

KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the council held in the Council Chamber, Browfort,
Bath Road, Devizes on Tuesday the 24th October 2006 at 2:15 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor J.J. Kunkler - Chairman

Councillor K R F Beard	Councillor C P G Hoddinott
Councillor P A Brown	Councillor C P Humphries
Councillor Mrs K Callow	Councillor S.J. Miles
Councillor D D Campbell	Councillor A Molland
Councillor Mrs T Carr	Councillor J.G. Ody
Councillor N D Carter	Councillor R T Parsons
Councillor W B Cavill	Councillor J.D. Pearcy-Caldwell
Councillor P.L. Colling	Councillor Mrs N G Rawlins
Councillor Mrs J K Combe	Councillor Dr. J.P.M. Reid
Councillor A P J Duck	Councillor P W Richardson
Councillor P Evans	Councillor A H Still
Councillor Mrs S M Findlay	Councillor C.R.W. Stone
Councillor Mrs J M Giles	Councillor Mrs M S N Taylor
Councillor L H Grundy	Councillor B J Twigger
Councillor Mrs E M Hannaford-Dobson	Councillor P N Veasey
Councillor Mrs A Hayhoe	Councillor Mrs P M Winchcombe
	Councillor A S Wood

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillor G Brewer
Councillor N Fogg
Councillor A Skittrall
Councillor D J Willmott

PART 1

Items considered whilst the public were entitled to be present

57. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the council held on the 25th July 2006,
were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

58. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were none.

59. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chairman made the following announcement:-

Chairman's Christmas party

The Chairman reminded members that he would be hosting a Christmas party at Browfort on the evening of Friday the 15th December 2006.

The purpose of this event was to raise funds for his chosen charity the Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Tickets would be available from Michelle Ward-Davies or Lucy Handstock in the Chief Executive's department from the 30th October 2006.

The Leader of the Council made the following announcements:-

State Of Kennet Debate

The Leader of the Council welcomed Mr Stuart Davies, Managing Director of Sarsen Housing Association who was present for the State of Kennet debate and who would answer questions from members if necessary.

Diana Ralls

The Council was reminded that Diana Ralls would be leaving the Council at the end of December. The Leader indicated that he would be inviting her to the Council lunch and meeting on the 19th December 2006 in order to present her with a gift from the council in recognition of her tremendous work for Kennet generally and the support and help she had given to councillors. He would be making a collection after the meeting for this purpose and would be grateful for members' contributions then, or indeed any time.

The Chief Executive had no announcements to make.

60. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were none.

61. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 12th SEPTEMBER 2006

The minutes of the meeting of the Community Development Executive Committee held on the 12th September 2006, were submitted by way of report. Arising there from:-

Minute number 36 - supplementary capital bid - building of new public convenience and demolition of existing convenience, Devizes

On consideration of the recommendation contained in this minute it was

RESOLVED

THAT

- a) a supplementary capital bid of £7,989 be approved to allow commencement of building a new public convenience in Devizes during the current financial year.
- b) a virement of £150,000 be approved from capital code CC 34112 to capital code CC 426.

62. PLANNING POLICIES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 27TH JULY 2006 AND 5TH OF OCTOBER 2006

The minutes of the meetings of the Planning Policies Executive Committee held on the 27th July 2006 and the 5th October 2006, were submitted by way of report. There were no matters arising.

63. THE RESOURCES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - 29TH OF AUGUST 2006

The minutes of the meeting of the Resources Executive Committee held on the 29th of August 2006, were submitted by way of report. Arising there from:-

Minute number 40 - Financial Prospects 2007-2008

On consideration of the recommendation contained in this minute it was

RESOLVED

THAT

1. Expenditure growth be minimised as is consistent with the need to maintain essential core services.
2. All sources of income and expenditure be critically examined with a view to achieving savings such as to produce a balanced budget in 2007/2008 that conforms to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
3. Staff structures and staffing levels be kept under review, and opportunities taken in association with the Human Resources Committee to reduce staff costs as is consistent with the need to maintain priority services.

64. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD-10th OF OCTOBER 2006

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board held on the 10th October 2006, were submitted by way of report. Arising there from:-

Minute number 34 - Use of Resources Task Group

On consideration of the recommendation contained in this minute it was

RESOLVED

THAT

The Council adopt a Municipal Work Plan in February each year, to enable Overview and Scrutiny to plan their work programme earlier and in particular to enable them to identify items to scrutinise during the municipal year.

65. REGULATORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The minutes of the meetings of the Regulatory Committee held on the 20th July 2006, 31st July 2006, 10th August 2006, 31st August 2006 and the 21st September 2006 were submitted by way of report. There were no matters arising.

66. HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE-14TH SEPTEMBER 2006

The minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on the 14th September 2006 were submitted by way of report. There were no matters arising.

67. STATE OF KENNET DEBATE-THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In accordance with the provisions of the Council's Constitution the Council conducted its annual State of Kennet debate choosing as a subject the provision of affordable housing.

The Leader of the Council introduced the debate setting out to members how government policy influenced the way in which the Council was able to provide affordable housing. It was clear that in the future, if current policies continued, then it would not be possible for the Council to provide as much affordable housing as it had in the past.

The Leader of the Council drew the attention of members to the report set out on the agenda prepared by the Director of Community Services

and which contained extensive data with regard to completions in respect of affordable housing.

Before the debate commenced the Housing Services Manager gave a short presentation to members setting out the problems and opportunities that had been identified with regard to the provision of affordable housing and the falling percentage of provision as a percentage of the whole of the new build being provided in Kennet.

In a wide-ranging debate the members considered the various options open to the Council for the provision of affordable housing. It was clear that the concept of low-cost housing varied from area to area in the country and that the lowest cost housing available in the Kennet area was quite often beyond the means of many people.

Members debated various options that were available to them and conceded that in the long term many available solutions to the problem might be unpopular in the communities to which they had to be applied.

The Chief Executive summed up the debate and suggested that the following bullet points might be considered for further discussion in the future:-

1. The council was in favour of the subsidised open market rent as a priority;
2. a decision needed to be made as to what constituted low-cost open market property;
3. the question as to whether or not to retain the 50% of affordable housing on allocated sites needed to be re-examined with the possibility of the council taking built houses rather than land from a developer;
4. the trigger size for affordable housing on developments needed to be re-examined;
5. that in addition to guiding applicants for affordable housing to private rental landlords the government be lobbied to enable social landlords to have a shorter tenancies;
6. the provision of affordable housing be focused on the needs of families with the possibility of accepting bed spaces rather than housing units being investigated; and
7. the possibility of allocating more a new land for housing development on the edge of village communities in the investigated.

RESOLVED

THAT the officers prepare a report incorporating the above points for future consideration by the appropriate Council committee.

68. MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE CORPORATE STRATEGY

The Council considered joint report C/26/06 by the Chief Executive and Director of Resources on the mid-term review of the Corporate Strategy.

The Council was reminded that it had considered the review of the Corporate Strategy at various forums and committees in previous weeks and that the resulting document reflected the views of members as expressed to officers.

RESOLVED

THAT the Council adopts the revised Corporate Strategy.

69. CONSTITUTION UPDATE

The Council received a report by the Solicitor to the Council on a proposal to insert into the Constitution a formal written procedure for the election of Chairman of committees and subcommittees where the Chairman was not appointed by the Council.

RESOLVED

THAT the following procedure be adopted and inserted into the Constitution at Part IV (1) B (Meetings and Procedures of Committees)

1A. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

For committees where a chairman is not appointed by Council, the following procedure be followed for the election of Chairman:

- i) If any of the following members are present they will act as presiding chairman, in the following order of precedence: Chairman of the Council; Vice Chairman of the Council; Chairman of the parent committee; Vice-Chairman of the parent committee; incumbent chairman of the committee; incumbent vice-chairman of the committee (should one have been appointed).
- ii) In the absence of any of the above, the senior officer present will invite oral nominations for the position of Chairman of the committee.
- iii) The senior officer present shall announce the name or names of the member(s) nominated and in the event of more than one nomination being received, the chairman of the committee shall be selected by means of a ballot taken by a show of hands.
- iv) In the event of an equality of votes, the senior officer present will invite oral nominations for the position of presiding chairman. In the event of more than one nomination a presiding chairman shall be elected by a ballot taken by a show of hands.
- v) The presiding chairman will then repeat steps ii). and iii), and in the event of an equality of votes shall exercise a casting vote.

70. MEMBERSHIP OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

the Council was informed that the members appointed by them had now interviewed and appointed applicants for both the parish council vacancy on the standards committee and the independent member vacancy.

The two members appointed were:-

Parish Council Representative

Cllr P Deck
Field House
Hollybush Lane
Pewsey
(Pewsey Parish Council)

Independent Member

Mr P Lefever
Starsmead
Bath Road
Marlborough

RESOLVED

THAT the Council formally endorses these appointments in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of the Relevant Authorities (Standards Committee) Regulations 2001.

PART 2

items considered whilst the meeting was closed to the public

NONE

Chairman
19th December 2006