

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

20 FEBRUARY 2014 AT 6.30 PM

PRESENT: MRS L HODGKINS - MAYOR

Mr RG Allen, Mr PR Batty, Mr Bessant, Mr DC Bill MBE,  
Mr CW Boothby, Mr SL Bray, Mrs R Camamile, Mr MB Cartwright,  
Mr DS Cope, Mr WJ Crooks, Mr DM Gould, Mr PAS Hall, Mrs WA Hall,  
Mr MS Hulbert, Mr DW Inman, Mr C Ladkin, Mr KWP Lynch,  
Mr R Mayne, Mr JS Moore, Mr K Morrell, Mr MT Mullaney,  
Mr K Nichols, Mr LJP O'Shea, Mrs J Richards, Mrs H Smith,  
Mrs S Sprason, Mr BE Sutton, Miss DM Taylor, Mr R Ward and  
Ms BM Witherford

Officers in attendance: Steve Atkinson, Sanjiv Kohli, Rebecca Owen, Katherine Plummer and Verina Wenham

405 APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors Bannister, Chastney and Lay.

406 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

On the motion of Councillor Bill, seconded by Councillor Bray, it was

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meetings held on 3 December 2013 and 21 January 2014 be approved and signed by the Mayor.

407 ADDITIONAL URGENT BUSINESS BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

It was reported that an emergency motion had been accepted and would be considered under the relevant agenda item for 'Motions'.

408 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Boothby, Smith and Sprason declared personal interests in item 14 (Housing Revenue Account Budget) as tenants of the authority. Under the Code of Conduct they were able to remain in the meeting and take part in the debate and voting thereon.

409 MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Mayor in her communications referred to her recent engagements and events.

410 COMMUNITY CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE FORMER REGENT CINEMA

In response to the recent public interest in the future of the former 'Flutters Bingo'/Regent Cinema on Regent Street, Hinckley, the 'Save the Regent' campaign group had been invited to the meeting. Chris Kealey and Kate Jeffrey gave a short presentation on behalf of the group and then answered questions from members. The owner of the building had been invited also, but was unable to attend.

Members thanked the representatives for their informative and passionate presentation and generally expressed empathy for their feelings and support for their aspirations. Whilst noting that there was no provision under the Constitution for Council to make any decision on the matter, the Leader said officers would hold further discussion with the

owner of the building, with the developer and with Iceland, to clarify the facts regarding the current position.

There was a brief adjournment following this item at 7.54pm to allow members of the public to leave. The meeting reconvened at 8.00pm.

411 LEADER OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION STATEMENT

In his position statement, the Leader referred to the council having been re-awarded Fairtrade status and the Hinckley BID being re-elected. He also thanked staff in the Finance service for their work on the budget and all staff for finding savings which had made it possible to achieve a balanced budget.

412 MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

The minutes of the Scrutiny Commission meetings on 21 November 2013 and 16 January 2014 were noted.

413 THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (STANDING ORDERS) (ENGLAND) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2014

Members gave consideration to a report which informed them of the Standing Order Regulations which would come into force on 25 February and would require a recorded vote to be taken at 'budget' meetings on decisions which set the council tax or precept. Members were also informed of the expectation that recorded votes would be taken at any budget meetings held prior to 25 February and it was noted that this would apply to items 12 and 13 on the agenda for this meeting. On the motion of Councillor Witherford, seconded by Councillor Bray, it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) the Council's Constitution be amended on the day following 25 February 2014 to including the new legislative requirements for recorded votes to be taken on council tax or precept-setting decisions;
- (ii) the expectation that recorded votes be taken on items 12 and 13 at this meeting be noted.

414 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Items 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 on the agenda were discussed together due to being interlinked, but votes were taken separately under each item. During discussion on the finance-related reports, the following points were raised or comments made:

- The Finance team were thanked again for their hard work on the budget and putting reports together and managers were thanked for finding and implementing savings;
- The reason for postage savings at the hub being due to centralisation and the recharging of partners;
- In response to a question about the availability of help towards local plan costs, it was reported that the District Councils' Network was making representations on this;
- Support was expressed for the continuation of part of the New Homes Bonus being devolved to parishes and it was acknowledged that HBBC was the only authority in the county to do so;

- The markets income took into account both Hinckley & Atherstone markets and, whilst there had been a reduction in income, savings had been made by re-arranging the erection and dismantling of stalls;
- In response to concern raised about costs resulting from delays in the opening of the leisure centre, members were assured that this was covered in the contract and would not impact on the Council;
- The reduction in car parks income due to the closure of Brunel Road North & South and the Bus Station car parks had been included in the budget;
- The overall surplus in car parking due to Leicestershire County Council staff purchasing permits was noted;
- Local authorities were being encouraged to borrow money to regenerate the economy, which explained the increased borrowing activity of the council;
- HBBC was one of the first authorities in the area to pay a living wage;
- The review of the Schedule of Rates for housing repairs had been concluded and a work plan was being devised to implement revised charges”;
- There would be a saving on the estimated cost of demolition of the former council offices;
- In response to a request for the issue of recharging tenants for services provided through Supporting People funding to come to Council it was reported that the setting of fees and charges was an Executive decision;
- The Disabled Facilities Grant budget had been reduced due to having jointly procured a new provider which resulted in lower costs and also the number of major works requested had reduced. It was noted that there was no longer a large waiting list for works;
- There was no statutory requirement to hold a set level of reserves but this authority maintained minimum levels of 10% of the net budget requirement in balances;
- It was suggested that flexibility be built into the Parish & Community Initiative Fund as smaller parishes may not need to apply for funding for several years, yet need a larger amount every few years.

The Executive member presenting the item suggested again that in future detailed questions on items within the report be passed to him before the meeting to enable him to provide the answers at the meeting.

Councillor Ladkin left the meeting during the item before the votes were taken.

#### 415 EXTENSION OF MEETING

Having reached 9.30pm and in accordance with Council Procedure Rules it was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Taylor and

RESOLVED – the meeting be allowed to continue to complete all business to be transacted.

#### 416 GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2014/15

Further to the discussion on the financial reports (minute 414 refers) it was moved by Councillor Lynch and seconded by Councillor Bray that the General Fund budget report and recommendations contained therein be approved. Councillor Bray and five other members stood to request a recorded vote on the item. The vote was taken as follows:

Councillors Bill, Bray, Cartwright, Cope, Crooks, Gould, Mrs Hall, Mr Hall, Hodgkins, Hulbert, Inman, Lynch, Mayne, Moore, Mullaney, Nichols, Taylor and Witherford voted FOR the motion (18);

Councillors Allen, Batty, Bessant, Boothby, Camamile, Morrell, O'Shea, Richards, Smith, Sprason, Sutton and Ward voted AGAINST the motion (12).

The motion was declared CARRIED and it was therefore

RESOLVED –

- (i) the General Fund service expenditure, Special Expenses Area expenditure, total General Fund expenditure and movement of General Fund Reserves and balances be approved;
- (ii) the intention to present a revised Medium Terms Financial Strategy to Council on 8 April 2014 be noted.

417 COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2014/15

Further to the discussion on the financial reports (minute 414 refers) it was moved by Councillor Lynch and seconded by Councillor Bray that the Council Tax calculation and setting report be approved. Councillor Bray and five other members requested that voting on the item be recorded. The vote was taken as follows:

Councillors Allen, Batty, Bessant, Bill, Boothby, Bray, Camamile, Cartwright, Cope, Crooks, Gould, Mrs Hall, Mr Hall, Hodgkins, Hulbert, Inman, Lynch, Mayne, Moore, Morrell, Mullaney, Nichols, O'Shea, Richards, Smith, Sprason, Sutton, Taylor, Ward and Witherford voted FOR the motion (30).

It was declared CARRIED and unanimously

RESOLVED – in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act (2012) for 2014/15

- (i) the budget requirement excluding special expenses and parish councils of £9,731,464 be approved;
- (ii) the budget requirement including special expenses of £10,294,105 be approved;
- (iii) the total net budget requirement including special expenses and parish councils of £11,748,232 be approved;
- (iv) a contribution from Revenue Support Grant (including the element indicated for Local Council Tax Support) and Non Domestic Rates (indicated by the NNDR Baseline) of £4,745,444 be approved;
- (v) a forecast transfer of £38,416 surplus from the Collection Fund to the General Fund be approved;
- (vi) Band D Council Tax for Borough wide services, excluding Special Expenses and Parish Council precepts of £95.96 be approved;
- (vii) Band D Council Tax for Borough wide services and an average of special expenses services of £112.09 be approved;
- (viii) An average Band D Council Tax relating to Borough wide services and an average of special expenses and parish council services of £154.04 be approved;

- (ix) the total Council Tax, including amounts for the County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner and Fire & Rescue Service for each area and valuation band as contained in appendix A to the report be approved.

418 HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2014/15

Further to the discussion on the financial reports (minute 414 refers) it was moved by Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray and

RESOLVED –

- (i) the revised Housing Revenue and Housing Repairs Account budgets be approved;
- (ii) the proposed virements for 2013/14 be approved;
- (iii) the Housing Revenue and Housing Repairs account budgets for 2014/15 be approved;
- (iv) the proposed movement in reserves be approved.

419 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15

Following the discussion on the financial reports (minute 414 refers) and on the motion of Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray, it was

RESOLVED –

- (i) the General Fund capital programme for 2013/14 to 2016/17 be approved;
- (ii) the Housing Revenue Account capital programme for 2013/14 to 2016/17 be approved;
- (iii) the proposed virements for 2013/14 on the Housing Revenue Account capital programme be approved.

420 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY & PRUDENTIAL CODE 2014/15

Further to the discussion on the financial reports (minute 414 refers) it was moved by Councillor Lynch, seconded by Councillor Bray and unanimously

RESOLVED –

- (i) the Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2013/14 to 2016/17, including the Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator, be approved;
- (ii) the minimum reserve provision statement setting out the Council's policy be approved;
- (iii) the Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14 to 2016/17 and the Treasury Prudential Indicators be approved;
- (iv) the Investment Strategy contained in the Treasury Management Strategy be approved.

421 LOCAL GOVERNMENT DECLARATION ON TOBACCO CONTROL

Council was informed of the Declaration on Tobacco Control and the Smokefree Action Coalition. It was moved by Councillor Gould, seconded by Councillor Bray and

RESOLVED – the signing of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control and joining of the Smokefree Action Coalition be approved.

422 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2014/15

In receiving the dates of statutory meetings proposed for 2014/15, members asked that the Council meeting scheduled for August be deleted. It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Bill and unanimously

RESOLVED – the calendar of meetings for 2014/15 be approved with removal of the August Council meeting.

423 MOTIONS

- (a) The following motion was received in accordance with Council Procedure Rules 13.1 and 13.2 and moved by Councillor Mullaney and seconded by Councillor Gould:

“This Council asks that the Chief Executive Officer writes to Andy Cooper, Managing Director Cross Country Trains (A Deutsche Bahn subsidiary) and the Secretary of State for Transport calling for the restoration of a twice-hourly rail service between Hinckley and Birmingham and Leicester .

Council believes that Hinckley needs a twice hourly rail service because;

- This was the previous level of service before the West Coast upgrade, and we had more and later trains under BR
- That Hinckley has suffered particularly badly given the significant levels of growth across the network, and whilst other stations have seen increases, we've had a marked decrease
- That Hinckley forms part of the largest urban area in the East Midlands to have anything less than this level of service ( Mansfield had its service upgraded in the 1990s through the "Robin Hood Line")
- As a growing area, with thousands more jobs coming locally there is a strong case for an increased level of rail service.”

Upon being put to the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED – the motion be supported and action requested be taken.

- (b) The following motion, received from Councillor O'Shea and seconded by Councillor Batty, had been accepted as an urgent motion due to the impending closure of the banks:

"Santander Bank is closing all its agencies across the UK. Many elderly and vulnerable people use these agencies in rural areas, where there is no other form of banking service. Across Leicestershire they are closing all 11 including the branch in Groby. It should be noted all of these agencies are serving at least 1000 customers. This Council asks that Santander Bank puts its vulnerable customers first before profits and reconsiders its policy of closing these agencies".

Upon being put to the vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED – the motion be supported and the requested action be taken.

(The Meeting closed at 9.37 pm)

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MAYOR