



COUNCIL

Corporate Services
Monkton Park
Chippenham SN15 1ER
Tel: (01249) 706612

Enquiries to: Marie Todd
Email: mtodd@northwilts.gov.uk

THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THE MEETING

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 22nd February 2007 at the Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham.

Present:

Chairman.....Councillor P.R. Davis

Councillors D.B. Allen, P.G. Allnatt, A.R. Baines, H.R. Barton, N.S. Bryant, A.M. Bucknell, C. Crisp, H.M. Dixon, K.A. Dixon, S.K. Doubell, D.J.E. Evans, P.J. Goldstone, P.G. Green, G.R. Greenaway, M.E.M. Groom, M.P. Hatton, R.J. Henning, A.S.R. Jackson, H.T. Jones, R.B. MacGregor, N.T. Maidment, S.B. Meadowcroft, S.D. Meadows, T.J.A. Northey, C. O’Gorman, G. Offord, N.M. Phillips, J.M. Read, C. Reid, P.S. Roberts, J.H. Rooke, M. Rousell, J.A. Scott, S.L. Scruton, T.R. Sturgis, O.J. Thomas, J.P.S.S. Thomson, R.L. Tonge, A.J. Trotman, S.R. Walls, C. Wannell, J. Webb, M.J. West and J.M. Wood.

Officers Present: L. Bell (Strategic Manager, Community and Environment), D.Burbidge (Chief Executive), J. Cogswell (Community Partnership Team Leader), A. Davies (Strategic Manager, Planning Services), N. Fenwick (Strategic Manager, Customer Services), P. Hawley (Chief Accountant), P. Jeremiah (Team Leader Legal Services), P. Langcaster (Press and Media Officer), C. Northam (Communications Officer), S. Pangbourne (Strategic Manager, Corporate Services), P. Timmins (Section 151 Officer), M. Todd (Senior Democratic Services Officer), J. Watling (Policy and Democratic Services Team Leader) and G. Wilson (Customer and Business Support Team Leader).

C86. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T.A.P. Briggs, C.R. Coleman, S.R. Coy, A.L. Davis, V.H. Greenman, I.J. Henderson, J.R. Ireland and D.M. Moore.

C87. Minutes

The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 30th January 2007 were considered.



Resolved that the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30th January 2007 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the first sentence of paragraph 5 of minute number C84 being amended to read as follows:

“Disabled people and people over 60 who have difficulty travelling on public transport can request tokens to the value of £18 instead of the free bus pass.”

C88. Declarations of Interest

<u>Name</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Nature</u>	<u>Action</u>
G. Offord	8 – Budget Proposals	Personal	Rudloe Community Centre and Affordable Social Housing Grant.	Remained in Chamber
H.T. Jones	8 – Budget Proposals	Personal	Trustee of Rudloe Community Centre	Remained in Chamber
M. Rousell	8 – Budget Proposals	Personal	Trustee of Rudloe Community Centre	Remained in Chamber

C89. Chairman’s Announcements

(a) Welcome

The Chairman welcomed Marie Todd to North Wiltshire District Council. Marie had recently joined the Council as Senior Policy and Democratic Services Officer, having worked previously for Wiltshire County Council.

(b) Hathaway Park Surgery

The Chairman reported that he had attended the opening of the Hathaway Park Surgery.

(c) Royal United Hospital, Bath

The Chairman reported that he had also spent a morning visiting the Royal United Hospital in Bath, which had been very interesting and informative.

C90. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions

The following public questions were received:

(a) **Mr S Wheeler, Corsham**

Mr Wheeler made a statement regarding the Executive proposal to withdraw all revenue funding from the Rudloe Community Centre and to drop the Capital Bid. Mr Wheeler concluded by asking the Council to revisit the recommendations of the Feasibility Study and to work with Westlea and the Rudloe Community Association to find a more positive way forward.

(b) **Mr P Lambert, Cricklade**

- (i) The year before the set up of the trust the budget for the operation of leisure centres in North Wiltshire was £1.54m excluding capital for repairs and maintenance. On establishment of the trust the first year's grant was reduced to £1.2m and in subsequent years reduced further to approximately £900k. This last year although difficult to isolate it would appear that NWDC spent an additional £780k to £1.078m on top of this £900k to keep NWLL afloat. NWDC own consultant's report says these payments were not based on strategic needs of the District but short term expediency. Don't the Council think that the budget should be set back to its level before the trust was set up so that all six centres can continue to operate. This will allow proper scrutiny of the premise and figures on which recent decisions have been made and so the correct strategic direction can be set rather than the panic of the last few months which may leave Cricklade without a leisure centre for all the wrong reasons.

Response

This first question is about setting the budget back to its level before the trust was set up. There are several issues here:

- The amount required is beyond the resources of the Council;
 - There was no guarantee that it would be enough;
 - Strategic Leisure did an independent assessment of leisure provision in the District and recommended that there should be fewer Leisure Centres, because of the reduced demand and increased competition. This recommendation is independent of the funding.
- (ii) What financial assistance have NWDC given to NWLL and what governance was instigated as a result? Presumably you are planning a public report on the lessons that have been learned?

Response

The financial assistance to NWLL in 2006-07 is just under £1.5 million, with a request for a further amount in excess of £500,000 by the end of March, which the Council did not agree to provide. The Governance issues were covered by a series of issues:

- The Council clearly setting boundaries to its support;
- The Council seeking a different long term arrangement to isolate itself from financial unknowns;
- The Council overseeing the process through a Leisure Working Party that reported to the Executive;

- The Council requesting an opinion, through NWLL, by NWLL's auditors of NWLL's financial position and its viability.
- Council decisions are always open to scrutiny by the audit commission. Any audit of the NWLL situation will clearly look at what lessons could be learnt.

(c) **Ms L Mulcock, Cricklade**

Your recent press release talked about the possible breach of levels of required funding if NWDC had granted NWLL anymore funds. Given the repeated additional funding required in this area over a period of some years, surely the Council had already reserved for this likely outcome?

Response

The Council expects its partners, like itself, to keep to their budget plans. The Council did not plan for additional funding for NWLL, and was only able to respond to a request because of the healthy level of reserves at that time. The cost of leisure in 2006-07 has reduced these reserves to a level below which it should not go.

The Council has made allowances within its proposed budget for 2007-8 for leisure, which is balanced against the other services it has to provide for the community. The budget as proposed means that only four centres are affordable.

Supplementary Question

Ms Mulcock then asked a supplementary question. As a non-driver how would the District Council reimburse her as she was paying Council Tax for a service she could not use?

The Leader of the Council responded by saying that the decision taken on the Leisure Centres had been a corporate decision in response to a corporate problem.

(d) **Ms V Mayers, Cricklade**

With a lease ensuring that Cricklade Leisure Centre must remain standing until at least 2016, basic calculations suggest that mothballing the facility would cost the Council in excess of £1 million - is closing the centre therefore the best way of spending council taxpayers money, including the council tax payers of Cricklade?

Response

The Council does not agree that the Cricklade Leisure Centre must remain standing until at least 2016, and does not accept that that mothballing the facility would cost the Council in excess of £1 million.

(e) **Mr G Walker, Cricklade**

If NWDC brought DC Leisure in under emergency measures, pending complying with procurement legislation, should the Council not consider using

reserve funding to ensure that both Cricklade and Calne are kept open until such time as the full procurement legislation is adhered to?

Response

The Council does not accept that procurement legislation has anything to do with its strategic choice, as it was an emergency situation the Council was in and will be tendering the contract at its earliest opportunity.

The Council has used its reserves this year to continue to keep the centres open. However, the Council is not able to continue to keep funding the centres from reserves, as these are now at their minimum level allowed.

Supplementary Question

Mr Walker then asked a supplementary question stating that he was appalled at the way he had been treated and asking why had the Council not complied with European legislation?

The Leader of the Council responded stating that the Legal Team Leader would send a full written answer to Mr Walker.

(f) **Mr J Simmons, Cricklade**

Isn't it true that in consistently reducing the funding provided via NWLL from the first year of their appointment, the degradation and loss of some of those sites was probable?

Response

No it is was not inevitable that consistently reducing the funding provided via NWLL from the first year of their appointment, led to the degradation and loss of some of those sites. Any reduction in funding was done in consultation with NWLL and was built into their annual business plan by them. There were other factors that contributed to closure, which have been a contributory factor, including increased competition from the private sector and decline in usage, and these are set out in the report undertaken by Strategic Leisure. It is fair to say that the Council's monitoring of the contract was not as robust as it could have been.

Supplementary Question

Mr Simmons then asked a supplementary question querying whether the Council wished to save the Leisure Centres and whether members felt that local people had been treated fairly?

The Leader of the Council responded by stating that she was very sorry that this situation had arisen. The Council had tried to consider all possible options. She had already responded to an e-mail from Mr Walker and felt that this matter would be better discussed face-to-face outside of this meeting.

(g) **Ms L Austen, Cricklade**

Could you explain the decision making process that saw Cricklade's alternative business plan distributed to members, debated and rejected in a very short space of time? How long were members given to read the plan?

Response

The review of the recovery plans was conducted by officers against an agreed matrix. Officers then presented these results to members. The main reason the recovery plans failed for each of the centres was that they required continued financial support from the Council and had no financial guarantor to protect the Council from any further exposure to costs.

Supplementary Question

Ms Austen then asked a supplementary question regarding the financial guarantor to which the Leader of the Council responded. She also explained that the Leisure Working Group and the Executive had considered this matter.

Ms Austen then asked who were the members of the Leisure Working Group that had discussed this matter. Officers undertook to include this information in the letter to be sent out in response to Mr Walker's question.

C91. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved to agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the item relating to the Review of the Senior Management and Functional Structure of the Council on the grounds that this is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4, of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

C92. Review of the Senior Management and Functional Structure of the Council

The Chairman explained that this matter was being considered as an urgent item in accordance with Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 due to the need for a decision to be made as soon as was practicably possible on the proposed Senior Management Restructure proposals so that staff could be made aware of the final structure changes.

Consideration was given to a report by the Chief Executive which set out the work of the Consultants and progress made following the meetings of the Senior Management Review Task Group on 30 January and 8 February 2007. Mr P.G. Allnatt stated that he wished to withdraw his Notice of Motion relating to this item.

Resolved that:

- (1) The Senior Management structure be agreed as set out in Appendix B to the report.
- (2) The new Deputy Chief Executive Officer posts be advertised internally in the first instance in accordance with the Council's agreed policies and procedures, the selection procedure to include a demonstration of commitment to the

Council's corporate objectives and the organisational changes set out in the report.

- (3) The new Heads of Service posts be advertised internally (with the exception the Head of Finance and Resources post) in the first instance in accordance with the Council's agreed policies and procedures, the selection procedure to include a demonstration of commitment to the organisational changes set out in the report.
- (4) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to take all necessary action to implement the recommendations including responsibility for agreeing the reviewed job descriptions, all arrangements for release of applicable staff (that is giving notice of redundancy) under the old structure, and for progressing appointments to positions in the new structure such as assimilation and ring-fencing arrangements, in consultation with the Trade Union.
- (5) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to offer and agree opportunities for employees to take voluntary redundancy and early retirement, subject to the needs of the service and in consultation with the Trade Union.
- (6) The Senior Management Review Task Group remains in place in order to continue to act as a Steering Group both during the implementation of the first phase of the restructuring process.
- (7) An Officer Implementation Group be set up as set out in paragraph 3.8 of the report.
- (8) The Appointments Committee carries out the appointment of the 2nd tier posts and those reporting directly to the Chief Executive.
- (9) The Head of Finance and Resources post be advertised externally immediately after the Senior Management structure is approved by Council.
- (10) The targets and objectives from the original brief to the Consultants be used to measure the success of the changes through the Chief Executive's appraisal process.
- (11) The Personnel, Licensing and Administration Committee to undertake a key role in helping to drive forward the culture change within the organisation.

NB Senior Officers affected by the above proposals left the meeting for the duration of the consideration of this item.

C93. Question Time

(a) Councillor P.G. Allnatt – C78(C) – Page 667

Question to Councillor T. Sturgis – “why have I not received your written reply?”

Councillor Sturgis stated that he would re-send his reply to Councillor Allnatt.

(b) Councillor T.R. Sturgis – O103 – Page 705 – Resolution 3

“Is North Wiltshire District Council going to pay the invoice from Wiltshire County Council for services delivered this year?”

The Leader of the Council stated that the Council paid all invoices when they were due.

Councillor Sturgis then asked why the £42,000 was shown as a saving in the current financial year?

The Leader of the Council agreed to ask officers to look into this matter and to send a written response to Councillor Sturgis.

(c) Councillor R.L. Tonge – E140 – Page 678

“What is the plan to involve members in Treasury Management?”

The Leader of the Council stated that there was an Officer Treasury Management Working Party. Treasury Management would be considered by the Executive and may also be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Final Accounts Committee if necessary.

C94. Corporate Plan 2007-2010

Consideration was given to Report No. 7. The report set out the Corporate Plan for 2007-2010, which clarified priorities, goals and actions for the Council over the next three years. The Executive had considered this matter at its meeting on 1 February 2007 and made a recommendation to Council (minute number E154 refers). The Leader of the Council moved the recommendation, seconded by Mrs S.K. Doubell.

Mr P.G. Allnatt then moved an amendment (attached as Appendix A to these minutes) which was seconded by M.J. West.

Members discussed a number of issues including:

- The role of Area Committees
- The effect of Unitary proposals on Management Restructuring
- How achievable are the goals set out in the Plan?
- Anti-social behaviour
- Parking policies
- Leisure Centres

On being put to the vote the amendment was **lost**.

Resolved that the Corporate Plan for 2007/10 be approved as set out in the report.

C95. Budget Proposals 2007/08

(a) Council Wide Revenue Budget 2007/10

Consideration was given to Report No. 8(a). The report set out the proposed 2007/08 revenue budget and following two years' forecasts. It also presented the Section 151 Officer's opinion on the adequacy of balances and the robustness of the budget.

The Executive considered this matter at its meeting on 8 February 2007 (minute number E170 refers). Report 8(a) was circulated on 19 February 2007 and set out revised budget proposals for consideration.

The Leader of the Council gave her budget speech and then moved the following motion which was seconded by Councillor S.K. Doubell. The motion amended the Cabinet recommendations of 8 February 2007.

“(1) We agree a General Fund Budget for 2007/08 consisting of:

- (a) The net base budget of £18,217k (Table 2 line 3 of the report) and the income from Government, Council Tax and the Collection Fund (Table 2 line 19 of the report);
 - (b) The addition of Inflation (Annex 3 of the report), cost pressure (Annex 4 of the report), Business Critical Growth (Annex 5 of the report), Efficiencies (Annex 6 of the report), Savings (Annex 7 of the report) and Growth (Annex 8 of the report), as amended by:
 - (i) that £120k of support for community initiatives for Leisure Centres, outside the scope of DC Leisure, be funded from the 2007/08 security costs, provided that, if there is any subsequent closure, the cost of one year's security is funded by each independent body.
 - (c) That the Bid 43 £65k be the first call on 2007/08 LAGBI funds, that are in excess of the budgeted £245k.
 - (d) That any further LAGBI funds be used to fund the deficit in the 2008/09 budget and the 2009/10 budget.
- (2) The unallocated inflation be held as a contingent budget, to be allocated by the Executive through the 2007/08 budget monitors.
- (3) The minimum level of reserves be set at £3.5m for 2007/08.
- (4) The statement of the Robustness of Budget Estimates and the Adequacy of Reserves (Annex C and D to report 8(c)) be noted.
- (5) A report be presented to the Executive before 31st March 2007 on the use of reserves in excess of the minimum level.

- (6) Agree an increase in the Council Tax by 5% for 2007/08, for its own purposes.
- (7) Agree to the policy changes implied by the budget.”

Councillor R.L. Tonge responded to the budget speech and then moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor T.R. Sturgis

“To insert the following:

1. Reinstatement of Rudloe funding as follows:

- Rudloe one-off growth of £29k from a delay in the appointment, in 2007-08, of the Arts Officer (£29k);
- Rudloe base budget of £4k from the cessation of funding to the Victoria Museum (£4k);
- Rudloe capital one-off £75k, from a one off £75k reduction in Affordable Housing;

Additionally:

- That any additional capital identified or realised is firstly used to top up the Affordable Housing Fund by a minimum £75k.

To change item 1 d) to read:

That any further LAGBI funds *be invested to reduce the deficit and increase performance* in the 2008-09 budget and 2009-10 budget.”

Members then debated the above amendment and discussed the following issues:

- Some members expressed concern at the proposed reduction in housing expenditure.
- Concern was also expressed about the Leisure Centre issue and some members stated that they would welcome an investigation into this matter.
- Councillor A.M. Bucknell stated that she found Councillor Allnatt’s proposal to ask for a recorded vote on an amendment he wished to put forward insulting. Councillor Bucknell objected strongly to the insinuation that if members did not vote in favour of Councillor Allnatt’s amendment it would imply that they wished the Leisure Centres to close. The Council did not have enough information before it to make a decision on the matter at this meeting.
- Members were unhappy with the proposed withdrawal of funding from Rudloe Community Centre because this would lead to the local residents being deprived of an important service.

On being put to the vote the amendment was **carried**.

Councillor C. Reid then responded to the budget speech and moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor P.G. Allnatt:

“To insert the following as paragraph (b)(ii):

Council Minutes – 22nd February 2007

Not implementing the savings affecting the Local Area Agreement (Town Centre Management £23k and Employment Support £27k) funded by the implementation of the closure of the toilets from September 2007, saving £50k.”

Concern was expressed regarding the proposed closure of the public conveniences. Councillor J.A. Scott then suggested that instead of closing the toilets the agency staff budget should be cut by £27k. Councillors C. Reid and P.G. Allnatt accepted this revision and agreed to delete the words “Town Centre Management £23k” from the amendment. Following advice from officers, Councillor T.J.A. Northey then proposed that the £27k for Employment Support should be taken from the inflation budget. Councillors C. Reid and P.G. Allnatt accepted this change to the amendment.

On being put to the vote the revised amendment was **carried**.

Councillor P.G Allnatt responded to the budget speech and then moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor M.J. West:

1. Fund the additional capital requirements for Rudloe Community Centre by commencing work part way through the financial year and using part or all of allocation for Carbon Reduction Programme, and/or further reductions in the capital programme for housing.
2. Fund additional capital requirements (12 months only) for Cricklade and Calne leisure centres, as necessary up to the predicted levels by DC Leisure by cutting housing capital programme.
3. Fund the additional revenue requirements for extending the life of Cricklade and Calne leisure centres for **twelve months** by:-
 - a. Reducing councillors’ allowances (basic and special responsibility) by a minimum of 5% (maximum 10%).
 - b. Achieving other savings on the democratic representation budgets and various communication/media budgets by:-
 - i. Reducing number of full council meetings from 8 to 4.
 - ii. Having 4 balanced committees of 14 members:
 - A. Executive 10
 - B. Overview and Scrutiny (to include final Accounts) 14
 - C. Development Control
 - D. Personnel, Licensing, Appeals & Appointments 14

Plus Standards Committee Chair of Council plus one from each of A to D – to include member training.

Plus revitalised Area committees. (only 4 meetings in 2007/08 but expected to increase in following years particularly if Unitary Authority and Area Boards develop).

- iii. No “portfolio holders” per se: only chairs and vice chairs have special responsibility allowances. (Members may only be on one of the 4 main committees and no substitutions).

Council Minutes – 22nd February 2007

- iv. No external training for members, unless free, training to concentrate on intensive days for each committee in May (and all candidates/parties for May 3rd 2007 should be made aware of this now).
- c. A complete moratorium on all non-mandatory public consultation and printed literature (other than possible consultation on public car parking).
- d. An across the board up to 10% cut to all budget heads in Community & Environment not subject to service level agreements. Delete Victoria History grant for two financial years.
- e. Achieving a minimum ten-post reduction in posts across the council below tier three by January 2008 at the latest.
- f. Postponing appointment of the second tier deputy chief executives.
- g. Area Committees. Redirect all capital and revenue grants to leisure centre budget for minimum of one year and maximum of two years.

Following debate on this amendment Councillor P.G. Allnatt requested a recorded vote. Voting on the amendment was as follows:

<u>For</u> (5)	<u>Against</u> (22)	<u>Abstention</u> (15)
Councillor P.G. Allnatt	Councillor D.B. Allen	Councillor A.R. Baines
Councillor C. Crisp	Councillor H.R. Barton	Councillor N.S. Bryant
Councillor K.A. Dixon	Councillor P.R. Davis	Councillor A.M. Bucknall
Councillor J.P.S.S Thomson	Councillor H.M. Dixon	Councillor M.E.M. Groom
Councillor M.J West	Councillor S.K. Doubell	Councillor M.P. Hatton
	Councillor D.J.E. Evans	Councillor H.T. Jones
	Councillor P.J. Goldstone	Councillor R.B. MacGregor
	Councillor P.G. Green	Councillor N.T. Maidment
	Councillor G.R. Greenaway	Councillor S.D. Meadows
	Councillor R.J. Henning	Councillor M.J. Read
	Councillor A.S.R. Jackson	Councillor P.S. Roberts
	Councillor S.B. Meadowcroft	Councillor J.A Scott
	Councillor T.J.A. Northey	Councillor S.L. Scruton
	Councillor C. O’Gorman	Councillor T.R. Sturgis
	Councillor G. Offord	Councillor O.J. Thomas
	Councillor N.M. Phillips	
	Councillor C.Reid	
	Councillor J.H. Rooke	
	Councillor M. Rousell	
	Councillor S.R. Walls	
	Councillor J.Webb	
	Councillor J.M.Wood	

The amendment was therefore **lost**.

Members then debated the substantive motion and discussed the following issues:

- Car parking charges.
- Performance Indicators

Council Minutes – 22nd February 2007

- Clarification of Policy Changes
- The role of the independent bodies in relation to leisure and community centres.

Following debate on the substantive motion Councillor S.K. Doubell requested a recorded vote. Voting on the substantive motion was as follows:

<u>For</u> (16)	<u>Against</u> (6)	<u>Abstention</u> (22)
Councillor D.B. Allen	Councillor P.G. Allnatt	Councillor A.R. Baines
Councillor P.R. Davis	Councillor J.A. Northey	Councillor H.R. Barton
Councillor S.K. Doubell	Councillor N.M. Phillips	Councillor N.S. Bryant
Councillor D.J.E. Evans	Councillor C. Reid	Councillor A.M. Bucknall
Councillor M.P. Hatton	Councillor A.J. Trotman	Councillor C. Crisp
Councillor R.J. Henning	Councillor M.J. West	Councillor H.M. Dixon
Councillor R.B. MacGregor		Councillor K.A. Dixon
Councillor S.B. Meadowcroft		Councillor P.G. Green
Councillor C. O’Gorman		Councillor G.R. Greenaway
Councillor G. Offord		Councillor M.E.M. Groom
Councillor J.M. Read		Councillor A.S.R. Jackson
Councillor J.H. Rooke		Councillor H.T. Jones
Councillor O.J. Thomas		Councillor N.T. Maidment
Councillor S.R. Walls		Councillor S.D. Meadows
Councillor J. Webb		Councillor P.S. Roberts
Councillor J.M. Wood		Councillor M. Rousell
		Councillor J.A. Scott
		Councillor S.L. Scruton
		Councillor T.R. Sturgis
		Councillor J.P.S.S. Thomson
		Councillor R.L. Tonge
		Councillor C. Wannell

It was therefore,

Resolved that:

- 1) A General Fund Budget for 2007/08 be agreed consisting of:
 - a) The net base budget of £18,217k (Table 2 line 3 of the report) and the income from Government, Council Tax and the Collection Fund (Table 2 line 19 of the report);
 - b) The addition of Inflation (Annex 3 of the report), Cost Pressures (Annex 4 of the report), Business Critical Growth (Annex 5 of the report), Efficiencies (Annex 6 of the report), Savings (Annex 7 of the report) and Growth (Annex 8 of the report) as amended by:
 - (i) £120k of support for community initiatives for Leisure Centres, outside the scope of DC Leisure, be funded from the 2007/08 security costs, provided that, if there is any subsequent closure, the

cost of one year's security is funded by each independent body.

- (ii) Not implementing the savings affecting the Local Area Agreement (Employment Support £27k) funded by taking £27k from the inflation budget.
 - c) The Bid 43 £65k be the first call on 2007-08 LAGBI funds that are in excess of the budgeted £245k.
 - d) Any further LAGBI funds be invested to reduce the deficit and increase performance in the 2008-09 budget and 2009-10 budget.
 - e) The reinstatement of Rudloe Community Centre funding as follows:
 - Rudloe one-off growth of £29k from a delay in the appointment, in 2007-08, of the Arts Officer (£29k);
 - Rudloe base budget of £4k from the cessation of funding to the Victoria Museum (£4k);
 - Rudloe capital one-off £75k, from a one off £75k reduction in Affordable Housing;
 - f) Any additional capital identified or realised be firstly used to top up the Affordable Housing Fund by a minimum of £75k.
 - 2) The unallocated inflation be held as a contingent budget, to be allocated by the Executive through the 2007-08 budget monitors;
 - 3) The minimum level of Reserves be set at £3.5m for 2007-08;
 - 4) The statement of the Robustness of Budget Estimates and the Adequacy of Reserves (Annex C and D to report 8(c)) be noted;
 - 5) A report be presented to the Executive, before 31 March 2007 on the use of reserves in excess of the minimum level.
 - 6) An increase in Council Tax of 5% for 2007/08 be agreed.
 - 7) The policy changes implied by the budget be agreed.
- (b) Capital Budget, Programme and Strategy 2007-10

Consideration was given to report no. 8(b). The report presented the final recommendations concerning the strategy and choices of the proposed 2007-08 capital budget and following two years' forecasts.

Council Minutes – 22nd February 2007

The Cabinet considered this matter at its meeting on 8 February 2007 (minute no. E169 refers).

Resolved:

- 1) That the Council notes:
 - (a) The £177k resources, now available from the 2006/07 programme;
 - (b) The capital strategy and spend to save criteria (set out in Annex 1 of the report);
 - (c) The changes in spend and resources, in response to the consultation, since December 2004 (as set out in Annex 2 of the report).
 - (d) The draft modified capital programme for 2007-10 (set out in Annex 3 of the report).
 - (e) The capital resources available to fund the capital programme (as set out in Annex 4 of the report).
 - (f) The affordable housing briefing paper (set out in Annex 5 of the report).
- 2) That the Capital Budget, Programme and Strategy 2007/08 be agreed as set out in the report subject to the amendment agreed under the revenue budget debate to reduce the affordable housing capital budget by £75k. (Minute No. C95, resolution 1(e) refers).

(c) Council Tax 2007/08

Consideration was given to report no. 8(c). The report asked members to consider setting the Council Tax for 2007/08.

Resolved that:

- 1) The final effect on the Council's budget requirement for 2007/08 (excluding Parish and Town Council Precepts) as set out in Annex A of the report be noted.
- 2) The Council Tax Resolutions for 2007/08 as set out at Annex B of the report be adopted.
- 3) The statement by the S151 Officer under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 on the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves as set out in Annex C and D of the report be noted.

- 4) The S151 Officer be authorised, in consultation with the relevant Strategic Manger, to make any technical presentational changes to the final published budget as deemed necessary to meet external reporting obligations.

C96. Protocol for Development Control Matters and Development Control Meeting

Consideration was given to a recommendation from the Development Control Committee, which met on 31 January 2007.

Resolved that the amendment to the Council Procedure Rule 13 be agreed as appended to the Development Control minutes included in the Minute Book.

C97. Calendar of Meetings 2007/08

Consideration was given to Report No. 10. The report sought approval of the draft Calendar of Meetings for the 2007/2008 municipal year. Members expressed concern at the proposals to hold a number of meetings during the school holidays and also at the close proximity of the May Development Control Committee meeting to the Annual Council Meeting. Officers agreed to reconsider the proposed Calendar of Meetings in the light of Members' concerns and to bring a report to the next meeting.

Resolved that consideration of this matter be deferred until the next meeting.

C98. Questions from Councillors – Council Procedure Rule 14

- (a) Councillor A.M. Bucknall – Dealing with Enquiries

A question was received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14 as follows:

Do the Leader and Deputy Leaders of the Council agree that:

1. There should be a protocol for dealing with enquiries relating to their portfolio from other elected members?
2. That it is reasonable for other elected members to receive responses to their enquiries within a reasonable amount of time?

and that

3. The term "reasonable" would be in the order of 5 working days?

Councillors G. Offord and S.K. Doubell responded to this question. Councillor Offord apologised for the delay in responding to a question from Councillor Bucknell. She also agreed that it would be helpful to have some guidance for dealing with enquiries from other elected members and asked Officers to draft a protocol for Members' consideration.

C99. Notices of Motion – Council Procedure Rule 15

Councillor P.G. Allnatt had submitted four Notices of Motion. The motion regarding the Senior Management Review was withdrawn by Mr Allnatt and the remaining three were considered under the Agenda items relating to the Budget and the Corporate Plan.

The meeting started at 7pm and finished at 10.30pm.

There were 23 members of the public present.