

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held at the Council Offices, Gloucester Road, Tewkesbury on Tuesday, 21 February 2017 commencing at 6:00 pm

Present:

The Worshipful the Mayor
Deputy Mayor

Councillor Mrs G F Blackwell
Councillor H A E Turbyfield

and Councillors:

R E Allen, P W Awford, Mrs K J Berry, R A Bird, R Bishop, G J Bocking, K J Cromwell, D M M Davies, Mrs J E Day, M Dean, R D East, A J Evans, D T Foyle, R Furolo, R E Garnham, Mrs P A Godwin, Mrs M A Gore, Mrs J Greening, Mrs R M Hatton, Mrs S E Hillier-Richardson, Mrs A Hollaway, Mrs E J MacTiernan, J R Mason, Mrs H C McLain, A S Reece, V D Smith, T A Spencer, Mrs P E Stokes, P D Surman, M G Sztymiak, R J E Vines, D J Waters, M J Williams and P N Workman

CL.96 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

96.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J H Evetts and B C J Hesketh.

CL.97 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

97.1 The Committee's attention was drawn to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 26 June 2012 and took effect from 1 July 2012.

97.2 There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

CL.98 MINUTES

98.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2017, and of the Extraordinary meeting held on 31 January 2017, copies of which had been circulated, were approved as correct records and signed by the Mayor, subject to an amendment to the first sentence at Minute No. CL.95.13, to read 'At the workshop which had been held with Mr Thomas earlier in January, a Member **Mr Thomas** had pointed out that part of the Innsworth side of the Strategic Allocation, which was designated for housing, flooded through pluvial flooding and ~~he~~ **the Member** questioned whether that area of development had now been removed'.

CL.99 ANNOUNCEMENTS

99.1 The evacuation procedure, as set out on the Agenda, was advised to those present.

CL.100 ITEMS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

100.1 There were no items from members of the public on this occasion.

CL.101 MEMBER QUESTIONS PROPERLY SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES

101.1 There were no Member questions on this occasion.

CL.102 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Budget 2017/18

- 102.1 At its meeting on 1 February 2017, the Executive Committee had considered a report which set out the proposed budget for 2017/18. The Executive Committee had recommended to Council that a net budget of £9,913,693 be approved; that a Band D Council Tax of £109.36, an increase of £5.00 per annum, be approved; that the use of New Homes Bonus, as proposed in Paragraph 3.8 of the report, be approved; that the Capital Programme, as proposed in Appendix A to the report, be approved; that the Capital Prudential Indicators, as proposed in Appendix B to the report, be approved; that the annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) statement, as contained in Appendix B to the report, be approved; and that the 2017/18 Treasury Management Strategy, as proposed in Appendix C to the report, be approved.
- 102.2 The report which was considered by the Executive Committee had been circulated with the Agenda for the current meeting at Pages No. 28-60.
- 102.3 The recommendation was proposed and seconded by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee. In seconding the recommendation, the Vice-Chair of the Committee explained that this had, once again, been a tough budget setting process under difficult circumstances and he offered his thanks to the Council's Finance Team for its help in ensuring a balanced budget was produced. He further indicated that, even by raising Council Tax, which was an unfortunate position to be in, the Council had still needed to use a relatively large amount of its reserves to balance the budget and these would need to be replaced in future years.
- 102.4 During the discussion which ensued, a Member questioned whether there was an overall statement of where all the reserves were held and the amounts that they contained. She felt it was important to be aware of how many reserves were being used and how much was left. In addition, she expressed the view that the cost for the waste, recycling and street cleansing services seemed very high and she was unsure why; she questioned whether this was connected to the Council joining Ubico and, if so, why being a member of Ubico should be costing the Council so much. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that the overall reserves position was not included within the budget report as it was considered by the Executive Committee as a separate 'Reserves report'. Overall, the Council had £3.72million in reserves with £837,000 being used in the 2017/18 budget in order to ensure a balanced budget was achieved. In response, the Member asked that she be provided with a list of all of the reserves so that she could keep track of them and the Head of Finance and Asset Management indicated that the Executive Committee reports were available to all Members. In terms of waste and recycling, he explained that the amount referred to covered the manning of the new vehicle fleet, fuel and insurance etc. and this had all been advised within the Medium Term Financial Strategy which Members had approved in December 2016. The other element was the increasing cost of dealing with recyclate which, in the current year, had cost an extra £200,000. He confirmed that, at the end of 2016/17, a new contract was required and this had also been factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy as an extra cost. In addition, the Lead Member for Finance and Asset Management advised that the waste fleet had been procured through a tendering process so the Council had gained the best value possible.
- 102.5 In terms of community grants, a Member questioned how much had been allocated. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that, in the current year, £150,000 had been provided for community grants, along with

a sum of approximately £32,000 which funded the Community Grants Officer post. Members had suggested that the £150,000 be eliminated from 2017/18 with the Community Grants Officer being utilised to find alternative funding for those projects that needed it. The Member indicated that the lack of allocation of any New Homes Bonus funding for community grants was a major issue as far as he was concerned. He was of the view that New Homes Bonus money should be used for the new communities being created that may have issues they wished to address and he felt that some money should be available for that purpose. He proposed that £100,000 be put into community grants from the Medium Term Financial Strategy reserve. In response, the Borough Solicitor referred the Member to the Council Procedure Rule which advised that, if a Councillor intended to move a Motion or Amendment in relation to the Council's annual budget, the text of the proposed Motion or Amendment must be submitted in writing to the Borough Solicitor by 9.00am on the working day preceding the day of the Council meeting.

102.6 A Member drew attention to Paragraph 6.1 which noted that the base estimate for the Chief Executive for 2017/18 was £250,187 and he questioned whether this was correct. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management advised that this covered the Chief Executive's Unit rather than just the Chief Executive which meant it included the costs for a number of staff members. Referring to the fact that the report included a statement about non-specified investment limits, a Member asked for reassurance that the Council would not end up in the same position as it had during the collapse of the Icelandic Bank. In response, the Head of Finance and Asset Management confirmed that all such investments would be avoided. The Council's ability to invest was not the same as it had been in previous years so that in itself offered a safeguard against foreign investments.

102.7 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting on the proposal was recorded as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Absent
R E Allen	Mrs S E Hillier- Richardson		J H Evetts
P W Awford	M G Sztymiak		B C J Hesketh
Mrs K J Berry			
R A Bird			
R Bishop			
Mrs G F Blackwell			
G J Bocking			
K J Cromwell			
D M M Davies			
Mrs J E Day			
M Dean			
R D East			
A J Evans			

D T Foyle

R Furolo

R E Garnham

Mrs P A Godwin

Mrs M A Gore

Mrs J Greening

Mrs R M Hatton

Mrs A Hollaway

Mrs E J
MacTiernan

J R Mason

Mrs H C McLain

A S Reece

V D Smith

T A Spencer

Mrs P E Stokes

P D Surman

H A E Turbyfield

R J E Vines

D J Waters

M J Williams

P N Workman

(Councillor M G Sztymiak asked that his vote against the budget be recorded for the reason that he felt it did not put enough money into the community).

102.8 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED

1. That a net budget of £9,913,693 be **APPROVED**.
2. That a Band D Council Tax of £109.36, an increase of £5.00 per annum, be **APPROVED**.
3. That the use of New Homes Bonus, as proposed in Paragraph 3.8 of the report, be **APPROVED**.
4. That the Capital Programme, as proposed in Appendix A to the report, be **APPROVED**.
5. That the Capital Prudential Indicators, as proposed in

Appendix B to the report, be **APPROVED**.

6. That the annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) statement, as contained in Appendix B to the report, be **APPROVED**.

7. That the 2017/18 Treasury Management Strategy, as proposed in Appendix C to the report, be **APPROVED**.

CL.103 COUNCIL TAX 2017/18

103.1 Having agreed the Council's 2017/18 budget earlier in the meeting, attention was drawn to a report, circulated around the table, which asked Members to approve and set a Council Tax requirement for 2017/18.

103.2 In proposing the recommended Council Tax level, a Member indicated that, as could be seen from the budget, the Council had needed to find £800,000 and, even by raising a Band D Council Tax by £5.00 per year, only £162,000 additional funding would be found through Council Tax increases. This had not been an easy decision to make but he felt it was the only thing the Council could do in the current circumstances and was something that nearly every authority in the country was having to do.

103.3 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, voting was recorded as follows:

For	Against	Abstain	Absent
R E Allen	M G Sztymiak	Mrs S E Hillier- Richardson	J H Evetts
P W Awford			B C J Hesketh
Mrs K J Berry			
R A Bird			
R Bishop			
Mrs G F Blackwell			
G J Bocking			
K J Cromwell			
D M M Davies			
Mrs J E Day			
M Dean			
R D East			
A J Evans			
D T Foyle			
R Furolo			
R E Garnham			

Mrs P A Godwin

Mrs M A Gore

Mrs J Greening

Mrs R M Hatton

Mrs A Hollaway

Mrs E J
MacTiernan

J R Mason

Mrs H C McLain

A S Reece

V D Smith

T A Spencer

Mrs P E Stokes

P D Surman

H A E Turbyfield

R J E Vines

D J Waters

M J Williams

P N Workman

103.4 Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED

1. That it be **NOTED** that, on 21 February 2017, the Council calculated:
 - a. the Council Tax base 2017/18 for the whole Council area as £32,512.32 (Item T in the formula section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")); and
 - b. the dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as attached to the report at Appendix C.
2. That the Council Tax requirement calculated for the Council's own purposes for 2017/18 (excluding Parish precepts) is £3,555,547.
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2017/18 in accordance with Sections 30 to 36 of the Act:
 - a. £37,853,992 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 all precepts issued to it by the Parish Councils;

- b. £32,490,743 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31(A)(3) of the Act;
 - c. £5,363,249 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act and its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in formula in Section 31B of the Act);
 - d. £164.96 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T(1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);
 - e. £1,807,702 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per Appendix C to the report);
 - f. £109.36 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T(1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates;
 - g. the amounts stated in Column 5 (Band D Parish/Town and Borough (b)) of Appendix B to the report are given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the amounts of special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area specified in Column 1 of Appendix B in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act. For completeness the table shows all areas; and
 - h. the amount set out in Appendix B to the report given by multiplying the amounts at 3(g) above by the number which, in 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.
4. That it be **NOTED** that, for the year 2017/18, Gloucestershire County Council and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Borough Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Valuation Bands	Gloucestershire County Council (£)	Office of the Police and
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				Crime Commissioner (£)
	ASC	General	Total	
A	29.66	756.51	786.17	142.99
B	34.60	882.60	917.20	166.83
C	39.55	1,008.68	1,048.23	190.66
D	44.49	1,134.77	1,179.26	214.49
E	54.38	1,386.94	1,441.32	262.15
F	64.26	1,639.12	1,703.38	309.82
G	74.15	1,891.28	1,965.43	357.48
H	88.98	2,269.54	2,358.52	428.98

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts, set out in Schedule 3 to the report, as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2017/18 for each of the categories of dwellings shown in Schedule 3.
6. The Council has determined that its relevant 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. As the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2017/18 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

CL.104 MOTION - WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

104.1 The Worshipful the Mayor referred to the Notice of Motion set out on the Agenda and indicated that, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, it was necessary for the Council firstly to decide whether it wished to debate and determine the Motion at the evening's meeting, or whether it wished to refer the Motion, without debate, to a Committee for consideration with authority either to make a decision on the matter or to bring a recommendation back to Council. Upon being put to the vote it was agreed that the Motion would be determined at the current meeting.

104.2 Councillor R A Bird proposed and Councillor Mrs K J Berry seconded that:
'Customer focused service is one of the highest priorities for Tewkesbury Borough

Council, and the Council Plan sets out our objectives to achieve this commitment. 'Puts Customers First' is one of our Council values.

Tewkesbury Borough Council's current waste collection service is the best in Gloucestershire in meeting the demands of residents, and achieves our customer service ethos.

Tewkesbury Borough Council is committed to maintaining the existing minimum service standard of:

- 1) bi-weekly residual waste (green bin) collections, to ensure that our customers receive an effective, hygienic rate of waste removal;
- 2) current large capacity residual waste bins (our existing standard), to ensure that customers are not in danger of having insufficient storage capacity, particularly where they might miss a collection; and
- 3) co-mingled recycling (blue bin) collections, the simplest recycling service currently available, and an effective encouragement to recycling.

We welcome the attempts of the Joint Waste Committee to seek efficiencies in waste management across Gloucestershire through standardisation, providing these do not reduce in any way the minimum customer service standards listed above, which would be contrary to our customer service ethos and our Council Plan'.

104.3 In speaking to the Motion, Councillor Bird indicated that the Motion was meant to be a statement of intent as to where the Council stood in terms of waste management. He had some concerns about the future direction of waste collection i.e. some authorities seemed to be considering three weekly residual collections and reducing bin sizes etc. In addition, many people saw the comingled collection, which was Tewkesbury Borough's current recycle collection, as contaminated. However, the Council Plan was focussed on customer service and Tewkesbury Borough Council considered its own service to be the best in Gloucestershire. The Joint Waste Committee had indicated that waste was a demand-led service but he felt it was important to remember that demands came from customers. Bearing all of this in mind, the proposer of the Motion felt it was important to set out the Council's minimum service standards and he referred to points 1-3 within the Motion set out on the Agenda. In seconding the Motion, Councillor Berry advised that she fully supported the proposer of the Motion. She had undertaken some research which had found that the highest performing authority was South Oxfordshire and that all five top performing authorities collected recycle in large bins like Tewkesbury Borough's blue bins. She felt this showed that there was no need to change the service that Tewkesbury Borough offered except to improve it by adding things like the collection of clothes, textiles and batteries which would all achieve more at the weigh-in than the current collection. She was of the view that the worst thing the Council could do would be to remove its current blue bin service. In addition to these concerns, the Member also felt that there was probably a health and safety issue as she, along with many other residents, would not be able to carry four or five different recycling boxes out to the kerbside and that must deter people from recycling; this would also affect the waste collection operatives and was something she felt should be borne in mind.

104.4 In supporting the Motion, a Member advised that the idea of a kerbside collection was that it was cleaner and should gain a better market price for the recycle collected. This was an advantage depending on the market but the method was not as popular with customers. Kerbside collections meant more disruption for road

users since it was sorted as it was collected and as such took longer to collect; Members felt this was a big disadvantage. A Member was of the view that the Council's co-mingled service was both clean and efficient and was one that others should aspire to. Another Member expressed the view that anything that could be done to reinforce the Council's current collection methods was welcome; he was very concerned that flytipping would increase if the frequency of residual waste collections was reduced.

- 104.5 A Member proposed an amendment, which was seconded, that there also be a commitment to the collection of food waste at a minimum of once a week. He felt this service was extremely important to residents and that the Council's intention to continue the weekly collection should be reaffirmed. The seconder of the amendment expressed concern that she was not aware of any discussions at the authority to change the current system and she felt if there was information available to this effect it should be shared with all Members. In response, the Lead Member explained that Tewkesbury Borough, along with Cheltenham Borough, Cotswold District and the Forest of Dean District Councils were all Members of the Joint Waste Committee; Stroud District and Gloucester City Councils were not members and, although they did have representatives that attended the meetings, they had no voting rights. The Joint Waste Committee had been looking at its business plan which aimed to bring together the way that authorities dealt with waste collection under one system; at this stage it was not known what that system would be. The proposer and seconder of the original Motion, along with the Lead Member, indicated that they were comfortable with the amendment and accordingly, it was

RESOLVED

That the following Motion be **AGREED**:

'Customer focused service is one of the highest priorities for Tewkesbury Borough Council, and the Council Plan sets out our objectives to achieve this commitment. 'Puts Customers First' is one of our Council values.

Tewkesbury Borough Council's current waste collection service is the best in Gloucestershire in meeting the demands of residents, and achieves our customer service ethos.

Tewkesbury Borough Council is committed to maintaining the existing minimum service standard of:

- 1) bi-weekly residual waste (green bin) collections, to ensure that our customers receive an effective, hygienic rate of waste removal;
- 2) current large capacity residual waste bins (our existing standard), to ensure that customers are not in danger of having insufficient storage capacity, particularly where they might miss a collection;
- 3) co-mingled recycling (blue bin) collections, the simplest recycling service currently available, and an effective encouragement to recycling; and
- 4) weekly food waste collections.

We welcome the attempts of the Joint Waste Committee to seek efficiencies in waste management across Gloucestershire through standardisation, providing these do not reduce in any way the minimum customer service standards listed above,

which would be contrary to our customer service ethos and our Council Plan’.

CL.105 SEPARATE BUSINESS

105.1 The Chair proposed, and it was

RESOLVED That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

CL.106 SEPARATE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Revenues and Benefits Restructure

(Exempt –Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – Information relating to any individual)

106.1 At its meeting on 1 February 2017 the Executive Committee had considered a report detailing a restructure of the Council’s Revenues and Benefits Service and had made a recommendation to Council thereon. Having considered the report before it, the Council approved the proposals as contained within Section 3 of the report and as detailed within the appendices.

Public Services Centre Refurbishment

(Exempt –Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 –Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

106.2 At its meeting on 1 February 2017 the Executive Committee had considered a report which detailed a proposal to refurbish the Public Services Centre and had made a recommendation to Council thereon. Having considered the report, the Council approved the proposals for the refurbishment of the Council Offices as outlined therein.

The meeting closed at 7:20 pm