

Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Friday 2nd March 2007 at the Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham, commencing at 10.00 am.

Present:

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

Councillors P.G. Allnatt, A.R. Baines, S.K. Doubell, D.J.E. Evans, P.G. Green, M.E.M. Groom, M.P. Hatton, I.J. Henderson, R.J. Henning, J.R. Ireland, A.S.R. Jackson, H.T. Jones, R.B. MacGregor, S.D. Meadows, T.J.A. Northey, C. O’Gorman, N.M. Phillips, C. Reid, M. Rousell, T.R. Sturgis, R.L. Tonge, S.R. Walls and J. Webb.

Officers Present: D. Burbidge (Chief Executive), P. Jeremiah (Team Leader Legal Services), P. Timmins (Section 151 Officer) and M. Todd (Senior Policy and Democratic Services Officer).

C100. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.B. Allen, H.R. Barton, T.A.P. Briggs, N.S. Bryant, A.M. Bucknell, C.R. Coleman, S.R. Coy, C. Crisp. A.L. Davis, H.M. Dixon, K.A. Dixon, P.J. Goldstone, G.R. Greenaway, V.H. Greenman, N.T. Maidment, S.B. Meadowcroft, D.M. Moore, G. Offord, J.M. Read, P.S. Roberts, J.H. Rooke, J.A. Scott, S.L. Scruton, O.J. Thomas, J.P.S.S. Thomson, A.J. Trotman, C. Wannell, M.J. West and J.M. Wood.

C101. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

C102. Chairman’s Announcements

(a) Councillor A.S.R. Jackson

The Chairman informed Members that today was Councillor Jackson’s 80th birthday and wished him many happy returns on behalf of the Council.

(b) Councillor R.J. Henning

The Chairman informed Members that Councillor Henning had become a father. Members congratulated Councillor Henning on the birth of his son.

C103. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions

The following public question was received:

J.A. Phillips, Chippenham

Will the Council give a guarantee that after this meeting a clear and precise statement will be publicly circulated explaining in simple language what difference the 99p ever made in its original calculations and being discussed at this meeting will make to the taxpayers?



As the proposed tax increase cannot apparently be higher than 5% under Government imposed restrictions, a limit the Council has already agreed, will any change agreed today as a result of the 99p error mean a reduction in the Council Tax demand, or yet further loss of income and therefore more cuts in the services being provided?

Failure to provide any simple and direct explanation to the tax payers will simply elude to another cover-up and increase public profile that we have a Council administration no longer with the desire, dedication and worst of all competence to service its area.

Mr P. Timmins, Section 151 Officer, stated that the error would not affect the level of Council Tax. He agreed to send a written response to Mr Phillips.

C104. Council Tax 2007/08

Consideration was given to Report No. 5 (circulated with the Agenda) asking Members to agree the Council Tax for 2007/08. This matter was being considered as an urgent item in accordance with Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as the Council Tax bills were due to be dispatched shortly and any delay could incur a cost to the Council.

The Chairman explained that due to a technical problem, the Council Tax bands that had been agreed last week were up to 99p in error. The revised bands were circulated with the report.

The Leader of the Council then moved the recommendation set out in the report which was seconded by Councillor S.K. Doubell.

Councillor P.G. Allnatt then moved the following amendment which was seconded by Councillor J.R. Ireland:

“That the increase in Council Tax be reduced from 5% to 3.2%.”

Members discussed the following issues:

- The reasons for the error in the figures this year.
- The unpaid invoice from Wiltshire County Council for £42,000. Officers stated that they were seeking clarification on this matter.
- The level at which Council Tax should be set.

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

<u>For</u> (3)	<u>Against</u> (14)	<u>Abstention</u> (7)
Councillor P.G. Allnatt	Councillor P.R. Davis	Councillor A.R. Baines
Councillor J.R. Ireland	Councillor S.K. Doubell	Councillor P.G. Green
Councillor N.M. Phillips	Councillor D.J.E. Evans	Councillor M.E.M. Groom
	Councillor M.P. Hatton	Councillor H.T. Jones
	Councillor I.J. Henderson	Councillor S.D Meadows
	Councillor R.J. Henning	Councillor T.R. Sturgis
	Councillor A.S.R. Jackson	Councillor R.L. Tonge
	Councillor R.B. MacGregor	

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	Councillor T.J.A. Northey	
	Councillor C. O’Gorman	
	Councillor C. Reid	
	Councillor M. Rousell	
	Councillor S.R. Walls	
	Councillor J. Webb	

The amendment was therefore **lost**.

The Leader’s motion was then put to the vote and was **carried**. It was therefore:

Resolved that the Council Tax resolutions for 2007/08 be adopted as set out in Annex B of the report.

The meeting started at 10.00am and finished at 10.30am.

There were no members of the public present.