

Council

24th February 2014

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Wanda King (Mayor), Councillor Pat Witherspoon (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Joe Baker, Roger Bennett, Rebecca Blake, Michael Braley, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Greg Chance, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Gay Hopkins, Alan Mason, Phil Mould, Brenda Quinney, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith and Debbie Taylor

Officers:

A-M Darroch, K Dicks, C Felton, C Flanagan, S Jones, S Morgan and J Pickering

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

83. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Simon Chalk, Brandon Clayton, Roger Hill, Luke Stephens and Derek Taylor.

84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the statutory provision under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 regarding the participation of Members who were more than two months in arrears with their Council Tax payments.

There were no declarations of interest.

85. MINUTES

Further to Minute 79, a member questioned the record as contained within the minutes, stating that it had been the existing rental income rather than the future ownership of the Post Office premises which had been in question.

RESOLVED that

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MAYOR, in the Chair

the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 27th January 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

86. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) As this was not an ordinary meeting of the Council, the Mayor informed Members that she would not be making any of her usual announcements.

(b) The Leader's Announcements were as follows:

i) Winyates

The Leader reported that he had recently attended the opening of the SPACE and Wellbeing Hub in Winyates.

ii) Chinese New Year

The Leader advised that he had recently attended a Chinese New Year celebration at the Kingfisher Centre.

iii) North Worcestershire Police Awards evening

The Leader advised that he had attended an Awards evening at Hindlip Hall at which a number of individual Officers and Policing Teams had received awards for their outstanding service.

iv) Redditch Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The Leader reported that the last meeting of the Redditch LSP had discussed new ways of working and had decided to proceed with a system of one annual meeting, the continuation of existing sub-groups and the suspending of the schedule of bi-monthly meetings for the Partnership.

v) Sue Horrobin

The Leader expressed his gratitude to Sue Horrobin for many year's dedicated service on the occasion of her leaving the Council to take up a new post in Scotland.

vi) Angie Heighway

The Leader expressed his gratitude to Angie Heighway, the Head of Community Services for many years dedicated service and wished her well as she would shortly be leaving the Council.

viii) Acorns Hospice

The Leader reported on his attendance at a recent fund-raising event for the Acorns Hospice.

87. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Council considered the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th February 2014 and the recommendations of the Executive Committee meeting immediately preceding this meeting of the Council.

During the discussion on the proposed Fees and Charges for 2014/15, there was some disquiet at the recommended increase in charges for Junior Swimming Lessons. The proposed rise in charges was contrasted with the continued provision of Free Swimming for under-16s and the Portfolio Holder was requested to reconsider this recommendation. The recommended charges for several other service areas, such as Environmental Services, were also noted as being very substantial compared to the charges levied in the previous year. The Leader advised that the overall increase in the levels of Fees and Charges was 3%, meaning that in some areas charges had increased by a greater amount whereas in others proposed charges were the same or lower than in previous years. In respect of Junior Swimming charges, it was noted that the charges proposed by Redditch Borough would still compare very favourably with the charges in neighbouring authorities. Members voted on an amendment recommending a review of the proposed increase in Junior Swimming charges but the amendment was lost.

In respect of the Report and Recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel, Members repeated a long-standing concern that they were placed in an invidious position in having to take a decision on their own remuneration. To that end, it was further recommended that their views be reported to central Government through the local Member of Parliament.

There was considerable Member interest in the Medium Term Financial Plan and robust discussion of a number of matters included within the proposed expenditure and savings and included amongst the unavoidable pressures highlighted within the report. The surrender of the lease on Threadneedle House by Barclays Bank and the subsequent decision to declare the property surplus and place it on the market was the subject of further debate. In the course of the debate, the issue of the money received from Barclays Bank in respect of dilapidations and the possibility of this money being clawed back by the Bank was raised. Officers stated their confidence that no such claw back would occur but undertook to verify this fact.

11th February 2014

RESOLVED that

Housing Revenue Account Initial Estimates / Rent Setting 2014/15

- 1) the draft 2014/2015 Estimates for the Housing Revenue Account attached to the report at Appendix A, be approved;
- 2) the actual average rent increase for 2014/2015 be 5.13% (3.2% RPI plus 1.93% due to rent restructuring);
- 3) £3.5m be transferred to a reserve as a Revenue Contribution to Capital to fund the future Capital Programme and repay borrowing;

Fees and Charges 2014/15

- 4) the fees and charges for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix 1- 9 to the report be approved; other than in cases where:-
 - a) fees or charges are statutory,
 - b) fees and charges are set externally, or
 - c) other Council- approved circumstances apply.;
- 5) the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services has delegation to alter the Leisure fees and charges by a variation of up to 30%

Independent Remuneration Panel for Worcestershire District Councils – Annual Report and Recommendations 2014/15

- 6) the Council has regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel;
- 7) the Council does not accept the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, set out in detail in Appendix 1 to its report, for the following allowances:

Basic
Leader
Deputy Leader
Portfolio Holders
Executive Members without Portfolio
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups
Chair of Audit and Governance Committee
Chair of Planning Committee
Chair of Licensing Committee
Chair of Standards Committee
Political Group Leaders;

- 8) the Council accepts the Panel's recommendations for travel, subsistence and dependent carers allowances;
- 9) for 2014-15, the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances continue at the level set for 2013-14, as set out in detail in the final column in appendix 1 to the Panel's report;
- 10) the Panel's recommendation relating to the Parish Council be noted;
- 11) a letter be written to Karen Lumley, M.P. requesting that she meet with The Rt. Hon. Eric Pickles M.P., Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and seek the establishment of an Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority-type body to oversee the setting of allowances for Councils nationally;

Redditch Borough Council Response to Birmingham Development Plan Pre-Submission Consultation

- 12) the Redditch Borough Council response (attached at Appendix 1 to the report) to the BDP Pre-Submission Draft be approved to be sent to Birmingham City Council; and

Policy for Securing Repayment of Disabled Facilities Grants and Lifetime Loans

- 13) repayment of Disabled Facilities Grants and Home Repair Assistance Lifetime Loans should be secured by means of registration on the Local Land Charges Register.

24th February 2014

The recommendations on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2014/15 – 2016/17 were the subject of the following named votes in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.5 and the recent guidance setting out central Government's expectation that at this year's budget meetings, all councils would adopt the practice of recorded votes. The Mayor agreed to take separate votes on resolutions 1 and resolutions 2 – 13, below

Members voting FOR the motion in respect of Resolution 1, below:

Councillors Joe Baker, Roger Bennett, Rebecca Blake, Michael Braley, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Greg Chance, John Fisher, Andy Fry, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Gay Hopkins, Wanda King, Alan Mason, Phil Mould, Brenda Quinney, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith, Debbie Taylor and Pat Witherspoon.
(24 votes)

Members voting AGAINST the motion in respect of Resolution 1, below:

None

Members abstaining from voting in respect of Resolution 1, below:

None.

Members voting FOR the motion in respect of Resolutions 2 - 13, below:

Councillors Joe Baker, Rebecca Blake, Greg Chance, John Fisher, Andy Fry, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Wanda King, Alan Mason, Phil Mould, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith, Debbie Taylor and Pat Witherspoon.
(14 votes)

Members voting AGAINST the motion in respect of Resolutions 2 - 13, below:

Councillor Michael Braley
(1 vote)

Members abstaining from voting in respect of Resolutions 2 - 13, below:

Councillors Roger Bennett, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Gay Hopkins and Brenda Quinney.

Accordingly, the Motions were approved, and it was consequently

Medium Term Financial Plan 2014/15 – 2016/17

RESOLVED that

- 1) the bid for £25K for the Eastern Gateway be approved;**

- 2) the budget for 2014/15 of £11.331M be approved;
- 3) the use of earmarked reserves of £1,196K be approved;
- 4) the unavoidable pressures detailed in appendix 2 of £335K be approved;
- 5) the savings detailed in appendix 3 of £786K be approved;
- 6) the Council Tax be increased by 1.9% for 2014/15;
- 7) it be noted that at its Executive Committee meeting on the 14th of January 2014 the Council calculated the following amounts for the year 2014/15 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33 (5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

a) **24,656.96**

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 (item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended (the 'Act'));

b) **Feckenham Parish – 364.78**

being the amount 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 relate (item TP in the formula in Section 34(3) of the Act);

- 8) the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2014/15 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

a) **£88,769,043**

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account the precept issued by Feckenham Parish Council.

(2014/15 Gross General Fund Expenditure)

b) **£83,504,930**

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.

(2014/15 Gross General Fund Income)

c) **£5,264,113**

being the amount by which the aggregate at 2(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year (item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).

(2014/15 Council Tax Requirement)

d) **£213.49**

being the amount at 2 (c) above (item R) divided by the amount at 1 (a) above (item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of Council Tax for the year (including parish precept).

(The average amount Band D properties pay for Redditch Borough Council services)

e) **£8,300**

being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act;

(Feckenham Parish Precept)

f) **£213.16**

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) (item T) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of Council Tax for dwellings in those parts of the area to which no special item relates.

(The amount Band D properties pay (except within the Parish of Feckenham) for Borough Council Services)

g) **£235.91**

being the amount given by adding to the amount at 2(f) above, the amount of the special item relating to the Parish of Feckenham, divided by the amount in 1(b) above (item TP), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (3) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in the Parish of Feckenham;

(The amount Band D properties pay within the Parish of Feckenham for Borough Council Services including the Parish Precept)

h)

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Part of Council's area	
		Parish of Feckenham £	All other parts of the Councils area £
A	6/9	157.27	142.10
B	7/9	183.49	165.79
C	8/9	209.70	189.47
D	1	235.91	213.16
E	11/9	288.34	260.53
F	13/9	340.76	307.89
G	15/9	393.18	355.26
H	18/9	471.82	426.31

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 2(f) and 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 dwelling listed in different valuation bands;

- 9) **it be noted that, for the year 2014/15, Worcestershire County Council, the Police & Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service 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 shown below:**

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Precepting Authority		
		Worcestershire County Council £	Police & Crime Commissioner for West Mercia £	H & W Fire & Rescue Authority £
A	6/9	706.15	121.52	50.04
B	7/9	823.84	141.77	58.38
C	8/9	941.53	162.02	66.72
D	1	1,059.22	182.28	75.06
E	11/9	1,294.60	222.78	91.74
F	13/9	1,529.99	263.29	108.43
G	15/9	1,765.37	303.80	125.10

H	18/9	2,118.44	364.55	150.11
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- 10) having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2(h) and 3 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2014/15 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Part of Council's area	
		Parish of Feckenham £	All other parts of the Council's area £
A	6/9	1,034.98	1,019.81
B	7/9	1,207.48	1,189.78
C	8/9	1,379.97	1,359.74
D	1	1,552.47	1,529.72
E	11/9	1,897.46	1,869.65
F	13/9	2,242.47	2,209.60
G	15/9	2,587.45	2,549.53
H	18/9	3,104.92	3,059.41

- 11) the level of General Fund balances to be utilised in 2014/15 be zero;
- 12) the Council's relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2014/15 is not excessive in accordance with the principles determined for the year by the Secretary of State under Section 52ZB Local Government Act 1992; and
- 13) as the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2014/15 is excessive and the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK Local Government Act 1992.

The Meeting commenced at 7.34 pm and closed at 8.55 pm

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MAYOR, in the Chair