's exemption of supported housing from the 1% rent cut.

A recorded vote was held further to the requirements of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 and Council Standing Order 16.6. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors David Bard, Val Barrett, Henry Batchelor, Anna Bradnam, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Graham Cone, Pippa Corney, Christopher Cross, Kevin Cuffley, Simon Edwards, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Jose Hales, Roger Hall, Philippa Hart, Tumi Hawkins, Roger Hickford, Mark Howell, Caroline Hunt, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Douglas de Lacey, Janet Lockwood, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, David McCraith, Cicely Murfitt, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Alex Riley, Tim Scott, Ben Shelton, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Richard Turner, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, Aidan Van de Weyer, David Whiteman-Downes, John Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright.

Abstention

Councillors Robin Page and Deborah Roberts.

Not voting

Councillor Raymond Matthews.

Voting on the statutory resolution in respect of the Council Tax for 2016-17, in addition to resolution (g) above, with 49 votes in favour, 1 abstention and 1 not voting Council **AGREED** the following statutory resolution:

That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2016-17 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------|---|
| (a) | £91,936,833 | being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) (a) to (f) of the Act (gross expenditure including parish precepts, the Housing Revenue Account and additions to reserves) |
| (b) | £79,309,268 | being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) (a) to (d) of the Act (gross income including the Housing Revenue Account and use of reserves) |
| (c) | £12,627,565 | being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year (net expenditure to be met from council tax) being the district amount of £7,852,090 and the parish precepts of £4,775,475 |
| (d) | £209.56 | being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average council tax for a band D property for the District including parishes) |
| (e) | £4,775,475 | being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (parish precepts) |

- (f) **£130.31** being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates (average council tax for a Band D property for the District excluding parishes), the amounts being for each of the categories of dwellings shown below in Table 1
- (h) In accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, the basic amounts of council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a special item relates are shown by adding the amounts for band D for the District Council in Table 1 below and Appendix A of the revised supplement
- (i) In accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands are shown by adding the amounts for each band in Table 1 below and Appendix A of the revised supplement.

That it be noted that for the year 2016-17 Cambridgeshire County Council, the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings as shown in Table 1:

Table 1	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
County Council	778.08	907.76	1037.44	1,167.12	1,426.48	1,685.84	1,945.20	2,334.24
Police & Crime Commissioner	122.10	142.45	162.80	183.15	223.85	264.55	305.25	366.30
District Council	86.87	101.35	115.83	130.31	159.27	188.23	217.18	260.62
Fire Authority	43.68	50.96	58.24	65.52	80.08	94.64	109.20	131.04

and

- j) that the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts set out in Appendix B of the revised supplement as the amounts of council tax for the year 2016-17 for each of the categories of dwellings shown in Appendix B.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION IN RESPECT OF SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX

Including the precepts from the County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Fire Authority and all of the parishes, the formal Council Resolution would produce a council tax for a band D property of:

£ p			%
District Council	General Expenses	130.31	+3.99%
	Special Expenses for Parish Precepts (average)	79.25	+3.87%
County Council		1,144.26	+0.00%
	Adult Social Care	22.86	
Police Authority		183.15	+0.99%
Fire Authority		65.52	+1.96%
Total		1,625.35	+2.13%

On these figures the council tax would range from £1,030.73 for B and A to £3,351.52 for Band H before any discounts or benefits.

Appendix C of the revised supplement showed the General Fund summary including Parish precepts and the final Formula Grant figure.

A recorded vote was held further to the requirements of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 and Council Standing Order 16.6. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors David Bard, Val Barrett, Henry Batchelor, Anna Bradnam, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Nigel Cathcart, Graham Cone, Pippa Corney, Christopher Cross, Kevin Cuffley, Simon Edwards, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Jose Hales, Roger Hall, Philippa Hart, Tumi Hawkins, Roger Hickford, Mark Howell, Caroline Hunt, Peter Johnson, Sebastian Kindersley, Douglas de Lacey, Janet Lockwood, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, Raymond Matthews, David McCraith, Cicely Murfitt, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Alex Riley, Tim Scott, Ben Shelton, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Richard Turner, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, Aidan Van de Weyer, David Whiteman-Downes, John Williams, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright.

Abstention

Councillor Deborah Roberts.

Not voting

Councillor Robin Page.

Councillor Edwards, on behalf of the Council, took this opportunity to thank officers for the tremendous work they had undertaken, in challenging circumstances, to produce the budget papers for this meeting. A round of applause by Members of the Council in support of Councillor Edwards' comments followed.

8 (d) Swavesey Byways Rate

Councillor Brian Burling, having declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in minute number 2, left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

Councillor Robert Turner, Portfolio Holder for Planning, proposed the recommendations contained within the report. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Nick Wright, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development.

Council unanimously **RESOLVED** to:

- (a) Maintain the current level of byeway maintenance for the period 2016-17.
- (b) Levy a rate at £1.10 to fund the required maintenance for the period 2016-17.

8 (e) Membership changes

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, proposed that Councillor Graham Cone be appointed onto the Council's Scrutiny and Overview Committee. Councillor Simon Edwards, Deputy Leader and Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder, seconded the proposal.

Councillor Manning took this opportunity to thank Councillor David Whiteman-Downes, who had resigned from the Committee due to work commitments, for his contributions.

Council unanimously **APPOINTED** Councillor Graham Cone onto the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

9. ADVICE NOTE ON ELECTED MEMBER INVOLVEMENT IN THE GREATER CAMBRIDGE CITY DEAL

Councillor Francis Burkitt, Portfolio Holder for the Greater Cambridge City Deal, proposed that the advice note on elected Member involvement in the Greater Cambridge City Deal, as included within the agenda pack, be endorsed.

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, seconded the proposal.

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of the Opposition, could not support the advice note which she felt essentially said that the District Council had no special position as a consultee on City Deal projects. She had originally understood that the Council would be a 'super-consultee' as a City Deal partner and said that the advice note now made it clear that the Council had no greater voice on City Deal issues than anyone else. Councillor Smith felt that the Council had been misled and that the protocol as suggested in the note was undemocratic. She therefore requested that it be sent back to the Executive Board for further work as, in her view, it was currently not fit for purpose.

Councillor Aidan Van de Weyer referred to the Notice of Motion agreed by the Council at its meeting on 26 November 2015, where it requested a protocol as to how Members individually, and the Council as a body, should respond to City Deal consultations. He did not feel that the advice note described how the Council as a body could respond to City Deal consultations. Referring to the advice note itself, paragraph 2.4 stated that Members of the partner Councils were fully involved in the City Deal programme. He did not agree with this statement. The note also suggested that Members could lobby individual officers and he therefore requested a list of officers and their contact details. Councillor Van de Weyer was of the opinion that this document was not a protocol for how the Council as a body interacted with the City Deal and supported Councillor Smith's suggestion of sending it back to the Executive Board for reconsideration.

Councillor Nigel Cathcart, particularly in view of the next Local Development Plan, felt that the voting arrangements for the City Deal should be reconsidered. He suggested a system where only those Members of South Cambridgeshire District Council should vote for issues affecting the South Cambridgeshire area in order to safeguard the district.

Councillor Robin Page agreed with the comment that the City Deal was undemocratic and was concerned that its projects would ruin South Cambridgeshire's countryside. Councillor Deborah Roberts had the same view in respect of the countryside and was unsure as to what exactly the City Deal would provide for the people of South Cambridgeshire. She made the point that the City Council Member on the Board gained more coverage in the local press than any other Member.

Councillor Sebastian Kindersley raised concerns regarding the establishment of Local Liaison Forums, as referred to in paragraph 3.5 of the document. He said that some of the City Deal transport infrastructure scheme projects would have significant impacts on a wide ranging area, so it was likely that some villages affected by some of these schemes may not be represented on the Forum.

Councillor Manning reminded Members that there were three Members entitled to vote on the City Deal Executive Board, with one of those votes being a South Cambridgeshire District Council vote. He was of the opinion that the person appointed to represent the Council on that body would have an idea of what the District Council would want and cast their vote accordingly. Councillor Manning also made the point that any Member of the Council had the right to address the Executive Board or Joint Assembly in the same way as members of the public.

NOTE – Councillor Robin Page left the meeting at this stage of proceedings.

Councillor Francis Burkitt made the following points in response to the comments raised during debate:

- the title 'City Deal' gave people an incorrect perception and he wanted to make it clear to people that this was a joint venture for the Greater Cambridge area, not solely for the City of Cambridge. He implored Members to get behind and support the implementation of the City Deal in view of the fact that the Council was a key strategic partner. This was one of the reasons why the Council as a body could not be a 'super-consultee', because it would effectively mean consulting with itself on City Deal consultations. It was therefore much better that individual Members could provide their input into the Executive Board or Joint Assembly, as suggested in paragraph 4.1 of the advice note;
- the exception to the Council being a 'super-consultee' was in relation to the Local Development Plan, the detailed arrangements around which would be worked up in more detail as reflected in paragraph 4.2 of the advice note;
- a list of officers for the various workstreams of the City Deal programme would be published in due course;
- in terms of concerns about the future of South Cambridgeshire's countryside, Councillor Burkitt made it clear that he would be a loud rural voice on the Executive Board;
- the more people understood what the City Deal was about and what it was seeking to deliver, the more people would appreciate and support it. The City Deal's new Strategic Communications Manager, due to commence their new role at the end of the month, would assist in promoting the City Deal in this respect;
- the City Council Member on the Board did appear in the local media more often than any other Member, due to the fact that Councillor Lewis Herbert as the City Council's representative on the Executive Board was the Chairman and spokesperson for the Board;
- Local Liaison Forums already existed via the County Council for transport infrastructure schemes and the City Deal's transport infrastructure schemes would follow the same process in that respect.

Councillor Burkitt closed by saying that he wanted Members to get on board with the City Deal and think of it as an extension of the District Council.

Voting on the proposal, with 36 votes in favour, 12 against and 2 abstentions, Council **ENDORSED** the advice note on elected Member involvement in the Greater Cambridge City Deal.

Enough Members as prescribed in Council Standing Orders requested a recorded vote. Votes were therefore cast as follows:

In favour

Councillors David Bard, Val Barret, Francis Burkitt, Brian Burling, Tom Bygott, Graham Cone, Pippa Corney, Christopher Cross, Kevin Cuffley, Simon Edwards, Sue Ellington, Andrew Fraser, Roger Hall, Roger Hickford, Mark Howell, Caroline Hunt, Peter Johnson, Douglas de Lacey, Mervyn Loynes, Ray Manning, Mick Martin, Raymond Matthews, David McCraith, Charles Nightingale, Tony Orgee, Alex Riley, Tim Scott, Ben Shelton, Edd Stonham, Peter Topping, Richard Turner, Robert Turner, Bunty Waters, David Whiteman-Downes, Tim Wotherspoon and Nick Wright.

Against

Councillors Henry Batchelor, Anna Bradnam, Nigel Cathcart, Jose Hales, Philippa Hart, Tumi Hawkins, Sebastian Kindersley, Janet Lockwood, Bridget Smith, Hazel Smith, Aidan Van de Weyer and John Williams.

Abstention

Councillors Cicely Murfitt and Deborah Roberts.

10. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

10 (a) From Councillor Bridget Smith

Councillor Bridget Smith asked the following question:

“The Gold Investors in People Award was to be celebrated. However, of late, training opportunities for Members have been in short supply. What plan does the Portfolio Holder have to reverse this trend and become more proactive in addressing Member training and development needs, including those that Members may not actually be aware of themselves?”

Councillor Peter Topping, Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Customer Services, took issue with Councillor Smith’s assessment of sessions for Members being in short supply and said that it depended on what her interpretation of a training and development session was. He referred to a Healthwatch briefing held prior to this meeting which had attracted a relatively large number of Members and, although was not a traditional training session, did broaden the knowledge of those in attendance on a key subject.

Councillor Topping also referred to externally facilitated training sessions and said that he had often approved Members to attend upon request, on the proviso that it was within budget and the Member provided an update as to what they learnt as a result of attending.

In terms of attracting Members to attend sessions, he reflected on a Digital by Default seminar that he had tried to set up last year which had to be cancelled due to a lack of interest. He said that he would give some consideration as to how sessions were promoted in the future but closed by saying that Members also had to take some responsibility to attend sessions that were put on for them.

Councillor Bridget Smith did not ask a supplementary question but made the point that training for the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, for example, used to be very comprehensive whereas, in her view, it was clear that the same level of training was now not being undertaken.

10 (b) From Councillor Hazel Smith

Councillor Hazel Smith asked the following question:

“With this Council's initiatives to provide for more truly affordable housing now in tatters as the result of Government policy changes, can the Portfolio Holder tell me what plans we are making to deal with a rising tide of homelessness and overcrowding that we seem powerless to prevent?”

Councillor Mark Howell, Portfolio Holder for Housing, acknowledged that the changes imposed by Government had provided some challenges in this respect. He said, however, that the Council was still seeking to build as many homes as it could, with 364 new homes scheduled to be built until 2019.

Councillor Smith, as a supplementary, asked how the Council would be prioritising discretionary housing payments in order to support those individuals in need and also asked whether any additional support could be given to related charities who were also under significant pressure.

Councillor Howell listed the different categories of people that were entitled to housing support, outlining how complex this area was and the difficult task the Council would have in prioritising support, which he said needed to take place. He added that, unfortunately, this would mean no additional support could be offered to charities and acknowledged the difficult position they were also in as a result of these changes.

10 (c) From Councillor Ben Shelton

Councillor Ben Shelton asked the following question:

“This Council holds personal and sensitive information on our residents, and that information in the wrong hands could leave our residents vulnerable. Can the Leader confirm that this authority is doing all it can to prevent any cyber attacks, and that we have the best and up to date systems for dealing with any threats.”

Councillor Peter Topping, Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Customer Services, confirmed that there were multiple systems in place to scan all inbound emails. It was noted that the average daily message volume for the Council was just over 20,000 messages and in the last three months 26 viruses had been blocked as a result of the Council's scanning.

Councillor Topping added that the Council would always protect against known vulnerabilities but would continue to need all users to be vigilant and careful when opening email attachments.

Councillor Shelton, as a supplementary, asked whether the ICT shared service would have any impact on the level of attacks or how the Council would be safeguarding against any such occurrences in the future.

Councillor Topping said that the shared service was already operational and a joined up approach to this important issue was in place.

10 (d) Questions without notice

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of the Opposition, asked for clarification as to whether there was any chance of the current Local Plan not being adopted in view of the next Local Plan scheduled for 2019. She asked, if so, at what stage this would be acknowledged in order that officers could focus their resources on the development of the new Plan.

Councillor Robert Turner, Portfolio Holder for Planning, said that the schedule of work in respect of the Local Development Plan had been confirmed and that the Council had to respond to any issues raised by the Inspectors at the relevant time. A number of modifications to the submitted Local Plan had been proposed in response to the letter received by the Inspectors last year, which had been the basis of a recent consultation. The outcomes of this consultation were scheduled for consideration at his Portfolio Holder Meeting on 14 March 2016, prior to the extraordinary meeting of Council on 23 March 2016. He clarified that work would not cease on this Local Plan until the Council had been instructed to do so by the Inspectors. Councillor Turner closed by saying that he still believed that this Plan would be adopted.

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

No Notices of Motion had been received.

12. CHAIRMAN'S ENGAGEMENTS

Those engagements attended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman since the last meeting, as set out in the agenda, were noted.

The Meeting ended at 3.53 p.m.
