

TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the Principal Committee Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 22 February 2005 at 6.30 pm.

Present: The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Allgrove)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Lees)

Councillors Beaven, Mrs Biscoe, Bishop, Bowrah, Mrs Bradley, N P Cavill, Miss S E L Cavill, C A Cluff, Croad, Davies, Denington, Durdan, Floyd, Garner, Govier, Guerrier, Hall, Hayward, Henley, Mrs Hill, Hindley, House, Leighton, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Meikle, Mullins, Murphy, Paul, Phillips, Prior-Sankey, Ms Priscott, Slattery, Mrs Smith, Stone, Stuart-Thorn, Vail, Watson, Weston, Mrs Whitmarsh, Williams and Mrs Wilson.

The Mayor reported the recent death of Councillor David Gill. The Council stood in silence as a mark of respect for the late Councillor Gill.

The Mayor also reported that Chief Executive, Mrs Penny James, was currently unwell and the Council sent its best wishes to her for a speedy recovery.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14 December 2004, copies having been sent to each member, were signed by the Mayor.

2. Apologies

Councillors Bone, Mrs Cluff, Edwards, Mrs Jones, Lisgo, Morrell, Mrs Nixon, Miss Peppard, Trollope and Wedderkopp.

3. Public Question Time

- (i) Mr Harris asked a number of questions in relation to Mr S Robins and properties in his ownership.

Councillor Williams replied that as no advance notice of these questions had been given, he was unable to answer them all individually. He asked that a copy of the questions be left and he would reply to any relevant points that had not previously been dealt with.

- (ii) Miss Daniella Robins asked a series of questions in connection with properties in the ownership of her father, Mr S Robins.

The Mayor asked that full details of all the questions asked were left and any points, not already dealt with, would be answered. Councillor Williams stated that a letter had recently been sent to Mr Robins asking him to allow the Council to inspect his property and help resolve the outstanding issues.

- (iii) Mr S Robins asked a number of questions in connection with the properties in his ownership and made a number of comments about Council officers.

The Mayor again asked that these questions be put in writing so that any outstanding issues might be dealt with. Councillor Williams felt that it was an abuse of Public Question Time to use it as an opportunity to criticise the Council's officers.

4. Recommendations to Council from the Executive

(Councillors Stone and Guerrier arrived at the meeting at 7.00 pm.)

(a) General Fund Revenue Estimates 2005/2006

The Executive had considered its 2005/2006 budget proposals. The report had considered details on:

- (i) the General Fund Revenue Budget proposals for 2005/2006;
- (ii) the results of the consultation exercise;
- (iii) the proposed Council Tax increase of 4.5%;
- (iv) Prudential Indicators for 2005/2006;
- (v) draft figures on the predicted financial position of the Council for the following two years.

The Review Board had also considered the report in detail.

On the motion of Councillor Williams it was RESOLVED that the budget for General Fund Services 2005/2006 be agreed and that:

- (i) the transfer for any under-spend in 2004/2005 back to General Fund Reserves be agreed;
- (ii) the proposed 2005/2006 budget, being Authority expenditure of £11,540,690 and special expenses of £26,520 be agreed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1992;
- (iii) the predicted General Fund Reserve balance at 31 March 2006 of £1,304,309 be noted; and
- (iv) the Prudential Indicators for 2005/2006, as set out in the report to the Executive, be agreed.

(b) Capital Programme 2005/2006 to 2007/2008

The Executive had considered the proposed General Fund and Housing Revenue Account capital programmes for the period 2004/2005 to 2007/2008.

For the General Fund the estimated resources available for this period amounted to £15,211k. The proposed capital programme amounted to £14,774k leaving £437k of unallocated capital resources available for future schemes.

For the Housing Revenue Account the estimated resources available for 2005/2006 amounted to £5,485k. The proposed capital programme for 2005/2006 amounted to £4,760k leaving £725k of unallocated capital resources available for additional schemes.

In previous years two separate capital reports had been considered. One on General Fund capital schemes and one on Housing capital schemes. In addition, the Housing capital programme report included General Fund and Housing Revenue Account capital schemes, which resulted in the omission from the General Fund report any mention of General Fund Housing spend, a key priority of the Council. In order to simplify the process, a single report covering the whole capital programme had now been produced.

The Review Board had also considered the capital programme.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was RESOLVED that:

- (i) the suggested investment plan submitted as an Appendix to the reports to the Executive and the Review Board for the additional £350,000 HRA RCCO be agreed;
 - (ii) the General Fund capital programme and the Housing Revenue Account capital programme for the period 2004/2005 to 2007/2008 as set out in the report to the Executive be agreed
- (c) Council Tax Setting 2005/2006

The Council was required to make an annual determination which set its gross expenditure (including the Housing Revenue Account and balances brought forward) and gross income (also including the Housing Revenue Account and balances brought forward) with the difference as its budget requirement. (This determination is set out in the resolution.)

Details were submitted of the estimated expenses chargeable to the non-parished area of Taunton, the estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund and the overall debt outstanding on Community Charge. The Council's budget requirement including parish precepts and non-parished special expenses was £11,847,762. This amount was then reduced by the amount notified in respect of the Borough's Revenue Support Grant amounting to £3,739,152 and the Non-Domestic Rates Distribution from the pool amounting £3,032,288. The net amount, having taken the Collection Fund position into account of £5,097,634 was used to calculate the Council Tax at Band D reflecting the Parish Precepts by dividing it by the total of the Council Tax Base as approved by the Executive in December 2004.

The Council Tax for the Borough (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses for the non-parished area) was £121.88 an increase of £5.25 (4.5%) compared to the 2004/2005 Council Tax.

An Amendment was moved by Councillor Henley, seconded by Councillor Prior-Sankey, that alternative budget proposals for 2005/2006, copies of which had previously been circulated to all Members, be agreed.

The Amendment was moved and was lost.

(Councillor Prior-Sankey declared a personal interest as a Director of the Citizens Advice Bureau and as a Member of Somerset County Council, whilst discussing this item.)

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was RESOLVED that, subject to final determination, including the Council Tax for Somerset County Council and the Police Authority, which was still to be advised

(i) That it be noted that at its meeting on 8 December 2004 the Executive calculated the following amounts for the year 2005/2006 in accordance with the regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended):-

(a) 39,010.22 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year.

(b)

Ash Priors	65.53	Neroche	238.16
Ashbrittle	89.95	North Curry	693.17
Bathealton	80.69	Norton Fitzwarren	722.27
Bishops Hull	1,068.26	Nynehead	149.33
Bishops Lydeard/ Cothelstone	1,892.53	Oake	322.79
Bradford on Tone	277.41	Otterford	163.37
Burrowbridge	200.90	Pitminster	436.97
Cheddon Fitzpaine	629.82	Ruishton/ Thornfalcon	611.24
Chipstable	115.32	Sampford Arundel	128.32
Churchstanton	310.49	Staplegrove	711.03
Combe Florey	111.69	Stawley	113.37
Comeytrowe	2,058.96	Stoke St Gregory	372.42
Corfe	130.01	Stoke St Mary	197.37
Creech St Michael	922.30	Taunton	15,563.51
Durston	56.60	Trull	982.09
Fitzhead	120.37	Wellington	4,536.05
Halse	143.65	Wellington (Without)	287.37
Hatch Beauchamp	243.63	West Bagborough	152.37
Kingston St Mary	434.64	West Buckland	403.34

Langford Budville	213.60	West Hatch	137.62
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	193.83	West Monkton	1,070.90
Milverton	574.78	Wiveliscombe	1,082.21

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

- (ii) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2005/2006 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-
- (a) £61,457,473 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) of the Act.
(Gross Expenditure including amount required for working balance.)
- (b) £49,609,711 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (c) of the Act.
(Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet Gross Expenditure.)
- (c) £11,847,762 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year.
- (d) £6,750,128 being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant, additional grant of SSA reduction grant increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its Collection Fund to its General Fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (*Council Tax Surplus*) and increased by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred from its Collection Fund to its General Fund pursuant to the Collection fund (Community Charge) directions under Sec. 98(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 made on 7 February 1994 (*Community Charge Surplus*).

(e) £130.67 $\frac{(c) - (d)}{1(a)} = \frac{11,847,762 - 6,750,128}{39,010.22}$

being the amount calculated at (c) above less the amount at (d) above, all divided by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year.

(Average Council Tax at Band D for Borough Including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses.)

(f) £343,072 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
(Parish Precepts and Special Expenses.)

(g) £121.88 $(e) - \frac{(f)}{1(a)} = 130.67 - \frac{343,072}{39,010.22}$

being the amount at (e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (f) above by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relate.

(Council Tax at Band D for Borough Excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses.)

(h)

Ash Priors	124.93	Neroche	133.43
Ashbrittle	133.00	North Curry	140.63
Bathealton	129.94	Norton Fitzwarren	140.56
Bishops Hull	134.57	Nynehead	141.97
Bishops Lydeard/ Cothelstone	136.31	Oake	131.95
Bradford on Tone	134.50	Otterford	121.88
Burrowbridge	142.80	Pitminster	133.51
Cheddon Fitzpaine	128.23	Ruishton / Thornfalcon	139.42
Chipstable	130.55	Sampford Arundel	156.48
Churchstanton	144.05	Staplegrove	132.85
Combe Florey	136.21	Stawley	131.58
Comeytrove	133.54	Stoke St Gregory	137.99
Corfe	131.49	Stoke St Mary	133.03
Creech St Michael	135.98	Taunton	123.58
Durstun	122.59	Trull	132.06
Fitzhead	136.00	Wellington	138.38

Halse	134.06	Wellington (Without)	134.06
Hatch Beauchamp	132.14	West Bagborough	128.44
Kingston St Mary	135.68	West Buckland	140.47
Langford Budville	129.60	West Hatch	135.96
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	130.39	West Monkton	126.55
Milverton	133.19	Wiveliscombe	136.66

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (g) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate. *(Council Taxes at Band D for Borough, Parish and Special Expenses.)*

(i) See overleaf.

(d) Housing Restructure

It was reported that the Housing Review Panel had considered a proposed restructure of the Housing Service. This had also been discussed by the Tenants' Forum and the proposals had been supported both by the Forum and the Panel.

On the motion of Councillor Garner it was RESOLVED that:

- (i) The changes to the base budgeted accounts be agreed to reflect the new structure, namely:
 - (1) an increase to the General Fund base budget of £24,393;
 - (2) an increase to the Housing Revenue Account base budget of £146,982;
 - (3) an increase to the base budget of the Building Maintenance DLO of £8,580.
- (ii) The 2005/2006 Housing Revenue Account budget include a sum of £200,000 for redundancy costs arising from the restructure which was to be funded from the working balance.
- (iii) The funding of the General Fund share of redundancy costs of approximately £45,000 from the General Fund Reserve be agreed.

(i)	Valuation Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Ash Priors		83.28	97.17	111.05	124.93	152.69	180.46	208.21	249.86
Ashbrittle		88.66	103.45	118.22	133.00	162.55	192.11	221.66	266.00
Bathealton		86.62	101.07	115.50	129.94	158.81	187.69	216.56	259.88
Bishops Hull		89.71	104.67	119.62	134.57	164.47	194.38	224.28	269.14
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone		90.87	106.02	121.17	136.31	166.60	196.89	227.18	272.62
Bradford On Tone		89.66	104.62	119.56	134.50	164.38	194.28	224.16	269.00
Burrowbridge		95.20	111.07	126.94	142.80	174.53	206.27	238.00	285.60
Cheddon Fitzpaine		85.48	99.74	113.98	128.23	156.72	185.22	213.71	256.46
Chipstable		87.03	101.54	116.05	130.55	159.56	188.57	217.58	261.10
Churchstanton		96.03	112.04	128.05	144.05	176.06	208.07	240.08	288.10
Combe Florey		90.80	105.95	121.08	136.21	166.47	196.75	227.01	272.42
Comeytrove		89.02	103.87	118.70	133.54	163.21	192.89	222.56	267.08
Corfe		87.66	102.27	116.88	131.49	160.71	189.93	219.15	262.98
Creech St Michael		90.65	105.77	120.87	135.98	166.19	196.42	226.63	271.96
Durston		81.72	95.35	108.97	122.59	149.83	177.08	204.31	245.18
Fitzhead		90.66	105.78	120.89	136.00	166.22	196.45	226.66	272.00
Halse		89.37	104.27	119.17	134.06	163.85	193.64	223.43	268.12
Hatch Beauchamp		88.09	102.78	117.46	132.14	161.50	190.87	220.23	264.28
Kingston St Mary		90.45	105.53	120.61	135.68	165.83	195.98	226.13	271.36
Langford Budville		86.40	100.80	115.20	129.60	158.40	187.20	216.00	259.20
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland		86.92	101.42	115.90	130.39	159.36	188.34	217.31	260.78
Milverton		88.79	103.60	118.39	133.19	162.78	192.39	221.98	266.38
Neroche		88.95	103.78	118.61	133.43	163.08	192.73	222.38	266.86
North Curry		93.75	109.38	125.01	140.63	171.88	203.13	234.38	281.26
Norton Fitzwarren		93.70	109.33	124.94	140.56	171.79	203.03	234.26	281.12
Nynehead		94.64	110.43	126.20	141.97	173.51	205.07	236.61	283.94
Oake		87.96	102.63	117.29	131.95	161.27	190.60	219.91	263.90
Otterford		81.25	94.80	108.34	121.88	148.96	176.05	203.13	243.76
Pitminster		89.00	103.85	118.68	133.51	163.17	192.85	222.51	267.02
Ruishton/Thornfalcon		92.94	108.44	123.93	139.42	170.40	201.39	232.36	278.84
Sampford Arundel		104.32	121.71	139.10	156.48	191.25	226.03	260.80	312.96
Staplegrave		88.56	103.33	118.09	132.85	162.37	191.90	221.41	265.70
Stawley		87.72	102.34	116.96	131.58	160.82	190.06	219.30	263.16
Stoke St Gregory		91.99	107.33	122.66	137.99	168.65	199.32	229.98	275.98
Stoke St Mary		88.68	103.47	118.25	133.03	162.59	192.16	221.71	266.06
Taunton		82.38	96.12	109.85	123.58	151.04	178.51	205.96	247.16
Trull		88.04	102.72	117.39	132.06	161.40	190.75	220.10	264.12
Wellington		92.25	107.63	123.01	138.38	169.13	199.88	230.63	276.76
Wellington Without		89.37	104.27	119.17	134.06	163.85	193.64	223.43	268.12
West Bagborough		85.62	99.90	114.17	128.44	156.98	185.53	214.06	256.88
West Buckland		93.64	109.26	124.86	140.47	171.68	202.90	234.11	280.94
West Hatch		90.64	105.75	120.86	135.96	166.17	196.39	226.60	271.92
West Monkton		84.36	98.43	112.49	126.55	154.67	182.80	210.91	253.10
Wiveliscombe		91.10	106.30	121.48	136.66	167.02	197.40	227.76	273.32

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (h) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which is in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands (Council Tax for Individual Parishes and the Borough).

That it be noted that for the year 2005/06 the Somerset County Council and the Avon and Somerset Police Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Somerset County Council	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Avon & Somerset Police Authority	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

(e) Housing Revenue Account, Revenue Estimates and Rent Levels

The Executive had considered the proposed Housing Revenue Account for the 2005/2006 financial year. It also included details relating to the new rent level, service charges and other housing related charges such as garage rents. Information was also provided on the Deane Helpline Trading Account and Deane Building DLO Trading Account.

In addition to the Executive, both the Housing Review Panel and the Review Board had considered this report.

On the motion of Councillor Garner it was RESOLVED that the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2005/2006 be agreed.

5. Questions to and Reports of the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillors

The following reports were made to the Council on the main items of current and future business.

(i) Leader of the Council (Councillor Williams)

Councillor Williams' report covered the following topics:

- Budget setting
- Gypsy and traveller issues
- Taunton Sub-regional study
- Vision for Taunton
- Economic development

(ii) Planning Policy and Transportation (Councillor Bishop)

Councillor Bishop submitted his report which drew attention to the following:

- Bus users' surgery
- Linking the local development framework to the community strategy
- Planning delivery grant
- The local development framework: The local development scheme
- Taunton sub-area consultation
- The Local Transport Plan

(iii) Leisure, Arts and Culture (Councillor Mrs Bradley)

The report from Councillor Mrs Bradley dealt with:

- Victoria Park play area
- Green Flag application 2005
- Park summary events programme
- West Deane Way mobile stage and projection equipment
- Leisure and disability projects

- Breaking the sound barrier
- Rural renaissance
- Activities planned by Tone Leisure Ltd
- Forthcoming events
- Networking.

(iv) Economic Development, Asset Management and Tourism (Councillor N P Cavill)

The report from Councillor Cavill covered:

- Taunton town centre partnership
- Lyons review
- Business survey
- Incubation centre
- Wellington and area community planning process
- Supporting area partnerships
- Surestart partnership
- Taunton East Development Trust
- Tourism

(v) Environmental Services (Councillor Edwards - submitted by Councillor Williams in Councillor Edwards' absence)

The report from Councillor Edwards covered the following issues:

- Children's play equipment
- Special projects
- Noise abatement
- Food safety
- Licensing issues
- Waste Services
- Taunton Deane Cemeteries and Crematorium issues.

(vi) Housing Services (Councillor Garner)

Councillor Garner's report covered:

- Housing Stock Options
- Wessex Reinvestment Trust
- The Home Aid Partnership

(vii) Resources (Councillor Hall)

The report from Councillor Hall provided an update on the following areas of his portfolio:

- Member Services
- Electoral Registration
- Financial Services
- Revenues
- Office Services
- Information Systems
- Customer Services
- Personnel
- Benefits

(viii) Communications (Councillor Gwyneth Leighton)

Councillor Leighton submitted her report which covered the following areas:

- Communications
- Media and public relations

(ix) Community Leadership (Councillor Mrs Lewin-Harris)

Councillor Mrs Lewin-Harris submitted her report which covered:

- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- Local Strategic Partnership
- Local area agreements

(The following Councillors left the meeting at the times indicated. Councillors Weston, C Cluff, Miss Cavill and Miss Priscott 8.05 pm, Stuart-Thorn 8.30 pm, Guerrier 8.45 pm, Mrs Hill 9.00 pm, Floyd and Paul 9.30 pm.)

(The meeting ended at 9.35 pm.)