

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on Monday, 20 February 2017 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Shepton Mallet commencing at 6.30pm.

COUNCILLORS

PRESENT: Bryan Beha, Eve Berry, Peter Bradshaw, Adam Boyden, John Brunsdon MBE, John Carter, Rachel Carter, John Coles, Shane Collins, Nick Cottle, Simon Davies, Edward Drewe, John Greenhalgh, Philip Ham, Des Harris, Steve Henderson, Bente Height, Nigel Hewitt-Cooper, Damon Hooton, Claire Hudson, Lloyd Hughes, Tom Killen, Roy Mackenzie, Jeannette Marsh, Clive Mockford, Terry Napper, Graham Noel, John North, Linda Oliver, John Osman, John Parham, Mike Pullin, Tim Rice, Harvey Siggs, Dick Skidmore, Helen Sprawson-White, Alan Townsend, David van Dyk, Nigel Woollcombe-Adams, Ros Wyke

OFFICERS

PRESENT: Stuart Brown Chief Executive
Paul Deal Section 151 Officer
Caroline McCafferty Committee Officer
Donna Nolan Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

Agenda Item Number	Subject	Actioned by
1 and 2	<p>Evacuation Procedures, Induction Loop and Turning Off Mobile Phones</p> <p>The Chair explained the evacuation procedures and informed everyone on the use of the induction loop and requested that mobile phones be switched to silent.</p> <p>Councillor Coles was invited to offer an opening prayer. People wishing to leave the meeting during the prayer were given the opportunity to do so.</p>	
3	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Joanna Beale, Adam Sen, Nigel Taylor, Danny Unwin, Stina Falle and Alvin Horsfall.</p>	
4	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	

<p>5</p>	<p>Chairman’s Engagements , Communications and Announcements</p> <p>The Chairman had attended Minehead Civic Service on Sunday 5 February.</p> <p>The Chairman then explained the Shape Mendip Lottery which had been established by Mendip District Council, and gave players the chance to win a £25,000 prize. This also helped community organisations to raise vital funds. The Lottery would be online with weekly draws. For each £1 ticket bought, 60% of the ticket price would go to support community groups throughout the district, though there would be an option for players to support a particular cause. No money would go to the Council. The first weekly draw was to take place on Saturday 25 March 2017.</p> <p>The Chairman changed the order of the meeting to accommodate the motion – Changing Places; items 6 and 14 would come after item 8.</p>	
<p>7</p>	<p>Previous Minutes of the Council</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 12 December 2017 were agreed as an accurate record, subject to following changes;</p> <p>Page 1 – Terry Napper had given his apologies and was listed as present.</p> <p>Page 7 - £39, 332.79 should be £39,322.79</p> <p>Councillor Mackenzie gave a brief update to his motion – Affordable Housing, on page 8.</p>	<p>Caroline McCafferty</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Update from the Leader of the Council</p> <p>The Leader opened by saying that it had been a successful but challenging year. Priorities continued to be focussed on the community, which was hopefully demonstrated in the Motion – Changing Places. Work was ongoing with regard to the growth agenda together with colleagues across the Heart of the South West including the Local Economic Partnership, and on the development of a Productivity Plan which linked with the Government’s recently issued Industrial Strategy. Work was being carried out on a revised Corporate Plan which would hopefully be brought to the May meeting of Full Council, with key areas being growth and transformation. The Leader added that the Deputy Leader had provided an update on growth at the recent meeting of Cabinet, which had reported a buoyant local economy.</p> <p>The Leader then thanked Members for their work and involvement with Committees, Groups and Panels, and added that further involvement was welcomed and encouraged.</p> <p>A team of peer colleagues from the Local Government Association had been invited to conduct a Peer Challenge, to reflect on the changes and achievements over the last 10 years, and also to consider our plans and</p>	

	<p>ambitions for the future. The Leader stated that it was important to be honest in this process.</p> <p>20,000 responses were due to be published with regard to the proposed parliamentary boundary changes, which would be circulated to Members via email.</p> <p>The Leader concluded by thanking the Chair, Councillor Jeannette Marsh for her hard work.</p> <p>Councillor Claire Hudson responded to the Leader, welcoming the Peer Challenge from the perspective of the Opposition. She wished to highlight the challenges anticipated due to the roll out of Universal Credit, which would most affect those people who were in work.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>The Chairman introduced 4 speakers with regard to item 13, Motion to Council.</p> <p>1. Alison Douthwaite</p> <p>Alison introduced her daughter ETTY, aged 12, who required the facilities of a changing place toilet. ETTY was continent, but as she required a hoist and a changing bed to use public toilet facilities, and there were very few facilities available locally, she was reliant on continence products while away from home. Alison explained that it had been easy to deal with ETTY's needs as a young child by using baby changing facilities and lifting her to the toilet, but now that she was 12, lifting ETTY could injure her family's backs and risk ETTY's safety, and changing continence products on disabled toilet floors did not respect ETTY's dignity and safety. ETTY and her family wanted her to have the same social opportunities as others of her age. The family enjoyed going out together, but the lack of bathrooms with Changing Places facilities restricted their options and they tended to go to places where the facilities existed. Alison concluded by saying that footfall to local towns could be increased by having more Changing Places available, and holiday makers who had a family member with a disability would return to areas where there were Changing Places facilities available.</p> <p>2. Becky Bird</p> <p>Becky stated that while she did not have a disabled child, she worked in Children's Social Care with children with disabilities. She said that care time was increased when families and carers could not just walk out and use public facilities. She explained that her Mum had been left disabled following a virus, which showed that disability could affect anyone at any time and anywhere. Though her Mum was small, Becky was unable to lift or help her, and her desire to remain an active member of society was unfulfilled due to the lack of facilities. She went on to say that Changing Places would cross ages and genders, and was needed in places like Frome which had large market which brought tourists. She concluded by</p>	

	<p>saying that many people take going to a public toilet for granted, and all people should have that right.</p> <p>3. Cath Puddick</p> <p>Cath stated that she was a Frome Town Councillor with Cerebral Palsy (CP) like Etty, a condition which has a wide spectrum. She explained that CP is a brain injury which occurs at or before birth, affecting the motor cortex which supplies messages to the body. She explained that intellectual capacity is unaffected, and that someone with CP has the same hopes and dreams as an able bodied person.</p> <p>4. Jenny Date</p> <p>Jenny's representation was read out as she was unable to attend the meeting. She was a member of Mencap, and had a daughter with multiple disabilities who used continence products. Changing Places would make a great difference to her family, as her daughter could not be lifted manually and required a hoist. The lack of facilities meant that a maximum of 3 hours could be spent away from home, and all outings, which were her daughter's greatest pleasure, had to be planned around facilities. She had concluded by saying that Changing Place facilities would encourage visitors and holiday makers with disabilities to the area.</p>	
14	<p>Motions to Councils</p> <p>Councillors Adam Boyden and Philip Ham submitted the following Motion to Council.</p> <p>That Council resolves to support the Changing Places campaign to make Mendip a more accessible district. With Council's endorsement, we require the Equalities Group to fully investigate the feasibility of providing Changing Places facilities within the district. This investigation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of demand • Consultation with the public and other key partners and stakeholders • The capital and revenue implications for both the Council and any other public, private or voluntary sector partners • An assessment of the most appropriate means of provision (noting that this may not be the same for each facility) <p>The Equalities Group were asked to report back to the next meeting of Council in May 2017 with their findings</p> <p>This motion was seconded by Councillors Helen Sprawson-White, Des Harris and Nigel Taylor.</p>	

Councillor Adam Boyden thanked all the speakers for their attendance and very articulate and personal contributions. He explained that accessible facilities had been considered in the past, but had been thought too difficult and costly. He had met with the Leader and the Cabinet, and expressed his gratitude for their frank discussions.

Councillor Philip Ham stated that, as Chair of the Equality Group, he acknowledged the need to act urgently and to look for different sites, solutions, stakeholders and funding partners.

Members all agreed that the central issue was dignity, and supported the Motion completely. Many Members added their thanks to the speakers, and stories of similar issues from their various Wards and personal perspectives.

Street Parish Council had discussed the installation of new toilet facilities including Changing Places facilities. The Ward Member stated that he would be happy to be involved in further discussions.

It was agreed that the Equalities Group should go out to meet with families and view existing facilities.

One Member urged caution, as a Solicitor, to ensure that any facilities provided were properly assessed and maintained.

The Leader of the Council summed up that the Council should use all the tools at its disposal to help, support and encourage others to work in partnership towards the provision of Changing Places facilities.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Councillor Philip Ham thanked all who had taken the time to attend the meeting and the speakers. He informed all that a special Equalities Group meeting had been arranged with regard to Changing Places.

RESOLVED

Full Council resolved to support the Changing Places campaign to make Mendip a more accessible district. Council endorsed that the Equalities Group fully investigate the feasibility of providing Changing Places facilities within the district. This investigation was to include:

- An assessment of demand
- Consultation with the public and other key partners and stakeholders
- The capital and revenue implications for both the Council and any other public, private or voluntary sector partners

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An assessment of the most appropriate means of provision (noting that this may not be the same for each facility) <p>The Equalities Group were asked to report back to the next meeting of Council in May 2017 with their findings</p> <p>This motion was seconded by Councillors Helen Sprawson-White, Des Harris and Nigel Taylor.</p> <p>Councillors Adam Boyden and Helen Sprawson-White left the meeting.</p>	
9	<p>Pay Policy Statement</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, and Corporate Services introduced a report which stated that the Localism Act 2011 (the Act) required all Councils to produce and publish a Pay Policy Statement. The contents had been determined by the Act and related guidance and statements were to be approved by Full Council.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Full Council agreed the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18.</p>	David Clark
10	<p>Medium Term Resource Strategy</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, and Corporate Services outlined a report, the purpose of which was to make recommendations on the level of the Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets, the Band D Council Tax and Special Expenses Rate for 2017/18.</p> <p>The report sought formal Member approval for a one-year Revenue Budget and Service Capital Investment Programme. Projected information was used to give an indicative financial picture of future financial years. New proposals commencing in 2018/19 and later years would be confirmed as part of future MTFP processes.</p> <p>The report contained background information to set out the context for the recommendations and included a number of appendices covering:</p> <p>Appendix A – 2017/18 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement Appendix B – Summary Capital Investment Programme; Appendix C – Detailed Capital Investment Bid Proposals; Appendix D – The Prudential Code Indicators; Appendix E(i) – Revenue Control Totals by Service; Appendix E(ii) – Revenue Control Totals by Subjective; Appendix F – Summary of Reserves and Balances Appendix G – Special Expenses Rate</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder went on to give a presentation which included how the Council would need to become even more focussed on securing its</p>	Paul Deal

own income in the future. Also, the Council will need to be mindful of inflation when planning for the future. He said we must find ways to become sustainable, living within what resources the Council could raise locally through Council Tax, Business Rates and commercially driven income. It was therefore vital that we had a robust strategy to maximise each income stream.

He said the Council was currently financially stable and the budget was balanced. The Council had recently formed a new Phoenix Sponsorship Board which had been formed to consider investment opportunities as part of the Council's transformation strategy to support the revenue stream.

Members thanked the Portfolio Holder for a clear presentation, and wished to thank the Section 151 Officer and Deputy Corporate Financial Advisor for their hard work.

In response to questions regarding the Somerset Rivers Authority, the Deputy Leader clarified that the precept funding was spent in the Mendip area.

In line with legislation, a recorded vote was taken as follows;

Members in favour of the resolution;

Councillors Bryan Beha, Eve Berry, Peter Bradshaw, John Brunsdon MBE, John Carter, Rachel Carter, John Coles, Nick Cottle, Simon Davies, Edward Drewe, John Greenhalgh, Philip Ham, Des Harris, Steve Henderson, Bente Height, Nigel Hewitt-Cooper, Damon Hooton, Lloyd Hughes, Tom Killen, Roy Mackenzie, Jeannette Marsh, Clive Mockford, Terry Napper, Graham Noel, John North, Linda Oliver, John Osman, John Parham, Mike Pullin, Tim Rice, Harvey Siggs, Dick Skidmore, Alan Townsend, David van Dyk and Nigel Woolcombe-Adams.

Councillors Claire Hudson and Ros Wyke abstained.

RESOLVED

1. Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

Full Council noted:

- (i) The outcome of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement as detailed within **Appendix A**

2. CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Full Council agreed:

- (ii) The overall Capital Investment Programme for 2017/18 of **£1.610m** and note the indicative programmes for 2018/19 to 2021/22 as

summarised in **Appendix B** with the detailed proposals included within **Appendix C**;

- (iii) Set an overall Capital Envelope at **£40m** for 2017/18 to provide sufficient flexibility to enable to Council to respond to investment opportunities if they arise in-year.
- (iv) That the Chief Executive and relevant Group Manager(s) be given delegation to decide on the specific individual capital projects to be delivered within generic approvals for their area of control, following any consultation as necessary;
- (v) The Prudential Code Indicators as shown in **Appendix D**, subject to any changes made;
- (vi) That the following statement on the Minimum Revenue Provision be endorsed for 2017/18:

“The Council will continue to make provision at least equal to an annual 4% reducing balance method on all capital expenditure covered by government supported borrowing approvals.

Provision for the capital expenditure within the proposed Annual Service Capital Programme will be based on the nominal life of the asset delivered.

Provision for the capital expenditure within any proposed Commercial Investment Capital Programme will be based upon one the following options:

- a. the nominal life of the asset delivered (the default position)
- b. any reduction in the valuation of the asset (assessed annually) being recovered over the remaining life of associated debt financing the investment.

If in subsequent years the value increases, the revised MRP would remain leading to excess provision set aside that can be used as a capital receipt enabling the council to invest further or reduce the overall capital financing costs”

3. REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSAL

Full Council agreed:

- (i) The overall Revenue Budget for 2017/18 of **£14,277,350.00** after taking into consideration all proposals and supporting documentation within the following appendices:

- **Appendix E(i)** – Revenue Control Totals by **Service**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix E(ii) – Revenue Control Totals by Subjective • Appendix F – Summary of Reserves and Balances • Appendix G – Special Expenses Rate <p>4. <u>COUNCIL TAX SETTING</u></p> <p>Full Council agreed:</p> <p>(i) In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulation 1992, as amended, the amount calculated by the Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2017/2018 shall be 39,322.79. This figure includes the adjustments made as a result of the Council tax support scheme.</p> <p>(ii) A Council Tax Requirement of £5,765,100 representing a Council Tax of £146.61 for a Band D property, an increase of 1.99% from 2016/17.</p> <p>(iii) The continuation of the additional Council Tax Precept equivalent to 1.25% of Mendip’s 2015/16 Council Tax Charge for the Shadow Somerset Rivers Authority only. This equates to a Band D value of £1.84 resulting in a Council Tax Requirement of £72,350 for 2017/18.</p> <p>5. <u>SPECIAL EXPENSES RATE</u></p> <p>Full Council agreed:</p> <p>(i) A Special Expenses Rate of £236,123.21 capping the rate to previous levels.</p>	
11	<p>Treasury Management Strategy</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, and Corporate Services presented a report which sought approval for the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy for the forthcoming financial year 2017/18.</p> <p>One Member stated that the United Arab Emirates and Qatar had poor human rights records and should not be supported.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Full Council agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The strategy as laid out in the report including only borrowing short term to cover shortfalls in cash flow; 2. The prudential guidelines as laid out in the report; 3. To approve MRP policy included in this report. 	Paul Deal
12	Appointment of External Auditors	Paul Deal

	<p>The Section 151 Officer introduced the report, the purpose of which was to recommend to Full Council the future process for external auditor appointments. He stated that in discussions with the 5 Councils partnership, it had been agreed that it was sensible to have the same auditor.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Full Council approved:</p> <p>That Mendip District Council opts in to the appointing person arrangements made by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) for the appointment of external auditors.</p>	
<p>13</p>	<p>Council Tax Setting</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, and Corporate Services introduced a report which presented a recommendation from the Council for the resolution required to set the Council Tax for the financial year 2017/18. The recommendation was based on a 1.99% increase on Council Tax for the 2017/18 year.</p> <p>This increase had not been applied to the Special Expenses Rate which had been capped at previous levels.</p> <p>In addition the Council would continue to raise a demand to fund the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) equivalent to 1.25% of the 2015/16 Council Tax Charge. This was detailed in the Medium Term Resource Strategy paper on this agenda.</p> <p>Information included in this report on the final Somerset Waste Partnership (Somerset County Council) and Devon and Somerset Fire Rescue Authority precepting figures were indicative. The final financial figures would not have a significant impact on the figures presented in this report.</p> <p>Councillor Ros Wyke abstained from the vote.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>Full Council approved the following:</p> <p>(a) the Council Tax resolutions referred to at paragraphs 3.1.1 to 3.1.3 inclusive; and</p> <p>(b) Delegate authority to the Leader and the Section 151 Officer to finalise the Medium Term Resource Strategy as necessary following the Final Local Government Financial Settlement.</p>	<p>Paul Deal</p>
<p>15</p>	<p>Questions from the Public</p>	

	No questions had been submitted from the public	
16	Questions from Members There were none.	
17	Urgent Business The Leader of the Council informed Members that an email would be forthcoming with regard to the Peer Challenge. The Chairman informed Members that Councillor Danny Unwin had been taken into hospital. Members agreed that a card should be circulated to send to Councillor Unwin.	

The meeting closed at approximately 8.25pm.