

Taunton Deane Borough Council

At a meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 26 February 2013 at 6.30 pm.

Present The Mayor (Councillor Hall)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Ms Lisgo)
Councillors Mrs Adkins, Mrs Allgrove, Mrs Baker, Beaven, Bishop, Bowrah, Brooks, Coles, Denington, D Durdan, Miss Durdan, Edwards, Farbahi, Mrs Floyd, Gaines, Hayward, Henley, Mrs Herbert, C Hill, Mrs Hill, Horsley, Hunt, Miss James, R Lees, Mrs Lees, Meikle, Mrs Messenger, Morrell, Nottrodt, Ms Palmer, Prior-Sankey, D Reed, Mrs Reed, Ross, Gill Slattery, T Slattery, Mrs Smith, P Smith, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stone, Swaine, Tooze, Mrs Warmington, Watson, Mrs Waymouth, Ms Webber, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp, Williams and Wren

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held on 24 January 2013, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

2. **Apologies**

Councillors Cavill, A Govier, Mrs Govier and Mullins.

3. **Declaration of Interests**

Councillors Brooks, Henley, Prior-Sankey, Mrs Waymouth and D Wedderkopp declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Henley also declared a personal interest as an employee of Job Centre Plus. Councillors Mrs Hill, Mrs Smith and Stone declared personal interests as employees of Somerset County Council. Councillor Tooze declared a personal interest as an employee of the UK Hydrographic Office. Councillor Wren declared personal interests as an employee of Natural England and as Clerk to Milverton Parish Council. Councillors Hayward and Ross declared personal interests as the Council's representatives on the Somerset Waste Board. Councillor Ross also declared a personal interest as the Alternate Director of Southwest One. Councillor Nottrodt declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillors D Durdan and Stone declared prejudicial interests as Tone Leisure Board representatives. Councillor Swaine declared a personal interest as a part-time swimming instructor. Councillor Gill Slattery declared personal interests as a member of the Board of Governors at Somerset College and a Patron of the Supporters of Taunton Women's Aid. Councillor Farbahi declared a personal interest as a local owner of land in Taunton Deane.

4. **Public Question Time**

(i) On behalf of the Wayfarers Pantomime Society, Taunton Amateur Operatic Society and the Gang Show who had all been seriously affected by the Brewhouse Theatre closure, Ms Hilary Marshall asked the following questions:-

1. Bearing in mind the closure of the Brewhouse Theatre and the effect it would have on the local community groups, would it be possible to open the theatre so that Taunton Amateur Operatic Society, The Gang Show and Rotary could use the building for their productions as a gesture of goodwill on behalf of the Council and the Administrators?
2. Bearing in mind that the local community groups are creditors of the Brewhouse, would it be possible for the first quarter of the grant usually made to the Brewhouse to be used to pay the community groups what they are owed?
3. Could Taunton Deane Borough Council put pressure on the administrator of the Brewhouse not to sell the assets and contents separately? If the sales were carried out separately, the building would be impossible to use for its proper purpose in any foreseeable future and very expensive to replace.

(ii) Mr Paul Partington asked:-

1. Did Taunton Deane Borough Council accept it had a duty to prepare a sustainable Community Strategy to promote or improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Borough and the people who live in it?
2. Where did the Brewhouse Theatre fit into this Strategy?
3. Did Taunton Deane Borough Council accept that due to underfunding the Brewhouse Theatre had been struggling for years to survive?
4. When did Taunton Deane Borough Council first become aware that the Brewhouse Theatre was likely to close?
5. Could Taunton Deane Borough Council state for every £1 invested in the Brewhouse what the economic benefit to the local economy was?
6. The closure of the Brewhouse Theatre had resulted in 20 full time and 35 part time jobs being lost. Did Taunton Deane Borough Council know what other jobs and suppliers/businesses had been affected as a consequence of the closure?

(iii) Mrs Dorothea Bradley firstly thanked Robert Miles and staff for all that they have achieved with a non viable 350 seat theatre. She went on to ask why Taunton Deane had not picked up the weaknesses in the business plan sooner?

Robert Miles had built up an audience catchment of over 700,000; a sufficient number to give Taunton "regional status". This crisis now gave us the chance to rethink how we could best cater not only for theatre but also art, music and the education appertaining thereto. It was also an opportunity for Taunton to promote itself in the C21st.

- Was Taunton Deane prepared to engage with this opportunity?
 - With the extensive musical activities on offer, should we concentrate on a concert/town hall?
 - With interesting drama taking place away from theatres, should Taunton have its own producing company?
 - Was the Brewhouse Theatre and Arts Centre with its two separate functions actually a 60's concept?
 - Were the feasibility studies done around seven years ago still valid or now partially obsolete?
 - Surely Taunton merited not an amateur-run super village hall but a regional venue to realise and express its potential status?
 - It was up to all of us, so please could we start by doing some serious brain storming on the future?
- (iv) Elizabeth Murray commented that many young people regularly used the Brewhouse Theatre. It would be very sad if a way could not be found to re-open the venue. What could Taunton Deane offer towards the re-opening of the theatre?
- (v) Steve Altria reported that 80 people had been rehearsing towards the Gang Show which was four weeks away from its scheduled performance. Was there any way in which the show could be staged at the Brewhouse?
- (vi) Gary Herbert said that although he had seen the closure of the theatre coming he asked the Council to work towards bringing the Brewhouse back into operation.
- (vii) Connie Morley said the closure of the Brewhouse was a tragedy. She felt that whilst any re-opening as a community based theatre would be welcomed, she was unsure whether the local amateur groups would want to use it instead of their usual venues. A commercial venture was needed at the Brewhouse to continue to attract commercial theatre groups and acts. She added that if possible the team that had run the theatre should, if possible, be retained as they were a real benefit to the County Town. The Administrators appointed must be prevented from selling off the fixtures and fittings otherwise it would prove very difficult to re-open.
- (viii) Steven Carter reported that his company was owed £16,500 by the theatre. How would they get their money back?
- (ix) Robert Miles, the former Director of the Theatre, stated that if Taunton Deane had funded the Brewhouse at the same level as South Somerset District Council funded the Octagon Theatre in Yeovil it would still be open. He added that there always seemed to be an air of suspicion about the theatre and a suggestion of bad management. He refuted that and said the total opposite applied. He felt a great mistake had been made letting the theatre fail. Personally he cared very much

for Taunton and all those people who had supported the theatre in the past.

- (x) Kelly Smith asked how we were now going to attract performers and artistes to Taunton Deane?
- (xi) Jackie Mullen said she had been involved with the Gang Show for over 20 years. She hoped some way would be found for the show to proceed which was important for all the young people involved.
- (xii) Katie, also from the Gang Show, said those involved enjoyed the experience of working alongside professionals.
- (xiii) Libby, a local actress who had performed regularly at the Brewhouse, said that the image of Taunton would be affected by not having a theatre. Without a regional theatre, there was nothing to keep people like her in the area.

In response, Councillor Williams made reference to the letter he had prepared which had been widely circulated, the text of which was as follows:-

“Taunton Deane Borough Council has been a strong supporter of The Brewhouse since the theatre’s launch more than 30 years ago.

The trustees of the theatre – an independent charity - decided to appoint administrators on 21 February 2013 due to the gravity of its financial situation.

The Borough Council was unable to offer further financial support to The Brewhouse, due to the amount required creating significant financial risk and uncertainty that any rescue would be successful. It has neither the money nor the specialist expertise to take on such a venture.

Over recent years the Council has awarded an annual grant of £152,000 to The Brewhouse. This is one of the single biggest grants awarded to any organisation in the Borough, which the Council expected to continue for the foreseeable future, emphasising the importance of the theatre to the cultural life of Taunton Deane. The grant remained at that level for a number of years, despite the continuing squeeze on public finances and a one-off additional sum of £50,000 was also awarded in 2009, to help the Brewhouse develop a sustainable business plan. The annual grant of £152,000 remains protected in the Council’s budget towards any successor venture and the Council is also allocating a one-off sum of £35,000, to help protect the property and facilitate the development of a sustainable way forward for the venue.

I believe this demonstrates the Council’s continuing commitment to high quality arts provision in Taunton and we will work with Arts Council England (ACE) and others in the cultural and creative sector, to try to find ways forward for the Brewhouse as a financially viable hub for arts and culture locally. This is likely to take time but it is vital to ensure that any future venture can be successful.”

In addition to this letter, Councillor Williams stated that he was saddened by the closure but added that Taunton Deane was committed to a performing arts venue in the town.

Now that Administrators had been appointed, the Council could not 'step in'. Even if it could, Taunton Deane had no expertise or the resources to run a theatre. The Council would work with the Administrator though to try and achieve a positive outcome and to ensure the fixtures and fittings remain intact.

With regard to some of the points raised by members of the public, Councillor Williams replied as follows:-

- The scale of the financial problems at the Brewhouse were only made known to the Council in the New Year; and
- Disappointed at the comments of the former Director of the theatre. Taunton Deane could not sustain the higher level of funding which was originally provided towards the running costs of the Brewhouse. However, despite the Council losing 30% of its income over the past couple of years as a result of Government cuts, the Council chose not to reduce the funding to the Brewhouse any further.

5. Proposed Suspension of Standing Orders

Councillor Morrell, seconded by Councillor Beaven, moved under Standing Order 29(1) that Standing Orders be suspended to allow him to present a Motion to Council relating to a suggestion that part of the Members' Allowances be contributed towards funding to bring about the re-opening of the Brewhouse Theatre.

The motion to suspend Standing Orders was put and was lost.

6. Recommendations to Council from the Executive

(a) General Fund Revenue Estimates 2013/2014

The Executive had considered its final 2013/2014 budget proposals which recognised the continuing financial challenge faced by the Council beyond the next financial year and the need for the strategic review of services that would be driven forward through the implementation of the new Corporate Business Plan.

The budget contained details on:-

- (i) the General Fund Revenue Budget proposals for 2013/2014, including the proposed Council Tax rate;
- (ii) draft figures on the predicted financial position of the Council for the

following four years.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the draft budget proposals at its meeting on 24 January 2013. One specific amendment in relation to the Unparished Area Fund had been requested, where it was suggested that the fund should not be split into specific ring-fenced 'pots' and that all expenditure should be subject to the bidding process through the Unparished Area Panel.

The Council Tax calculation and formal tax setting resolution was to be considered separately. The proposed budget for Taunton Deane contained a proposed Council Tax Freeze for 2013/2014 which meant that the Band D Council Tax would remain at £135.19. The Band D taxpayer would, therefore, receive all the services provided by the Council in 2013/2014 at a cost of £2.59 per week.

It was a requirement for the Council to prepare not only budgets for the following financial year but to also provide indicative figures into future years. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) provided an indication of the expected budget gap going forward into 2014/2015 and beyond and a summary of this position was reflected in the following table:-

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k
Net Expenditure	11,464	11,994	12,724	13,237	13,594
<i>Financed By:</i>					
Retained Business Rates	(2,264)	(2,337)	(2,396)	(2,457)	(2,519)
Revenue Support Grant	(3,556)	(2,731)	(2,047)	(1,610)	(1,260)
Tax Freeze Grant	(57)	(57)	0	0	0
Council Tax	(5,587)	(5,676)	(5,791)	(5,908)	(6,027)
Predicted Budget Gap	0	1,193	2,490	3,262	3,788

These estimates included the following main assumptions relating to funding:-

- Revenue Support Grant for 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 was as set out in the provisional Finance Settlement. Retained Business Rates for 2013/2014 would be based on the NNDR1 for the year. Estimated Business Rates funding in subsequent years was projected to increase in line with inflation. Net funding from the two elements combined was estimated to reduce by in the region of 10% year-on-year for the subsequent three years. In addition it was assumed that the £137,000 Freeze Grant relating to 2011/2012 would be removed in 2015/2016; and
- Council Tax would increase by 0% in 2013/2014, then by 2% per year thereafter.

It was proposed that the minimum acceptable reserves position should be increased to £1,500,000 (from £1,250,000), or £1,250,000 if funds were allocated to 'invest to save' initiatives. The Draft Budget for 2013/2014 would maintain reserves well above this minimum, but the MTFP showed that the Council was expected to face significant financial pressures in the medium term as shown in the following table:-

General Reserves Forecast

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k
Estimated Balance B/F	3,079	3,079	1,886	(604)	(3,866)
Predicted Budget Gap	0	(1,193)	(2,490)	(3,262)	(3,788)
Estimated Balance C/F	3,079	1,886	(604)	(3,866)	(7,654)

The estimated expenses chargeable to the non-parished area of Taunton in 2013/2014 amounted to £41,220, which represented a 0% increase in the special expenses per Band D equivalent of £2.92 per property per year in the Unparished Area.

The amount of funding had reduced from the previous year as a result of the Council Tax Support scheme and the related reduction in the tax base. At its recent meeting, Full Council approved an allocation of £6,500 from the Council Tax Support Grant Funding to the Unparished Area which increased the budget for the new financial year to £47,720.

Before the start of each financial year, the Council was required to determine the basis on which it would make provision from revenue for the repayment of borrowing undertaken for the purpose of financing capital expenditure. This annual provision, known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), was designed to ensure that authorities made prudent provision to cover the ongoing costs of their borrowing.

The proposed Policy for 2013/2014 was for the calculation of MRP to be the same as the current year.

The Council's Section 151 Officer had a duty to comment, as part of the budget setting process on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves. In her response, Shirlene Adam had stated that she believed the Council's reserves to be adequate and the budget estimates used in preparing the 2013/2014 budget to be as robust as possible.

Moved by Councillor Horsley, seconded by Councillor Coles, that the budget proposals be amended as follows:-

(i) Open Spaces – A proposal to reinstate the proposed Savings Plan reduction of £4,000 for hanging baskets and a further £25,000 to be allocated to identify a policy/strategy to introduce an organised grass cutting programme in 2014/2015 which achieved the balance between competing demands of cost reductions, the perception of "tidiness" and the desire to encourage wildflowers and associated wildlife;

(ii) Tree Planting – The allocation of an additional £10,000 to replace trees that have had to be removed because of disease; and

(iii) Art Development Grants – The restoration of the £7,515 which was withdrawn last year from Take Art, Action Track, SPAEDA, Somerset Art Works and Somerset Film.

The amendment was put and was lost.

Moved by Councillor Ross, seconded by Councillor Gaines, that the budget proposals be amended as follows:-

(i) Council Tax – A proposal to raise Council Tax by 3.5% to bring in additional income of £1766,340. This would mean the Tax Freeze Grant of £57,000 would be lost;

(ii) New Homes Bonus – It was proposed that £2,000,000 should be placed in a ‘Sustainability Fund’ to ensure that Taunton Deane was a liveable and likeable place, a home and a destination and a place of enterprise, learning and leisure. In addition, a further £375,000 to be allocated for both “re-presenting” and “representing” Taunton Deane. The former would be a form of ‘Spring Clean’ to achieve quality of place; the latter ‘to hold our heads high’ and celebrate our ambience, culture and history, the people and the place;

(iii) Savings Plans - To reinstate the following budget savings:-

- Hanging Baskets - £4,000;
- Christmas Lighting - £10,000;
- Nature Reserves - £2,000.

To fund this additional £16,000, it was proposed not to proceed with the plan to set up a new reserve for Extreme Weather;

(iv) Additional Spending – With the net additional income from the Council Tax increase, additional projects were proposed as set out in the following table:-

Financial Summary of New Spending

	£	£
Community Fruit and Vegetable Gardens	10,000	
Greening the Deane – Vehicle Livery	5,000	
Greening the Deane - Conference	4,340	
Supporting An Innovative Culture	5,000	
Celebrating the Deane	5,000	
Distinguishing the Deane	2,000	
Deane Helpline	20,000	
Protecting our Community	18,000	
Shared Services	50,000	
		<hr/>
		119,340

The amendment was put and was lost.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that the budget for General Fund services for 2013/2014 as outlined in the report to Full Council be agreed and that:-

- (a) The Section 151 Officer's Statement of Robustness, which applied to the whole budget including General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Budget proposals be noted and that the recommended increase to minimum acceptable level of reserves to £1,500,000, or £1,250,000 if funds were allocated to invest to save initiatives, be approved;
- (b) The Draft General Fund Revenue Budget 2013/2014, including a Basic Council Tax Requirement budget of £5,039,960 and Special Expenses of £41,220 be approved;
- (c) The transfer of any under/overspend in the 2012/2013 General Revenue Account Outturn to/from the General Fund Reserves be approved;
- (d) The Service Options set out in the report be approved and the Equalities Impact Assessments provided in the report and appendices be considered as part of the budget decision process;
- (e) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy with MRP calculated as follows be approved:-
 - for supported borrowing, 4% on outstanding debt; and
 - for unsupported borrowing, the debt associated with the asset divided by the estimated useful life of the asset; and
 - for capital grants and contributions to third parties, 4% (or 1/25th) per year on a straight line basis; and
- (f) The General Reserves position and Medium Term Financial Plan projections, and the continuing financial challenge to address the Budget Gap for future years be noted.

(b) Capital Programme Budget Estimates 2013/2014

Consideration had also been given to the proposed General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programmes for the period 2013/2014 to 2017/2018.

Full Council had approved a Capital Programme for 2012/2013 General Fund schemes last February. In December 2012 the Government provided a further allocation of £95,850 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding to the Council for the current financial year. It was recommended that this sum be allocated as a Supplementary Estimate, increasing the approved 2012/2013 Capital Budget for DFGs to £792,730.

The Draft General Fund Capital Programme totalled £3,393,000 within an indicative five year programme totalling £7,337,000. It was proposed that

£3,553,000 was budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following three years.

In future years the funding of General Fund capital priorities would rely upon a variety of sources including Capital Receipts, Grant Funding, Capital Contributions, Revenue Budgets or Reserves and through Borrowing. The Council had approved the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme for 2012/2013 totalling £5,500,000, in February 2012. There were no changes to the approved budget so far this year.

The HRA Capital Programme totalled £19,572,000 within a five year programme totalling £50,168,200 which reflected the priorities set out in the updated 30-Year HRA Business Plan. It was proposed that £14,805,000 was budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following two years.

The continuing capital maintenance and improvement would be fully funded from the Major Repairs Reserve and the Social Housing Development Programme Capital Budget would be funded through a combination of:-

- Revenue Contributions – from the Social Housing Development Fund;
- Capital Receipts – from Right to Buy and other HRA asset sales; and
- Borrowing.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the draft programme and had made no formal suggestions for any changes to the programme. The Tenants Services Management Board had also considered the draft Housing Capital Programme.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was:-

Resolved that:-

- (a) A Supplementary Estimate of £95,850 in the 2012/2013 Capital Programme for Disabled Facilities Grants, to be funded by additional Government grant received in December 2012 be approved;
- (b) The General Fund Capital Programme Budget of £3,930,000 be approved. Of this amount, £3,553,000 be budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following three years; and
- (c) The Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme of £19,572,000 be also approved. Of this amount, £14,805,000 be budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following two years.

(c) Council Tax Setting 2013/2014

The Localism Act 2011 had made significant changes to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and now required the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year, not its Budget Requirement,

as previously.

The Town and Parish Council Precepts for 2013/2014 totalled £520,441. The increase in the average Band D Council Tax for Town and Parish Councils, including Special Expenses for the Unparished Area, was 8.6% and resulted in an average Band D Council Tax figure of £13.96 for 2013/2014.

Under the new governance arrangements for the Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner announced before Christmas the intention to freeze Council Tax for 2013/2014. This had recently been confirmed.

The confirmed precept was £6,264,441 which resulted in a Band D Council Tax of £168.03. The precept would be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £25,600.

The Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority approved its tax requirement on 18 February 2013. The amount of precept included a 1.99% increase and had been set at £2,810,584, which resulted in a Band D Council Tax of £75.39. The Precept would be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £11,260.

The Somerset County Council approved its tax requirement on 20 February 2013. The amount of precept included a 0% increase and had been set at £38,298,366.34, which resulted in a Band D Council Tax of £1,027.30. The Precept would be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £156,520.

The estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund was forecast on 15 January each year. Any surplus or deficit was shared between the County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Fire Authority and Taunton Deane, in shares relative to their precept levels.

This year the estimated balance was a surplus of £215,940. Taunton Deane's share of this amounted to £22,560, and this had been reflected in the General Fund Revenue Estimates.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

(a) The following formal Council Tax Resolution for 2013/2014 be approved:-

(1) That it be noted that on 24 January 2013 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for 2013/2014:-

- (i) for the whole Council area as 37,280.60 - Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"); and,
- (ii) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept related as in the attached Appendix B to these Minutes;

(2) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2013/2014 (excluding Parish precepts) be calculated as £5,039,960;

(3) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2013/2014 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-

- (i) £86,043,671 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils. (*Gross Expenditure including amount required for working balance*)
- (ii) £80,483,270 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. (*Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet Gross Expenditure*)
- (iii) £5,560,401 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act). (*Total Demand on Collection Fund.*)
- (iv) £149.15 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts). (*Council Tax at Band D for Borough Including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*)
- (v) £520,441 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix B). (*Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).
- (vi) £135.19 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (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 Parish precept relates. (*Council Tax at Band D for Borough Excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*);

(4) To note that Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner and Devon and Somerset Fire Authority would issue precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40

of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area;

- (5) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate provisional amounts shown in the table in Appendix A to these Minutes as the amounts of Council Tax for 2013/2014 for each part of its area and for each categories of dwellings;
- (6) Determine that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2013/2014 was not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992; and

(b) Note that if the above formal Council Tax Resolution was approved the total Band D Council Tax would be as follows:-

	2012/13	2013/14	Increase
	£	£	%
Taunton Deane Borough Council	135.19	135.19	0.00%
Somerset County Council	1,027.30	1,027.30	0.00%
Avon and Somerset Police Authority / Police and Crime Commissioner	168.03	168.03	0.00%
Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	73.92	75.39	1.99%
Sub-Total	1,404.44	1,405.91	0.10%
Town and Parish Council (average)	12.85	13.96	8.64%
Total	1,417.29	1419.87	0.18%

**APPENDIX
A**

Valuation Bands								
Council Tax Schedule 2013/14	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Taunton Deane Borough Council	90.13	105.15	120.17	135.19	165.23	195.27	225.32	270.38
Somerset County Council	684.87	799.01	913.16	1,027.30	1,255.59	1,483.88	1,712.17	2,054.60
Avon & Somerset Police Authority	112.02	130.69	149.36	168.03	205.37	242.71	280.05	336.06
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority	50.26	58.64	67.01	75.39	92.14	108.90	125.65	150.78
Parish / Town only (a)	9.31	10.86	12.41	13.96	17.06	20.16	23.27	27.92
Parish / Town & District (b)	99.44	116.01	132.58	149.15	182.29	215.43	248.59	298.30
Total (c)	946.59	1,104.35	1,262.11	1,419.87	1,735.39	2,050.92	2,366.46	2,839.74
<u>Parish:</u>								
Ash Priors	937.28	1,093.49	1,249.70	1,405.91	1,718.33	2,030.76	2,343.19	2,811.82
Ashbrittle	952.65	1,111.43	1,270.20	1,428.97	1,746.51	2,064.07	2,381.62	2,857.94
Bathealton	941.21	1,098.07	1,254.94	1,411.80	1,725.53	2,039.27	2,353.01	2,823.60
Bishops Hull	950.43	1,108.83	1,267.23	1,425.63	1,742.43	2,059.24	2,376.06	2,851.26

Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	955.87	1,115.17	1,274.48	1,433.79	1,752.41	2,071.03	2,389.66	2,867.58
Bradford on Tone	950.15	1,108.50	1,266.86	1,425.21	1,741.92	2,058.64	2,375.36	2,850.42
Burrowbridge	953.25	1,112.12	1,270.99	1,429.86	1,747.60	2,065.35	2,383.11	2,859.72
Cheddon Fitzpaine	948.24	1,106.28	1,264.31	1,422.35	1,738.42	2,054.51	2,370.59	2,844.70
Chipstable	948.32	1,106.37	1,264.42	1,422.47	1,738.57	2,054.68	2,370.79	2,844.94
Churchstanton	953.07	1,111.92	1,270.76	1,429.60	1,747.28	2,064.98	2,382.67	2,859.20
Combe Florey	950.15	1,108.51	1,266.86	1,425.22	1,741.93	2,058.65	2,375.37	2,850.44
Comeytrowe	945.17	1,102.70	1,260.22	1,417.75	1,732.80	2,047.86	2,362.92	2,835.50
Corfe	944.85	1,102.33	1,259.80	1,417.27	1,732.21	2,047.17	2,362.12	2,834.54
Cotford St Luke	950.83	1,109.30	1,267.77	1,426.24	1,743.18	2,060.13	2,377.07	2,852.48
Creech St Michael	956.15	1,115.50	1,274.86	1,434.21	1,752.92	2,071.64	2,390.36	2,868.42
Durston	944.19	1,101.55	1,258.91	1,416.27	1,730.99	2,045.72	2,360.46	2,832.54
Fitzhead	953.91	1,112.89	1,271.87	1,430.85	1,748.81	2,066.78	2,384.76	2,861.70
Halse	945.91	1,103.56	1,261.21	1,418.86	1,734.16	2,049.47	2,364.77	2,837.72
Hatch Beauchamp	947.98	1,105.97	1,263.97	1,421.96	1,737.95	2,053.94	2,369.94	2,843.92
Kingston St Mary	945.91	1,103.55	1,261.20	1,418.85	1,734.15	2,049.45	2,364.76	2,837.70

Langford Budville	950.58	1,109.01	1,267.43	1,425.86	1,742.71	2,059.58	2,376.44	2,851.72
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	950.14	1,108.49	1,266.85	1,425.20	1,741.91	2,058.62	2,375.34	2,850.40
Milverton	952.27	1,110.98	1,269.69	1,428.40	1,745.82	2,063.25	2,380.67	2,856.80
Neroche	949.67	1,107.95	1,266.22	1,424.50	1,741.05	2,057.61	2,374.17	2,849.00
North Curry	952.08	1,110.76	1,269.43	1,428.11	1,745.46	2,062.83	2,380.19	2,856.22
Norton Fitzwarren	956.37	1,115.77	1,275.16	1,434.55	1,753.33	2,072.13	2,390.92	2,869.10
Nynehead	954.41	1,113.48	1,272.54	1,431.61	1,749.74	2,067.88	2,386.02	2,863.22
Oake	947.79	1,105.75	1,263.71	1,421.67	1,737.59	2,053.52	2,369.46	2,843.34
Otterford	937.28	1,093.49	1,249.70	1,405.91	1,718.33	2,030.76	2,343.19	2,811.82
Pitminster	950.89	1,109.37	1,267.85	1,426.33	1,743.29	2,060.26	2,377.22	2,852.66
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	953.52	1,112.44	1,271.35	1,430.27	1,748.10	2,065.95	2,383.79	2,860.54
Sampfords Arundel	963.52	1,124.10	1,284.69	1,445.27	1,766.44	2,087.61	2,408.79	2,890.54
Staplegrove	946.69	1,104.46	1,262.24	1,420.02	1,735.58	2,051.14	2,366.71	2,840.04
Stawley	949.69	1,107.96	1,266.24	1,424.52	1,741.08	2,057.64	2,374.21	2,849.04
Stoke St Gregory	956.00	1,115.33	1,274.66	1,433.99	1,752.65	2,071.32	2,389.99	2,867.98
Stoke St Mary	947.39	1,105.29	1,263.18	1,421.08	1,736.87	2,052.67	2,368.47	2,842.16

Taunton	939.23	1,095.76	1,252.30	1,408.83	1,721.90	2,034.98	2,348.06	2,817.66
Trull	949.37	1,107.60	1,265.82	1,424.05	1,740.50	2,056.96	2,373.42	2,848.10
Wellington	952.41	1,111.15	1,269.88	1,428.61	1,746.07	2,063.55	2,381.02	2,857.22
Wellington Without	949.77	1,108.06	1,266.35	1,424.64	1,741.22	2,057.81	2,374.41	2,849.28
West Bagborough	948.05	1,106.05	1,264.06	1,422.06	1,738.07	2,054.09	2,370.11	2,844.12
West Buckland	949.17	1,107.37	1,265.56	1,423.75	1,740.13	2,056.53	2,372.92	2,847.50
West Hatch	948.69	1,106.81	1,264.92	1,423.03	1,739.25	2,055.49	2,371.72	2,846.06
West Monkton	954.39	1,113.46	1,272.52	1,431.58	1,749.70	2,067.84	2,385.97	2,863.16
Wiveliscombe	952.52	1,111.27	1,270.02	1,428.77	1,746.27	2,063.78	2,381.29	2,857.54

TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPTS

Parish/Town Council	2012/13			2013/14			Council Tax Increase
	Tax Base	Precept Levied	Council Tax Band D	Tax Base	Precept Levied	Council Tax Band D	
		£	(£)		£	(£)	
Ash Priors	84.83	-	-	81.46	-	-	0.00%
Ashbrittle	95.72	1,800	18.80	86.74	2,000	23.06	22.62%
Bathealton	89.28	500	5.60	84.83	500	5.89	5.25%
Bishops Hull	1,114.92	22,000	19.73	1,052.00	20,750	19.72	-0.04%
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	1,120.81	25,185	22.47	1,021.90	28,489	27.88	24.07%
Bradford on Tone	293.94	5,500	18.71	285.01	5,500	19.30	3.13%
Burrowbridge	205.99	4,200	20.39	196.21	4,700	23.95	17.48%
Cheddon Fitzpaine	643.53	10,203	15.85	598.80	9,843	16.44	3.68%
Chipstable	133.31	1,950	14.63	129.81	2,150	16.56	13.23%
Churchstanton	337.87	7,299	21.60	342.98	8,126	23.69	9.67%
Combe Florey	122.05	2,250	18.44	116.50	2,250	19.31	4.76%

Comeytrove	2,111.95	25,000	11.84	1,967.11	23,290	11.84	0.02%
Corfe	133.48	2,500	18.73	132.02	1,500	11.36	-39.34%
Cotford St Luke	821.67	16,000	19.47	752.62	15,300	20.33	4.40%
Creech St Michael	999.23	28,275	28.30	937.95	26,543.99	28.30	0.01%
Durston	59.10	600	10.15	58.64	607.37	10.36	2.02%
Fitzhead	122.29	2,995	24.49	113.55	2,832	24.94	1.83%
Halse	142.58	1,800	12.62	139.03	1,800	12.95	2.55%
Hatch Beauchamp	268.82	4,500	16.74	249.16	4,000	16.05	-4.10%
Kingston St Mary	463.52	6,000	12.94	424.73	5,496	12.94	-0.03%
Langford Budville	238.94	5,000	20.93	225.54	4,500	19.95	-4.65%
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	208.84	3,582	17.15	199.03	3,839.23	19.29	12.47%
Milverton	624.11	12,650	20.27	562.51	12,650	22.49	10.95%
Neroche	255.27	4,500	17.63	239.15	4,446	18.59	5.46%
North Curry	741.43	16,500	22.25	692.23	15,366	22.20	-0.25%
Norton Fitzwarren	931.94	25,060	26.89	903.16	25,871	28.64	6.53%
Nynehead	164.15	4,250	25.89	165.34	4,250	25.70	-0.72%

Oake	333.34	5,000	15.00	317.34	5,000	15.76	5.04%
Otterford	174.06	-	-	165.11	-	-	0.00%
Pitminster	464.42	9,500	20.46	435.08	8,885	20.42	-0.17%
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	624.94	12,000	19.20	574.63	14,000	24.36	26.88%
Sampford Arundel	127.60	4,600	36.05	121.94	4,800	39.36	9.19%
Staplegrove	748.42	10,710	14.31	708.57	10,000	14.11	-1.38%
Stawley	128.82	2,400	18.63	132.17	2,460	18.61	-0.10%
Stoke St Gregory	384.63	7,000	18.20	356.14	10,000	28.08	54.28%
Stoke St Mary	210.86	3,008	14.27	198.25	3,008	15.17	6.36%
Taunton	16,226.62	47,382	2.92	14,115.83	41,218	2.92	0.00%
Trull	1,032.39	14,000	13.56	992.02	18,000	18.14	33.80%
Wellington	4,852.37	104,798	21.60	4,290.56	97,396	22.70	5.11%
Wellington Without	304.54	5,200	17.08	293.61	5,500	18.73	9.70%
West Bagborough	169.77	2,500	14.73	154.78	2,500	16.15	9.68%
West Buckland	448.31	8,000	17.84	424.77	7,580	17.84	0.00%
West Hatch	143.00	2,330	16.29	136.11	2,330	17.12	5.06%

West Monkton	1,184.22	27,664	23.36	1,077.78	27,664	25.67	9.88%
Wiveliscombe	1,128.51	23,500	20.82	1,027.90	23,500	22.86	9.79%

(d) Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2013/2014

The Executive had given consideration to the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates for the 2013/2014 Financial Year. It also included details of the proposed increase in Average Weekly Rent for the year where a 4.9% increase had been recommended.

2013/14 would be the second year of operating the HRA under self-financing arrangements. The Council remained on course to repay the settlement debt of £85,200,000 by 2030. The lower cost of borrowing this sum was reflected in the Budget and had enabled the Council to fund the updated proposals in the HRA Business Plan and increase funding for housing development.

The Proposed Budget was based on assumptions and estimates on expenditure requirements and income projections, in order to deliver the updated Business Plan that was approved by Full Council in December 2012.

Dwelling rents for approximately 6,000 properties provided annual income of over £23,000,000 for the HRA.

Local authorities had both the power and duty to set their own rent. However, the Government had previously set out a policy for social rents in England to be fair, affordable and less confusing for tenants. Local Authorities and Housing Associations had therefore been requested to bring rents into line over several years, using a national formula to set a target rent (also called 'formula rent') based on property values and average manual earnings in each area.

The previous 'negative subsidy' system required Local Authorities to raise their 'average weekly rent' to meet the 'target' or 'formula' rent by the convergence date of 2015/2016, with a 'guideline rent' being the amount the Department for Communities and Local Government assumed should be charged. The Council continued to work towards the convergence date of 2015/2016 and had taken this into account in the draft rent calculations.

It was therefore proposed that the average weekly rent for dwellings for 2013/2014 should be set at the guideline rent of £77.21. This was an increase of 4.9% or £3.61 per week.

The Dwelling Rents formed the major element of income for the HRA. Each ½% rent increase was equivalent to approximately £114,600. If the average rent was set lower than the current proposal, the loss of income would have to be met by reducing expenditure.

The budget for non-dwelling rents and charges for services and facilities was based on a 2.6% increase.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the 2013/2014 draft budget at its meeting on 24 January 2013 where no formal recommendations to change the HRA budget were made.

The Tenants Services Management Board has also considered the report.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Adkins, it was:-

Resolved that:-

- (1) The Average Weekly Rent increase of 4.9% be approved; and
- (2) The Housing Revenue Account budget for 2013/2014 be agreed.

7. **Reports of the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillors**

(i) **Leader of the Council (Councillor Williams)**

Councillor Williams's report covered the following topics:-

- Budget Setting;
- Flood Alleviation Scheme;
- Northern Inner Distributor Road;
- A303/A30/A358 Somerset County Council Initiative;
- Infrastructure Costs and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- Orchard Centre and Quantock House;
- West Somerset Council; and
- Community Development.

(ii) **Community Leadership (Councillor Mrs Jane Warmington)**

Councillor Mrs Warmington presented the Community Leadership report which focused on the following areas within that portfolio:-

- Police and Crime Plan;
- Voluntary and Community Sector Grants and the Youth Fund;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Community Development;
- Priority Areas Strategy; and
- Family Futures (Troubled Families); and
- Equalities and Diversity.

(iii) **Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts and Tourism (Councillor Cavill)**

The report from Councillor Cavill covered:-

- Launch of Taunton Means Business;
- Rigid Containers Limited;
- Mid-Summer Festival;
- Business Start up Grants and Rural Retailer Grants;
- Hinkley Nuclear New Build;
- Taunton Town Centre Company;

- Make it Your Business, Wellington Business Event;
- Asset Management; and
- Tourism and the Arts Update.

8. **Suspension of Standing Order**

Resolved that Standing Order 28, Time limits for all meetings be suspended to enable the meeting to continue for a further half an hour.

(iv) **Environmental Services and Climate Change (Councillor Hayward)**

The report from Councillor Hayward drew attention to developments in the following areas:-

- Environmental Health;
- Climate Change / Carbon Management; and
- Cremation Services.

(v) **Sport, Parks and Leisure (Councillor Mrs Herbert)**

The report from Councillor Mrs Herbert dealt with activities taking place in the following areas:-

- Parks;
- Community Leisure and Play; and
- Tone Leisure (Taunton Deane) Limited Activities.

(vi) **Housing Services (Councillor Mrs Adkins)**

Councillor Mrs Adkins submitted her report which drew attention to the following:-

- Housing Enabling - Regeneration;
- Affordable Housing Target;
- Sellicks Green, Blagdon Hill;
- Right to Buy Sales;
- Council House Building;
- Housing Services;
- Estates Management – Voids; and
- Estates Management – Benefit Changes.

(vii) **Corporate Resources (Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams)**

The report from Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams provided information on the following areas within her portfolio:-

- Customer Contact Centre;
- Corporate and Client Services;

- Corporate Performance;
- Legal and Democratic Services;
- Revenues and Benefits; and
- Wellbeing Initiatives.

(viii) **Planning, Transportation and Communications (Councillor Edwards)**

The report from Councillor Edwards provided information on the following areas within his portfolio:-

- Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan;
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA);
- Planning Appeals;
- Core Strategy;
- Authorities Monitoring Report;
- Neighbourhood Planning;
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL);
- Heritage – Sandhill Park, Tone Works and Tonedale;
- Parking; and
- Communications.

(Councillor Stone left the meeting at 8.38 pm. Councillors Mrs Herbert, C Hill, Mrs Messenger, D Reed and D Wedderkopp all left the meeting at 9.10 pm. Councillor Morrell left the meeting at 9.20 pm. Councillors Ms Palmer and Ms Webber both left the meeting at 9.27 pm. Councillor Meikle left the meeting at 9.30 pm. Councillors Mrs Baker, Brooks, Mrs Hill and Nottrodt left the meeting at 9.38 pm. Councillor Bishop left the meeting at 9.45 pm.)

(The meeting ended at 10.00 pm.)