

**CABINET**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2014**

**AT 4.30 PM**

**IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WILLITON**

**Present:**

Councillor T Taylor ..... Leader

Councillor K M Mills  
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew  
Councillor D J Westcott

Councillor S J Pugsley  
Councillor K H Turner

**Members in Attendance:**

Councillor M O A Dewdney  
Councillor B Heywood  
Councillor E May  
Councillor D D Ross  
Councillor D J Sanders

Councillor A P Hadley  
Councillor A F Knight  
Councillor P H Murphy  
Councillor K J Ross  
Councillor M A Smith

**Officers in Attendance:**

Chief Executive (P James)  
Director of Operations (S Adam)  
Interim Executive Director (A Dyer)  
Economic Regeneration Manager (C Matthews)  
Principal Benefits Officer (P Lamb)  
Meeting Administrator (K Kowalewska)

**CAB91     Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K V Kravis and C Morgan.

**CAB92     Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 January 2014**

(Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 8 January 2014 - circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that, subject to amending the description of interest to 'landlord' and adding Councillor D D Ross to the list of Minute No. CAB83 Declarations of Interest, the Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 8 January 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

During this item, the Leader confirmed that following the resolution at the last Cabinet meeting regarding the Tobacco Declaration, the matter would be further discussed at the Community Policy Advisory Group held on 25 February 2014, particularly in relation to formulating an action plan, prior to

it being presented to full Council. The Leader also advised that a meeting would be held with the Chair of the Patients Group and the Practise Manager of the local health centre to look at a whole range of health and wellbeing issues.

**CAB93     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 K H Turner	All	Brompton Ralph	Spoke and voted
Councillor D J Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Councillor P H Murphy	All	Watchet	Spoke
Councillor K J Ross	All	Dulverton	Spoke

In addition, the following interests were declared:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Description of interest</b>	<b>Personal or Prejudicial</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Cllr P H Murphy	CAB98	Parking Permit holder	Personal	Spoke

**CAB94     Public Participation**

No member of the public had requested to speak.

**CAB95     Forward Plan**

(Copy of latest Forward Plan published 28 January 2014 – circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of this item was to approve the latest Forward Plan published 28 January 2014.

**RESOLVED** that, subject to amending the decision relating to the consideration of nominations received under the Community Right to Bid to read ‘To approve community listing’, the latest Forward Plan published 28 January 2014 be approved.

**CAB96     Cabinet Action Plan**

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

**RESOLVED (1)** that CAB87 – Low Cost Home Ownership Scheme be deleted as actioned as it was considered at the Council meeting held on 22 January 2014.

**RESOLVED (2)** that CAB88 – Somerset Strategic Housing Framework and West Somerset Action Plan be deleted as actioned as it was considered at the Council meeting held on 22 January 2014.

**RESOLVED (3)** that CAB89 – Tobacco Declaration be carried forward.

**CAB97 Annual Budget and Council Tax Setting 2014-15**

(Report No. WSC 24/14, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to provide Members will all the information required for Cabinet to recommend the proposed revenue budget and capital programme for 2014/15 to full Council.

In the absence of the Lead Member for Resources and Central Support, the Leader of Council presented the item. During the debate he advised that government had that morning announced that the capped amount for Council Tax increases would be 2% and above, government had also announced that the freeze grant would be built in to the future revenue support grant calculations. He concluded by stating that following central government's recent positive feedback about WSC he was of the opinion that because of the narrow gap between the cap (2%) and the freeze grant (1%) the level of council tax in 2014/15 should be frozen at the same level as 2013/14. .

In light of the government's announcement the Lead Member proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor K H Turner.

The net amount of NNDR retained by WSC (as described in table 1 of the report) was considered to be confusing as it was not clear that the Council also received the baseline funding amount, and it was suggested that this should be made clearer.

It was reported that modifications to figures had been made since the report was presented to the Scrutiny Committee and concern was raised at the extraordinary variance relating to NNDR and MTFP between the two reports. The Interim Executive Director provided clarification on these details. He also pointed out that a decision had been taken to decouple the capital programme from the budget report because there was no relationship between the two, and in paragraph 4.4.2 of the report the proposed council tax increase amount should read 2%. Further explanations were provided on points raised relating to car parking income.

Members noted that following the transfer back to East Quantoxhead Estates of the responsibility for the toilet block at Kilve beach, Veolia had agreed to clean the Carousel toilets in Minehead from April to November within the existing contractual agreement and praise was given to the Interim Executive Director and Veolia for the work undertaken in reaching this agreement, and further thanks were extended to Veolia for their flexibility and cooperation.

**RESOLVED (1)** that it be recommended to Council that the Council Tax Freeze Grant be accepted and thus does not increase Council Tax unless Government sets the capping referendum rate at 2%.or more

**RESOLVED (2)** that the revenue budget for 2014/15 as presented in Appendix A to the report be recommended to Council.

**RESOLVED (3)** that the schedule of savings as shown in Appendix B, Table 10 to the report (as recommended by Scrutiny) balancing the remainder of the budget using general reserves be recommended to Council.

**RESOLVED (4)** that the revised Medium-Term Financial Plan in Appendix A, Table 2 to the report be recommended to Council.

**CAB98     Fees and Charges 2014/15**

(Report No. WSC 23/14, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to propose levels of fees and charges for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 (in some cases fee increases would be implemented earlier and stated in the relevant sections of the report).

In the absence of the Lead Member for Resources and Central Support, the Leader of Council presented the item and proposed the recommendation contained in the report which was seconded by Councillor S J Pugsley.

During the discussion of this item it was noted that, following previous comments raised by Members as to whether fees and charges should be inclusive or exclusive of VAT, these had been taken on board in the proposals.

Members felt that fees and charges should be reviewed before the end of the next financial year and in principle would like to see them increase in line with the rate of inflation. It was noted that the new officer team would be undertaking this review going forward.

**RESOLVED** that the levels of fees and charges be recommended to Council.

**CAB99     2015/16 Council Tax Rebate Scheme Consultation**

(Report No. WSC 5/14, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to inform Cabinet of the options modelled to incentivise work and encourage people to remain in employment, and seek their recommendations with regards to which should be used as a basis of consultation with the public.

The Lead Member for Community and Customer presented the item and emphasised the purpose of this item, advising that the scheme was very pertinent to the West Somerset community; and he provided an explanation as to how the scheme would be funded.

The Lead Member advised that the Scrutiny Committee had recently considered the matter and resolved to recommend to consult on two options – 1 and 5. However, due to the fact that consulting on two options may further complicate the consultation process, as it was a difficult subject to understand, the Lead Member for Resources and Central Support proposed that Option 5 be recommended to Council for consultation as an alternative to the existing scheme. The recommendations were duly seconded by Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew.

An explanation was provided on the difference between Options 5 and 6 and the cost of travelling to one's place of work was considered to be a significant factor for choosing Option 5.

In response to questions, the Principal Benefits Officer advised that it was a legal requirement to consult on any changes to the scheme and that council tax rebate recipients and all council tax payers would be consulted during the annual billing process.

**RESOLVED (1)** that it be recommended to Council that the Authority consult for the period 24 February 2014 to Friday 23 May 2014 on possible change to the 2015/16 Council Tax Rebate Scheme.

**RESOLVED (2)** that it be recommended to Council to consult on Option 5 as an alternative to the existing scheme.

**CAB100 Allocation of Seaside Strategy Funding**

(Report No. WSC 25/14, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to make proposals for the allocation and use of the residue of the seaside strategy funding earmarked reserve for schemes in Minehead.

The Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth presented the item and provided details on the two projects contained within the report. She then proposed the recommendation in the report which was seconded by Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew.

It was explained that Project Two – Small Business Grants would be available to help those businesses operating within the area covered by Minehead Town Council and would be allocated on a first come first served basis. Further work would be undertaken to try and obtain more funding into the grants pot.

The project of creating a heritage hub in Minehead was welcomed and it was clarified that the Minehead Visioning Group were supportive of this project as part of the Vision Project delivery plan. The Economic Regeneration Manager advised Members of the procurement process and that Minehead Development Trust would be the accountable body for the management of the project.

Members were encouraged by the YMCA's positive influence and impact on the local community.

**RESOLVED** that the allocation of up to a maximum of £11,600 of the seaside strategy fund for the projects described in paragraph 5 of the report be agreed.

The meeting closed at 6.10 pm