

**CABINET**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 2 DECEMBER 2015**

**AT 4.30 PM**

**IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WILLITON**

**Present:**

Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew..... Leader

Councillor M Chilcott  
Councillor C Morgan  
Councillor K Turner

Councillor M Dewdney  
Councillor S J Pugsley  
Councillor D J Westcott

**Members in Attendance:**

Councillor G S Dowding  
Councillor A P Hadley  
Councillor R P Lillis

Councillor S Y Goss  
Councillor B Heywood  
Councillor P H Murphy

**Officers in Attendance:**

Assistant Chief Executive (B Lang)  
Assistant Director Resources (P Fitzgerald)  
Revenues and Benefits Manager (H Tiso) – Item 8  
Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure (A Goodchild) – Item 7  
Community and Client Services Manager (S Weetch) – Item 9  
Licensing Manager (J Rendell) – Item 9  
Finance Manager (S Plenty) – Item 11  
Meeting Administrator (K Kowalewska)

**CAB66     Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor K Mills.

**CAB67     Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 November 2015**

(Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 4 November 2015 - circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 4 November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record.

**CAB68     Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

| <b>Name</b>                  | <b>Minute No.</b> | <b>Member of</b> | <b>Action Taken</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Councillor C Morgan          | All               | Stogursey        | Spoke and voted     |
| Councillor A Trollope-Bellew | All               | Crowcombe        | Spoke and voted     |
| Councillor K Turner          | All               | Brompton Ralph   | Spoke and voted     |
| Councillor D Westcott        | All               | Watchet          | Spoke and voted     |
| Councillor S Goss            | All               | Stogursey        | Spoke               |
| Councillor P Murphy          | All               | Watchet          | Spoke               |

In addition, Councillor A Trollope-Bellew made reference to a potential prejudicial interest in respect of Item 11 Fees and Charges 2016/17 as owner of a private water supply, and advised that if the matter of private water supply charges was to be specifically discussed he would leave the Chamber during this item.

**CAB69     Public Participation**

No member of the public had requested to speak on any item on the agenda.

**CAB70     Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Forward Plan for the month of January 2016 – circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of this item was to approve the Forward Plan.

**RESOLVED** that the Forward Plan for the month of January 2016 be approved.

**CAB71     Cabinet Action Plan**

(Copy of the Action Plan – circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED (1)** that CAB62 – Budget Savings 2015/16 and Earmarked Reserves Review be deleted as actioned.

**RESOLVED (2)** that CAB63 – HPC Planning Obligations Board Allocations of CIM Funding be deleted as actioned.

**RESOLVED (3)** that CAB65 – WSC Asset Property Portfolio Compliance Status Report be deleted as actioned.

**CAB72     Corporate Performance 2015/16 Quarter 2**

(Report No. WSC 168/15 – circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with key performance management data up to the end of quarter 2 2015/16, to assist in

monitoring the Council's performance. Publishing the information also supports the aim of greater public accountability.

The Leader presented the report and advised Members that the Scrutiny Committee had considered the report and their comments were contained within the report. He highlighted that planning performance had significantly improved since the last quarter and an explanation was given on the new suggested Performance Indicator for Disabled Facilities Grants. It was noted that there had been an increase in sickness absence and there was concern that this may rise further during the transformation process.

The Leader proposed the recommendations of the report, which were duly seconded by Councillor K Turner.

The matter of housing benefit processing times and the delays experienced by claimants was raised, and the Assistant Director of Resources confirmed that the migration exercise of transferring benefits data onto the Civica system used by Taunton Deane Borough Council would be completed by 14 December 2015.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the performance in quarter 2 be noted.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the change of measure in relation to Disabled Facility Grants described in paragraphs 5.9 and 5.12 of the report be supported.

**CAB73 Council Tax Rebate Scheme Review for 2016/17**

(Revised Report No. WSC 169/15 – tabled at the Meeting.)

The purpose of the report was to provide Cabinet with information on the existing Council Tax Rebate (CTR) scheme and the context for reviewing the scheme for Working Age applicants from 2016/17; to advise the Cabinet of the outcome of the public consultation on the Council Tax Rebate scheme in 2016/17; and to advise Cabinet of the preferred revisions to the Council Tax Rebate scheme in 2016/17 provided by the Corporate Policy Advisory Group on 28 October 2015 and the Scrutiny Committee on 12 November 2015.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the revised report and advised that the comments and recommendations of both the Corporate Policy Advisory Group and the Scrutiny Committee had been incorporated into the draft scheme. She reported that since the recent announcement of the Autumn Statement there had been an alteration to the report and, because of government legislation having an impact on the scheme; there was also a requirement to provide an additional recommendation as it was envisaged that next year's consultation would consult on a wider range of options in order to be more flexible. The Lead Member then provided Members with detailed background information, highlighted the differences in the tabled report

and emphasised that the most significant change to affect the CTR scheme was to be a reduction in the Tax Credit income.

She concluded by acknowledging the hard work undertaken and thanked the staff involved.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor M Dewdney.

**RESOLVED (1)** that, having regard to the steer provided by the Corporate Policy Advisory Group, the Scrutiny Committee, the consultation response and the Equality Impact Assessment, it be recommended to Council to amend the current Council Tax Rebate scheme to that shown in Appendix 1 (and illustrated in Model 15) to the report. This would implement a combination of Options 2, 3, 4 and 5 (see Model 15) and would affect working age applicants in 2016/17 by:

- disregarding maintenance received for children;
- removing entitlement to applicants with capital over £6,000;
- applying a Minimum Income for Self-Employed applicants; and
- paying Council Tax Rebate at a level that would be no more than for a Band C property.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the 2016/17 Council Tax Rebate Scheme be recommended for 2016/17 only.

**Administrator's Note:** On circulation of the agenda, Members were advised to read the policy (Appendix 1 of the report), and to consider the implications detailed in the Equalities Impact Assessment, which was made available to view online on the West Somerset Council's website.

**CAB74     Licensing Officer Post – West Somerset Council**

(Report No. WSC 153/15 - circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to outline the requirement for a full-time licensing officer post.

The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing presented the report and provided Members with the background information. He proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor C Morgan.

**RESOLVED** that the appointment of a permanent full-time Licensing Officer post be agreed.

**CAB75     Financial Monitoring Report 2015-16 (April – September 2015)**

(Report No. WSC 170/15, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with details of the Council's latest forecast financial outturn position for the 2015/16 financial

year for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information relating to predicted end of year reserve balances.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the item and outlined the key areas contained within the report, advising that the general reserves projected balance was above the recommended minimum balance and stressed the importance of maintaining reserves above the recommended minimum, and that reserves were a one-off source of funding.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor M Dewdney.

The Assistant Director of Resources reiterated that there was a financial resilience pressure to manage and maintain the general reserves balance to keep it above the recommended minimum balance of £500,000; and Members were advised of the need to fully understand the implications of the decisions being made during the budget process.

**RESOLVED** that the current financial standing of the Council together with the estimated position at the end of the financial year be noted.

**CAB76      Fees and Charges 2016/17**

(Report No. WSC 171/15, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to consider the proposed fees and charges for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, prior to submission to full Council on 16 December 2015.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the item and outlined the key areas contained within the report. She highlighted the proposals for fee changes in 2016/17, and pointed out that the changes were minimal as the Council aimed to deliver a good service at the best price.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendation which was duly seconded by Councillor M Dewdney.

**RESOLVED** that the proposed Fees and Charges for 2016/17, as set out in the report, be recommended to Council on the following basis:

The following fees are unchanged:

- Hackney Carriage Licences
- Private Hire Licences
- Acupuncture/Tattooing/Skin Piercing/Semi-Permanent Skin-Colouring Licences
- Scrap Metal Dealers Licensing
- Animal Welfare Licences
- Street Trading Licences

- Gambling Licences
- Caravan Site Licences
- Land Search Fees
- Housing Inspections for Immigration Purposes
- Freedom of Information Enquiries

The following changes are proposed:

**Amended charge structure for:**

- Building Control Charges

**Increased charges for:**

- Harbour Mooring and Slipway Fees
- Pleasure Boat Dues
- Various Waste Charges
- Pre-Planning Advice

**Decreased charges for:**

- Court Summons and Liability Orders for Council Tax and Business Rates

The meeting closed at 5.24 pm