

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 29 January 2015 at 7.50 p.m.

Present The Mayor (Councillor D Durdan)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mrs Hill)
Councillors Mrs Adkins, Mrs Allgrove, Beaven, Bowrah, Cavill, Coles, Denington, Miss Durdan, Farbahi, Mrs Floyd, Gaines, Hall, Hayward, Mrs Herbert, C Hill, Horsley, Miss James, R Lees, Mrs Lees, Ms Lisgo, Meikle, Morrell, Nottrodt, Ms Palmer, D Reed, Mrs Reed, Ross, Miss Smith, Mrs Smith, P Smith, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stone, Mrs Warmington, Watson, Mrs Waymouth, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp, Williams and Wren

1. Apologies

Councillors Mrs Baker, Bishop, Edwards, A Govier, Mrs Govier, Henley, Hunt and Tooze.

2. Declaration of Interests

Councillors Coles, A Wedderkopp and D Wedderkopp declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Mrs Hill declared a personal interest as an employee of Somerset County Council. Councillor Wren declared a personal interest as Clerk to Milverton Parish Council. 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 Farbahi declared a personal interest as a local owner of land in Taunton Deane. Councillor Mrs Herbert declared a personal interest as an employee of the Department of Work and Pensions. Councillor Ms Lisgo declared a personal interest as a Director of Tone FM.

3. Public Question Time

Mr Nigel Behan referred to the future of Southwest One (SW1) and in particular to the media reports that Avon and Somerset Police and Wiltshire Police were moving towards sharing services (IT, HR and Payroll etc.).

- (a) Was Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) (as a partner in the Joint Venture Company-Somerset County Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council, Avon and Somerset Police and IBM - known as SW1) consulted?
- (b) Had this been included in the Corporate Risk Log?
- (c) What steps were being taken to ensure there is no detriment to Taunton Deane Borough Council?
- (d) What progress was being made to bring back (insource) services from SW1 as the contract ends in 2017?"

In response, Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams stated that:-

- (i) The Council had not been consulted;
- (ii) The matter had not been added to the Risk Log yet. A review would be undertaken shortly and the Risk Log updated as necessary;
- (iii) Discussions on the proposed sharing of services by the two Police Authorities began yesterday and continuing engagement would take place; and
- (iv) Various options were being looked at with regard to 2017.

4. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clause 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

5. **Proposed sale of a site at Priory Way, Taunton**

Considered report previously circulated, which sought permission to sell a site at Priory Way Taunton. The report had been considered by the Executive at its meeting immediately beforehand.

The proposed sale was based on the asset being oversized for the current use and the need for significant investment to bring the asset to a standard fit for the next 10-20 years of operation.

There was a known shortage of available employment land in Taunton and this impacted on local businesses when looking to expand their current operation. In the case of the preferred bidder there was a real chance that these businesses would be lost from Taunton if a sale could not be agreed.

Details of the preferred bidder and the bidding process that was used following the agreed marketing of the site was identified in the report.

The preferred bidder's price remained subject to vacant possession and planning.

Following detailed discussion, the Executive had recommended Full Council to support:-

- (a) The sale of the site at Priory Way, Taunton to the preferred bidder delegating authority to officers, the Portfolio Holder and the Shadow Portfolio Holder to negotiate the most appropriate conditions for this Council;
- (b) The urgent work required to determine the future operating location of the present occupiers of the site;

- (c) The underwriting of the preferred bidder's third party costs that were reasonably incurred specifically relating to planning applications on this site up to £35,000. (This would only be applicable if the alternative condition could be agreed); and
- (d) The capital receipt from the sale of the site being ring-fenced for the provision of a new site for the present occupiers, with any surplus being returned to General Reserves.

During the discussion, Members agreed that any surplus from the capital receipt obtained from the proposed sale should be used towards the provision of replacement temporary accommodation.

Resolved that it be agreed to support:-

- (a) The sale of the site at Priory Way, Taunton to the preferred bidder delegating authority to officers, the Portfolio Holder and the Shadow Portfolio Holder to negotiate the most appropriate conditions for this Council;
- (b) The urgent work required to determine the future operating location of the present occupiers of the site;
- (c) The underwriting of the preferred bidder's third party costs that were reasonably incurred specifically relating to planning applications on this site up to £35,000. (This would only be applicable if the alternative condition could be agreed); and
- (d) The capital receipt from the sale of the site being ring-fenced for the provision of a new site for the present occupiers, with any surplus being allocated towards the provision of replacement temporary accommodation.

(The meeting ended at 8.25 p.m.)

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 24 February 2015 at 6.30 pm.

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

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held on 9 December 2014, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

2. Apologies

Councillors Mrs Baker, Bishop, Cavill, Mrs Floyd, Mrs Gaden, Mrs Govier, Nottrodt and Ms Palmer.

3. Declaration of Interests

Councillors Coles, A Govier, Prior-Sankey, A Wedderkopp and D Wedderkopp declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Henley declared personal interests both as a Member of Somerset County Council and as an employee of Job Centre Plus. Councillor Hunt declared personal interests both as a Member of Somerset County Council and as one of the Council's representatives on the Somerset Waste Board. Councillor Ross declared personal interests as one of the Council's representatives on the Somerset Waste Board and as the Alternate Director of Southwest One. Councillor Mrs Hill declared a personal interest as an employee of Somerset County Council. Councillor Tooze declared personal interests as an employee of the UK Hydrographic Office and as the Vice-Chairman of the North Taunton Partnership. Councillor Swaine declared a personal interest as a part-time swimming instructor. Councillor Mrs Herbert declared a personal interest as an employee of the Department of Work and Pensions. Councillor Wren declared a personal interest as Clerk to Milverton Parish Council. Councillor D Durdan declared a prejudicial interest as a Tone Leisure Board representative. Councillor Gill Slattery declared personal interests

as a member of the Board of Governors at Somerset College, as a representative on the Parrett Internal Drainage Board and as a member of the National Steering Group for the Public Health England/Kings College, London longitudinal study into the impact of flooding on health and wellbeing . Councillor Farbahi declared a personal interest as a local owner of land in Taunton Deane. Councillor Ms Lisgo declared a personal interest as a Director of Tone FM

4. **Public Question Time**

- (a) Mr Steve Hasell asked how the Council assessed and applied the new prior notification planning regulations for converting agricultural barns into homes that came into being in April 2014.

By their very nature agricultural barns were in the rural areas where facilities and public transport was somewhat limited. But there was another side to the argument that by allowing the organic growth of hamlets and villages by this prior notification method, then these communities became more sustainable, because they could support more services. This type of prior notification also allowed farmers to provide much needed accommodation for the next generation of their families and their workers.

Mr Hasell explained that an application he had submitted had been refused a few weeks ago and he would be appealing to the Secretary of State and asking for costs to be awarded against the Council.

He asked for the following information:-

- (1) How many prior notification applications of this type had been submitted to the Council since April 2014?
- (2) How many of them had been successful? and
- (3) Please could the Council review how this type of application was determined to ensure it was compliant with national guidelines?

Councillor Edwards thanked Mr Hasell for his questions and undertook to arrange a written reply in due course.

- (b) Mr Alan Debenham felt there had been a 'massacre of local services' over the past few years and, with the Government proposing to withdraw the Revenue Support Grant, things were only going to become worse. Why had there no arguments made against austerity? Why were services not being defended against this right-wing Government?

In response Councillor Williams stated that the country had had to face a very serious recession where difficult decisions had to be made. Although addressing the National Debt was a priority Councillor Williams continued to be proud of Taunton Deane's service delivery.

Services had not been 'massacred' – most had remained intact due to the actions undertaken by the Council.

- (c) Having previously asked a number of questions about the future of Southwest One (SW1) at the meeting of Full Council on 29 January 2015, Mr Nigel Behan from the UNITE Union asked the following further questions:-

The Future of Southwest One

When would services (currently dependent on SW1) be able to plan effectively for the period leading up to 2017 and beyond?

IBM, Leicester City Council and SW1

It was recently reported in the media that "Technology company IBM was to open a base in Leicester with the creation of 300 jobs over three years. It will be the first time the US firm had selected a UK site for one of its services centres."

- a) Did IBM consult Somerset County Council (SCC) and Taunton Deane about creating a service centre in Somerset?
- b) Were similar claims (creating and working with universities and creating new jobs in Somerset) made during the ISiS programme (which led to the contract with IBM?)
- c) Were the promises by IBM of economic development and creating new jobs (in Taunton and Somerset) contractual? If so, were IBM now in clear breach of contract and what steps could be taken?

Reference the Annual Report of the SCC Cabinet Member for Resources in relation to SW1

Section 2.9 stated "Since the return of services in 2013 the Client Team had continued to robustly manage SW1 with a continued focus on the ICT service to ensure value for money and improve the service performance of the contract for SCC. SW1 have had a significant number of KPI failures since, resulting in SCC having to serve warning notices to ensure an improvement to the ICT service."

Were there similar Key Performance Indicator (KPI) failures at Taunton Deane and, if so, could a list of them be provided?

The latest SW1 Company Accounts

The report stated that "The SW1 directors were aware that at the end of the contract life, the company was currently due to settle its inter-company loan balance with IBM, which at 31 December 2013 was £48,800,000. Currently it was felt that there were insufficient cash flows to be generated in the remainder of the contract to settle the loan balance."

- a) Could it be clarified whether Taunton Deane would be liable for any of the inter-company loan balance with IBM as Taunton Deane was a Joint Venture Partner in SW1?
- b) Did SW1 borrow an additional £1,000,000 from IBM in 2013?
- c) Was SW1 currently still trading because of “continued financial support from IBM United Kingdom Holdings Limited”?

Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams thanked Mr Behan for his questions and undertook to arrange a written reply in due course.

5. **Monkton Heathfield Capacity Funding**

Reported that the urban extension at Monkton Heathfield comprised mixed use development including 1,000 dwellings identified in the Taunton Deane Local Plan with a further 3,500 in the period up until 2026 allocated in the Core Strategy.

Whilst planning permission had been granted for the first phases and dwellings were now occupied, there remained considerable work and a number of issues that needed to be overcome in order to ensure that delivery was provided at a rate that would make a substantial contribution to the Council’s Housing Land Supply in years to come, as well as bringing forward much needed employment land.

As a result, capacity support had been sought from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to assist in unblocking potential hurdles to delivery.

Further reported that the DCLG had made available up to £400,673 to the Council through the Large Sites Infrastructure Programme Capacity Fund. This was in addition to the award made in 2013, which had been spent primarily on legal and other technical advice aimed at pursuing a solution that would deliver the Western Relief Road. It had also funded the submission of a planning application for the road.

Whilst the money was not ring fenced, the award had been made on the basis that it was intended to support the development of the Monkton Heathfield housing development.

The initial payment of £160,173 had been received with the additional payment of £240,500 due to be received early in the next financial year on the basis that satisfactory progress had been made.

Approval was therefore sought to spend the award, and any outstanding money from the earlier award, in accordance with the key objectives that formed the basis of the Council’s bid. These were to set up a dedicated Delivery Team focused primarily on progressing both completion of the first phase of development as well as master planning and delivery of the wider Core Strategy proposals.

Resolved that a supplementary estimate of £160,173 (and potentially a further £240,500) be approved, funded by the grant received from the Department of Communities and Local Government (to add to remaining funds from the earlier award) on progressing the setting up of a dedicated Delivery Team as set out in the report.

6. **Loan to Somerset Waste Partnership for Waste Vehicles - Update**

Reference Minute No. 6 of the Full Council meeting held on 30 September 2014, reported that the procurement process had taken longer than anticipated, and had raised some new options which had been considered by the Somerset Waste Board (SWB).

The preferred outcome from this exercise was to progress some hire options as well as the purchase of vehicles, thereby reducing the total loan requirement. In addition, interest rates for seven year funding had fallen since September 2014 and the rate of 3.5% was no longer appropriate.

The total loan requirement was now £3,805,000, which SWB was asking Taunton Deane and South Somerset District Council (SSDC) to progress. Having discussed rates, it was felt a fixed rate of 1% above Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) rate (currently 1.7%) was reasonable and offered a decent balance of return for the two Councils, plus an affordable rate for the SWB.

SSDC was progressing similar approvals in line with this new position – with the ambition for both Councils to offer loans of £1,902,500 at PWLB +1%. However, if SSDC decided not to progress this arrangement, the Section 151 Officer felt it would be appropriate for Taunton Deane to offer the full amount of £3,805,000.

The latest information suggested a loan start date of 1 June 2015, but this might shift to later in 2015 should lead in times for vehicles change.

Resolved that:-

- (a) The principle of a seven year fixed rate loan at PWLB +1% to Somerset Waste Partnership of up to £3,805,000 (detailed terms within this framework to be agreed, through delegated authority, by the Section 151 Officer), be agreed; and
- (b) It also be agreed to add this capital expenditure to the Capital Programme with the understanding that the principal payments would be treated as capital receipts offsetting the Capital Financing Requirement.

7. **Written Questions to Members of the Executive**

From Councillor Morrell to Councillor Mrs Herbert

- (1) Following the recent signing between Mendip District Council and Fusion Leisure, whereby Fusion Leisure had contracted to take over all associated running costs and risks from the Council as well as agreeing to invest £2,000,000 of new funding into the Frome Leisure Centre so allowing the Council to reinvest in other frontline services, why did Taunton Deane continue operating its leisure services – including the recently agreed Blackbrook Swimming Pool - at financial cost, risk and uncertainty to the taxpayer?
- (2) In light of the Mendip District Council and Fusion Leisure contract, when would Taunton Deane cease operating unviable commercial practices and become commercially savvy?

Response by Councillor Catherine Herbert – As a result of their existing contractual arrangements coming to an end, Mendip had recently finalised a deal with Fusion Leisure re their leisure sites. This was a long term deal (50 year leases) and delivered significant revenue savings for the Council. The Council is aware that the leisure market had shifted over recent years, and this Council would be reviewing options open to us later this year so we could properly prepare for the continuation of services when the present lease arrangements with Tone Leisure expired in 2019.

From Councillor Morrell to Councillor Cavill

- (1) Further to Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011, requiring District Councils to maintain a list of 'community assets', when would the register be published?

Response by Councillor John Williams (in the absence of Councillor Norman Cavill) – The Localism Act 2011 placed requirements on the Council to maintain a list of land/buildings in its area that it considers land of community value. The Community Right to Bid provided the right to nominate land or buildings as Assets of Community Value.

Under the relevant regulations it was clear that if land/ a building in the local authority's area, was nominated by a 'relevant body', was not an excluded land/building type and met the definition of community value then the local authority must list it and inform the interested parties.

In accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011- Part 5, the Council must maintain a list of assets of community value and a list of assets nominated unsuccessfully. These lists were published on the Council's website and made available for free inspection by any person at the Council's Offices.

Assets would remain on the register for five years and a restriction and Local Land Charge would be registered against the property. When the five year period had expired, the asset could be re-nominated.

- (2) Could it be confirmed that all art and artefacts of historical and/or cultural importance held by Taunton Deane Borough Council, whether on display or not, were registered and secured without risk of damage by the elements or theft?

Response by Councillor Williams – The Council's Art and Silver collections were either stored securely whilst on display in The Deane House or securely and appropriately stored at the Heritage Centre. Some paintings were on display at the Old Municipal Buildings and two on loan at the Museum of Somerset. All items were listed and itemised on the Council's insurance policy.

From Councillor Morrell to Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams

- (1) Following the 2015 Annual Report of Somerset County Council's Cabinet Member for Resources highlighting South West One's (SW1) key performance indicator failures, when would Taunton Deane's Councillors receive detail on South West One's key performance indicator failings?

Response by Councillor Vivienne Stock-Williams - In respect of the 2014/2015 financial year to end of January 2015 SW1 had failed one Key Performance Indicator as follows:-

ICT – Nov 14 – Taunton Deane Network availability : Target 99.70%, Actual 99.54%

- (2) Could the level of cashable savings from the SW1 contract to date be detailed?

Response – Procurement savings - Currently identified projected savings to Taunton Deane from procurement were approximately £3,049,000, of which £2,631,000 had been delivered and reduced from budgets to 31 March 2015.

Unitary Charge Savings – Taunton Deane received a 2.5% reduction in its annual Unitary Charge; the payment to SW1 for providing the services. Elements of the Unitary Charge were subject to indexation, although in addition Taunton Deane seconded staff increments for secondees were funded by SWO.

- (3) Could it be determined whether those cashable savings as answered in question (2) had cleared loan and interest costs?

Response – The savings had not yet cleared the internal loan, but the current estimate was that it would be cleared in 2015/2016 (approximately

£100,000 would remain outstanding at 31 March 2015). There was no commercial interest in respect of this internal loan although there was an opportunity cost. In addition it should be noted that in line with our established accountancy practices this capital borrowing was also reduced by 4% per annum in addition to the procurement savings.

(4) As the South West One contract would end in 2017, when would Taunton Deane Borough Councillors be briefed of provisional plans post-expiry?

Response – The intention was to bring a report to Members regarding Succession Planning over the coming months.

8. Recommendations to Council from the Executive

(a) Proposed Business Case for a Shared Legal Service

The Executive had recently considered a report which set out the latest position in respect of the preparation of a draft Business Case for establishing a shared Legal Service between Mendip District Council (MDC), Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) and West Somerset Council (WSC).

The three Councils had been working together to examine the feasibility of sharing legal services. This work has flowed from the Somerset Shared Services Task and Finish Group which directed that such a project should be potentially undertaken across all Somerset authorities.

Following the completion of an outline business case in April 2014, Somerset County Council, Sedgemoor District Council and South Somerset Council decided not to pursue the matter at this time. However, MDC, TDBC and WSC had agreed to pursue their ambition to forge a constructive partnership to deliver legal services collectively.

A Joint Officer Project Board was established to develop the Business Case. Its vision was to create a dedicated service to support public and third sector clients with specialist and cost effective advice.

The key objectives of the project would be to:-

- Deliver a significant budget saving for TDBC and WSC;
- Create a flexible resilience model, with a critical mass of expertise;
- Provide enhanced efficiency and effectiveness; and
- Establish an arrangement that would operate for a minimum initial five year period with a review at the end of year four.

The outcome from this work was the production of a draft Business Case for a shared Legal Service based on the model of MDC to be the host authority and aiming for an implementation date of 1 April 2015.

The lead authority model option was seen to be the most appropriate as it would enable the three Councils to set up a shared service relatively swiftly with the minimum of risk. It was likely to be seen as a first step towards a fully integrated service that could potentially be expanded with further partners at a later date.

The host authority model involved current TDBC staff being transferred under the Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employees (TUPE) Regulations to MDC. There has been consultation with all affected staff throughout the process. It is anticipated that all existing staff would have the option of a job in the new shared service.

The Business Case had demonstrated that for TDBC the annual cost of providing the Legal Service would be reduced by £22,323 to £200,915, representing a 10% saving. Correspondingly, the annual cost to WSC would be reduced by £20,113 to £113,977 which represented a 15% saving.

MDC had agreed to defray initial savings on the basis that in the Business Case it was anticipated that there would be some growth in terms of generating additional income and the distribution formula for this would be set to ensure that MDC received a 15% saving from this income as the first priority. Additional growth beyond this would then be distributed between the three partners based on a formula linked to their respective inputs into the partnership.

The high level financial Business Case had been signed off by the Section 151 Officers of the three Councils.

Consultations had been undertaken with UNISON and the affected staff at the three Councils.

The Business Case had been considered by the Scrutiny Committees and Cabinets of both WSC and MDC, all of whom were fully supportive of the proposals.

TDBC's Corporate Scrutiny Committee considered the proposal at its meeting on 13 January 2015 when Members agreed to support the introduction of a Shared Legal Service subject to a six month 'break clause' being included in the Inter Authority Agreement between the Councils which could be invoked by TDBC after the first three years of operation of a shared service.

Reported that MDC has indicated that it would be amenable to this amendment subject to certain 'receipted costs' incurred by that authority being able to be recouped. Such costs would be agreed at the time of any termination of the agreement.

In anticipation that Full Council would adopt the proposed Business Case, a draft Inter-Authority Agreement to ensure the proper and transparent governance of the proposed Shared Legal Service had been prepared. Essentially this document formalised an arrangement whereby MDC could discharge TDBC's and WSC's relevant functions through a shared legal practice under the provisions of Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and of the Local Government (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2000.

This was an important document as it set out the terms and conditions that the three authorities would be required to work within for the provision of the service.

There was a specific requirement that TDBC and WSC would designate a senior officer as a Contract Manager for the service in relation to delivery of the service to TDBC and WSC. The Assistant Chief Executive was currently the senior officer responsible for the provision of the legal service across both authorities and had had significant experience in managing a similar contract with Mendip District Council since 2008.

It was therefore recommended that the Assistant Chief Executive be designated to fulfil the role of Contract Manager for WSC and TDBC.

If these recommendations are adopted, then certain detailed amendments to the existing constitution needed to be agreed and details of these had been provided.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (1) The draft Business Case for a Shared Legal Service to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2015 be approved;
- (2) The Inter-Authority Agreement which was the framework for operating a Shared Legal Service with effect from 1 April 2015 be endorsed;
- (3) The Assistant Chief Executive be designated to undertake the role of "Contract Manager" as defined in the Inter-Authority Agreement; and
- (4) Amendments to the Constitution be agreed to reflect the proposed arrangements as set out in the report to the Executive.

(b) General Fund Revenue Estimates 2015/2016

The Executive had considered its final 2015/2016 budget proposals which recognised the continuing financial challenges, with annual reductions in Government funding for Local Council services as the Government sought to reduce the national deficit.

The budget contained details on:-

- (i) the General Fund Revenue Budget proposals for 2015/2016, including a Council Tax Freeze; and
- (ii) draft figures on the predicted financial position of the Council for subsequent years.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the draft budget proposals at its meeting on 22 January 2014. Specific recommendations made by Members related to a request for further information in relation to public toilets and the process surrounding community asset transfers and arrangements with Town and Parish Councils and asking for the previous decision to remove the funding for the fixed-term Climate Change Officer role to be re-considered.

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 2015/2016 which would mean that the Band D Council Tax would remain at £137.88. The Band D taxpayer would therefore receive all the services provided by the Council in 2015/2016 at a cost of £2.64 per week.

The estimated Special Expenses chargeable to the non-parished area of Taunton in 2015/2016 amounted to £42,900, which represented a freeze in the special expenses per Band D equivalent of £2.98 per property per year in the Unparished Area. In addition, the Unparished Area Budget had received a notional Council Tax Support Grant of £6,030 in 2015/2016 giving a total budget for the year of £48,930.

Although the Fees and Charges for 2015/2016 had been approved by Full Council on 9 December 2014, work had progressed on a number of representations raised in connection with some of the Taxi Licensing fees and some minor amendments were now considered appropriate. The overall impact on the budget was forecast to be a cost of £2,400 and this would be addressed through the Licensing Earmarked Reserve.

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 2016/2017 and beyond and a summary of this position was reflected in the following table:-

	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k	2018/19 £k	2019/20 £k
Net Expenditure on Services	12,067	12,744	13,332	13,934	14,493
Other Operating Costs & Income	(287)	(278)	(268)	(258)	(247)
Parish precepts and Special expenses	574	575	576	577	578
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	2,141	3,358	3,482	3,351	3,180
Transfers to/from General Reserves	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Financing Adjustments	(1,302)	(1,422)	(1,548)	(1,548)	(1,548)
Net Expenditure	13,193	14,977	15,574	16,056	16,456
<i>Financed By:</i>					
New Homes Bonus	(3,179)	(3,768)	(3,892)	(3,761)	(3,590)
Retained Business Rates	(2,749)	(2,869)	(2,972)	(3,035)	(3,122)
Revenue Support Grant	(1,916)	(1,319)	(726)	(327)	(114)
Council Tax Freeze Grant	(62)	0	0	0	0
Demand on Collection Fund - TDBC	(5,288)	(5,433)	(5,583)	(5,736)	(5,894)
Demand on Collection Fund - Parishes & SER	(574)	(575)	(576)	(577)	(578)
Previous Years Collection Fund Deficit Share - NNDR	710	0	0	0	0
Previous Years Collection Fund Surplus Share - Council Tax	(135)	0	0	0	0
Predicted Budget Gap	0	1,013	1,825	2,620	3,158

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

- Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for 2015/2016 was as set out in the Provisional Finance Settlement. It was then projected to diminish to nil by 2020/2021.
- The updated estimates for Business Rates funding for 2015/2016 took into account the cap on the Retail Price Index increase to Rates at 1.91%.
- Council Tax is assumed to be frozen in 2015/2016 and increases by 1.99% in 2016/2017.

It was proposed that the minimum acceptable reserves position should be retained at £1,500,000, or £1,250,000 if funds were allocated to 'invest to save' initiatives.

The current Budget for 2015/2016 would maintain reserves above this minimum, but following a number of allocations from reserves agreed during 2014/2015 there was limited 'headroom' in the current estimated balance. This would significantly limit the Council's ability to fund 'up front' service and transformation investment from revenue reserves.

Based on the MTFP position set out above the General Reserves forecast was summarised as follows:-

General Reserves Forecast

	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k	2018/19 £k	2019/20 £k
Estimated Balance B/F	1,897	1,897	884	-942	-3,562
Predicted Budget Gap	0	-1,013	-1,825	-2,620	-3,158
Estimated Balance C/F	1,897	884	-942	-3,562	-6,721

Clearly the Council would need to ensure action was taken to ensure the projected financial deficit over the medium term was avoided and (at least) minimum balances were maintained. This was essential for the continuing financial resilience and sustainability of the Council. The Budget Proposals and Options presented for consideration provided opportunities to make significant progress towards addressing the financial challenge.

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 continuing costs of their borrowing.

The proposed Policy for 2015/2016 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 2015/2016 budget to be robust.

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

"That £25,000 was included in the budget for 2015/2016 towards the provision of Christmas Lights in Taunton".

In accordance with Standing Order 18(6), the Mayor called for a formal roll call of votes to be taken and recorded in the Minutes.

The amendment was put and was carried with forty six Councillors in favour and one abstaining, as follows:-

Yes	No	Abstain
Councillor Mrs Adkins		Councillor Wren
Councillor Mrs Allgrove		
Councillor Beaven		
Councillor Bowrah		
Councillor Coles		
Councillor Denington		
Councillor D Durdan		
Councillor Miss Durdan		
Councillor Edwards		
Councillor Farbahi		
Councillor Gaines		
Councillor A Govier		
Councillor Hall		
Councillor Hayward		
Councillor Henley		
Councillor Mrs Herbert		
Councillor C Hill		
Councillor Mrs Hill		
Councillor Horsley		
Councillor Hunt		
Councillor Miss James		
Councillor R Lees		
Councillor Mrs Lees		
Councillor Ms Lisgo		
Councillor Meikle		
Councillor Mrs Messenger		
Councillor Morrell		
Councillor Prior-Sankey		
Councillor D Reed		
Councillor Mrs Reed		
Councillor Ross		
Councillor Gill Slattery		
Councillor T Slattery		
Councillor Miss Smith		
Councillor Mrs Smith		
Councillor P Smith		
Councillor Mrs Stock-		
Williams		
Councillor Stone		
Councillor Swaine		
Councillor Tooze		
Councillor Mrs Warmington		
Councillor Watson		
Councillor Mrs Waymouth		
Councillor A Wedderkopp		

Councillor D Wedderkopp
Councillor Williams

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

“This Council allocates £80,000 from General Fund Reserves in 2015/2016 to the convenience of the public in Milverton, Wellington, Wiveliscombe and West Deane and those other areas in Taunton Deane in which Town and Parish Councils, who had already disputed or objected to closure, identified a need to maintain existing public services by reinstating public toilets.

The £80,000 was for reinstating and operating specific public toilets and aimed to allow pause for reflection and consideration in which the Council could respond to communities who thought that Taunton Deane Borough Council was not listening to them”.

In accordance with Standing Order 18(6), the Mayor called for a formal roll call of votes to be taken and recorded in the Minutes.

The amendment was put and was carried with twenty four Councillors in favour, twenty one Councillors voting against and one abstaining, as follows:-

Yes	No	Abstain
Councillor Coles	Councillor Mrs Adkins	Councillor Wren
Councillor Farbahi	Councillor Mrs Allgrove	
Councillor Gaines	Councillor Beaven	
Councillor A Govier	Councillor Bowrah	
Councillor Henley	Councillor Denington	
Councillor Mrs Hill	Councillor D Durdan	
Councillor Horsley	Councillor Miss Durdan	
Councillor Miss James	Councillor Edwards	
Councillor R Lees	Councillor Hall	
Councillor Mrs Lees	Councillor Hayward	
Councillor Ms Lisgo	Councillor Mrs Herbert	
Councillor Mrs Messenger	Councillor C Hill	
Councillor Morrell	Councillor Hunt	
Councillor Prior-Sankey	Councillor Meikle	
Councillor Ross	Councillor D Reed	
Councillor Gill Slattery	Councillor Mrs Reed	
Councillor T Slattery	Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams	
Councillor Miss Smith	Councillor Mrs Warmington	
Councillor Mrs Smith	Councillor Watson	
Councillor P Smith	Councillor Mrs Waymouth	
Councillor Swaine	Councillor Williams	
Councillor Tooze		

Councillor A Wedderkopp
Councillor D Wedderkopp

Members went on to discuss the substantive Budget of the Council.

In accordance with Standing Order 18(6), the Mayor called for a formal roll call of votes to be taken and recorded in the Minutes.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, the substantive Motion, which is detailed below, was put and was carried with thirty nine Councillors in favour, one Councillor voting against and six abstaining:-

Resolved that the budget for General Fund services for 2015/2016 as shown in the original report to Full Council and as amended above, be approved 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;
- (b) The General Fund Revenue Budget 2015/2016, including a Basic Council Tax Requirement budget of £5,287,500 and Special Expenses of £42,900 be approved;
- (c) The transfer of any unallocated year end under/overspend in the 2014/2015 General Fund Revenue Account Outturn to/from the General Fund Reserves be approved;
- (d) The Budget Savings Proposals for 2015/2016 as set out in the report to the Executive be approved and that it be noted that Equalities Impact Assessments were not required for the savings detailed in the report to the Executive;
- (e) 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;
- (f) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2015/2016 as set out in the report to the Executive be approved;
- (g) The revised Taxi Licensing Fees, set out in the report to the Executive be also approved; and
- (h) An additional £105,000 be added to the budget (£25,000 for Christmas Lights and £80,000 for Public Conveniences) for 2015/2016 funded from General Fund Reserves.

The details of the recorded vote was as follows:-

Yes	No	Abstain
Councillor Mrs Adkins	Councillor Morrell	Councillor Gaines
Councillor Mrs Allgrove		Councillor A Govier
Councillor Beaven		Councillor Ms Lisgo
Councillor Bowrah		Councillor Mrs Messenger
Councillor Coles		Councillor Ross
Councillor Denington		Councillor Swaine
Councillor D Durdan		
Councillor Miss Durdan		
Councillor Edwards		
Councillor Farbahi		
Councillor Hall		
Councillor Hayward		
Councillor Mrs Herbert		
Councillor C Hill		
Councillor Mrs Hill		
Councillor Horsley		
Councillor Hunt		
Councillor Miss James		
Councillor R Lees		
Councillor Mrs Lees		
Councillor Meikle		
Councillor Prior-Sankey		
Councillor D Reed		
Councillor Mrs Reed		
Councillor Gill Slattery		
Councillor T Slattery		
Councillor Miss Smith		
Councillor Mrs Smith		
Councillor P Smith		
Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams		
Councillor Tooze		
Councillor Mrs Warmington		
Councillor Watson		
Councillor Mrs Waymouth		
Councillor A Wedderkopp		
Councillor D Wedderkopp		
Councillor Williams		
Councillor Wren		

(c) Capital Programme Budget Estimates 2015/2016

The Executive had also recently considered the proposed General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programmes for 2015/2016.

In terms of the GF Capital Programme, a prioritisation system is used to assess bids received from budget holders using the following approved criteria:-

Priority	
1	Business Continuity (corporate / organisational)
2	Statutory Service Investment (to get to statutory minimum / contractual / continuity)
3	Growth (top 5)
4	Transformation
5	Others

The prioritisation system had been developed in order to ensure that the Council's very limited Capital Resources were channelled at key projects. The proposed Draft General Fund Capital Programme for 2015/2016 totalled £1,012,000 split between Deane DLO schemes and General Fund Schemes.

In addition to these schemes which primarily delivered service continuity and improvements, the following table incorporated the highest priority 'Growth' schemes and their estimated total costs. It was not expected that the Council would be liable for the full amounts but it was anticipated that Taunton Deane will need to make a financial contribution towards these. The Council's strategy of setting aside the majority of the New Homes Bonus Grant could provide funding towards these schemes in future.

Bids Submitted for Growth Schemes

Project	Cost £k	Priority				
		1	2	3	4	5
Growth Schemes						
Firepool Infrastructure and Planning	3,500			3,500		
Toneway Corridor Improvements (including Creech Castle)	23,120			23,120		
J25 Improvements	9,240			9,240		
Taunton Strategic Flood Alleviation Work	15,000			15,000		
Total	50,860			50,860		

Funding for capital investment by the Council could come from a variety of sources including Capital Receipts, Grant Funding, Capital Contributions (for example from another Local Authority or Section 106 Agreement funding), Revenue budgets/reserves (often referred as RCCO – Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay) and Borrowing.

The Capital Programme for 2015/2016 was fully funded through a combination of revenue contributions (DLO and General) plus grant funding provided via Somerset County Council. There was projected

unallocated resources of £149,000, pending actual capital receipts arising, which would provide some flexibility to support future priority schemes.

As to the HRA, the proposed Draft Capital Programme for 2015/2016 totalled £8,670,000. This was part of a Five-Year Capital Expenditure Estimate of some £40,340,000 for the period 2015/2016 to 2019/2020. The Programme reflected the priorities set out in the 30-Year Business Plan which is reviewed every year.

A breakdown of the proposed Capital Programme for 2015/2016 was shown below highlighting the proposed capital investment requirements in the next budget year.

Draft HRA Capital Programme 2015/2016

Project	Total Cost £
Major Works	6,590,000
Improvements	155,000
Related Assets	125,000
Exceptional Extensive Works	260,000
Disabled Facilities Grants and Aids and Adaptations	435,000
IT Systems and Software Improvements	100,000
Social Housing Development Fund	1,000,000
Total Proposed HRA Capital Programme 2015/16	8,665,000

It was proposed that the HRA Capital Programme for 2015/2016 would be fully funded from revenue resources, including the Major Repairs Reserve, Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay and the Social Housing Development Fund.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (a) The additional General Fund Capital Programme Budget of £1,012,000 for 2015/2016 be approved; and
- (b) The Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme of £8,670,000 for 2015/2016 also be approved.

(d) Council Tax Setting 2015/2016

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.

The Town and Parish Council Precepts for 2015/2016 totalled £574,623. The increase in the average Band D Council Tax for Town and Parish Councils, including Special Expenses for the Unparished Area, was 3.41% and resulted in an average Band D Council Tax figure of £14.98 for 2015/2016.

The Avon and Somerset Constabulary Police and Crime Commissioner had recently announced a 1.99% increase. The confirmed precept was £6,702,601 which resulted in a Band D Council Tax of £174.78. The precept would be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £151,312.

The Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority had also approved a 1.99% increase to its tax requirement on 20 February 2015. The confirmed precept had been set at £3,007,297 which resulted in a Band D Council Tax of £78.42. The Precept would be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £66,565.

The Somerset County Council had approved its tax requirement on 18 February 2015. The amount of precept included a 0% increase and would be £39,395,472, which results in a Band D Council Tax of £1,027.30. The Precept would be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £907,040.

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 the precept levels.

This year the estimated balance was a surplus of £1,259,450. Taunton Deane's share of this amounted to £134,533, and this had been reflected in the General Fund Revenue Estimates.

In accordance with Standing Order 18(6), the Mayor called for a formal roll call of votes to be taken and recorded in the Minutes.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, the substantive Motion, which is detailed below, was put and was carried with twenty nine Councillors in favour, eight Councillors voting against and four abstaining:-

Resolved:-

- (a) That the following formal Council Tax Resolution to reflect the proposed Council Tax Freeze in 2015/2016 be approved:-
 - (1) That it be noted that on 15 January 2015 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for 2015/2016:-
 - (i) for the whole Council area as 38,348.55 [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 Appendix B below;

(2) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2015/2016 (excluding Parish precepts) be calculated as £5,287,500;

(3) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2015/2016 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-

- (i) £90,882,603 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) £85,020,480 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) £5,862,123 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) £152.86 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) £574,623 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as in Appendix B below). *(Parish Precepts and Special Expenses).*
- (vi) £137.88 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 2015/2016 for each part of its area and for each category of dwellings;
- (6) To determine that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2015/2016 was not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992; and
- (7) To note that if the above formal Council Tax Resolution was approved the total Band D Council Tax would be as follows:-

	2014/2015	2015/2016	Increase
	£	£	%
Taunton Deane Borough Council	137.88	137.88	0.00%
Somerset County Council	1,027.30	1,027.30	0.00%
Police and Crime Commissioner	171.37	174.78	1.99%
Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	76.89	78.42	1.99%
Sub-Total	1,413.44	1,418.38	0.35%
Town and Parish Council (average)	14.49	14.98	3.41%
Total	1,427.93	1,433.36	0.38%

The details of the recorded vote was as follows:-

Yes	No	Abstain
Councillor Mrs Adkins	Councillor Gaines	Councillor Horsley
Councillor Mrs Allgrove	Councillor A Govier	Councillor Ms Lisgo
Councillor Beaven	Councillor Mrs Messenger	Councillor Mrs Smith
Councillor Bowrah	Councillor Prior-Sankey	Councillor A Wedderkopp
Councillor Coles	Councillor Ross	
Councillor Denington	Councillor Miss Smith	
Councillor D Durdan	Councillor Swaine	
Councillor Miss Durdan	Councillor D Wedderkopp	
Councillor Edwards		
Councillor Farbahi		
Councillor Hall		
Councillor Hayward		
Councillor Mrs Herbert		
Councillor Mrs Hill		
Councillor Hunt		
Councillor Miss James		
Councillor R Lees		
Councillor Mrs Lees		
Councillor Meikle		

Councillor Morrell
Councillor Mrs Reed
Councillor T Slattery
Councillor Mrs Stock-
Williams
Councillor Mrs Warmington
Councillor Watson
Councillor Mrs Waymouth
Councillor Williams
Councillor Wren

APPENDIX A

Valuation Bands								
Council Tax Schedule 2015/16	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Taunton Deane Borough Council	91.92	107.24	122.56	137.88	168.52	199.16	229.80	275.76
Somerset County Council	684.87	799.01	913.16	1,027.30	1,255.59	1,483.88	1,712.17	2,054.60
Police and Crime Commissioner	116.52	135.94	155.36	174.78	213.62	252.46	291.30	349.56
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority	52.28	60.99	69.71	78.42	95.85	113.27	130.70	156.84
Parish / Town only (a)	9.99	11.65	13.32	14.98	18.31	21.64	24.97	29.97
Parish / Town & District (b)	101.91	118.89	135.88	152.86	186.83	220.80	254.77	305.73
Total (c)	955.58	1,114.84	1,274.10	1,433.36	1,751.89	2,070.41	2,388.94	2,866.73
<u>Parish: **</u>								
Ash Priors	945.59	1,103.18	1,260.79	1,418.38	1,733.58	2,048.77	2,363.97	2,836.76
Ashbrittle	959.54	1,119.45	1,279.39	1,439.30	1,759.15	2,078.99	2,398.84	2,878.60
Bathealton	949.43	1,107.66	1,265.91	1,424.14	1,740.62	2,057.09	2,373.57	2,848.28

Bishops Hull	958.34	1,118.05	1,277.79	1,437.50	1,756.95	2,076.39	2,395.84	2,875.00
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	968.02	1,129.35	1,290.70	1,452.03	1,774.71	2,097.38	2,420.05	2,904.06
Bradford on Tone	960.24	1,120.27	1,280.32	1,440.35	1,760.43	2,080.50	2,400.59	2,880.70
Burrowbridge	961.94	1,122.25	1,282.59	1,442.90	1,763.55	2,084.19	2,404.84	2,885.80
Cheddon Fitzpaine	960.70	1,120.81	1,280.94	1,441.05	1,761.29	2,081.52	2,401.75	2,882.10
Chipstable	957.90	1,117.55	1,277.21	1,436.85	1,756.15	2,075.45	2,394.75	2,873.70
Churchstanton	962.51	1,122.92	1,283.35	1,443.76	1,764.60	2,085.43	2,406.27	2,887.52
Combe Florey	959.51	1,119.42	1,279.35	1,439.26	1,759.10	2,078.93	2,398.77	2,878.52
Comeytrove	953.48	1,112.39	1,271.31	1,430.22	1,748.05	2,065.87	2,383.70	2,860.44
Corfe	955.93	1,115.24	1,274.58	1,433.89	1,752.54	2,071.17	2,389.82	2,867.78
Cotford St Luke	960.26	1,120.30	1,280.35	1,440.39	1,760.48	2,080.56	2,400.65	2,880.78
Creech St Michael	965.85	1,126.82	1,287.80	1,448.77	1,770.72	2,092.67	2,414.62	2,897.54
Durston	952.46	1,111.19	1,269.95	1,428.68	1,746.17	2,063.65	2,381.14	2,857.36
Fitzhead	962.68	1,123.11	1,283.57	1,444.01	1,764.91	2,085.79	2,406.69	2,888.02
Halse	954.92	1,114.06	1,273.23	1,432.37	1,750.68	2,068.98	2,387.29	2,864.74 2,867.88

Hatch Beauchamp	955.96	1,115.28	1,274.62	1,433.94	1,752.60	2,071.25	2,389.90	
Kingston St Mary	954.16	1,113.17	1,272.21	1,431.23	1,749.29	2,067.33	2,385.39	2,862.46
Langford Budville	958.71	1,118.49	1,278.28	1,438.06	1,757.63	2,077.20	2,396.77	2,876.12
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	958.43	1,118.16	1,277.91	1,437.64	1,757.12	2,076.59	2,396.07	2,875.28
Milverton	961.84	1,122.13	1,282.45	1,442.75	1,763.37	2,083.97	2,404.59	2,885.50
Neroche	958.07	1,117.74	1,277.43	1,437.10	1,756.46	2,075.81	2,395.17	2,874.20
North Curry	961.13	1,121.31	1,281.51	1,441.69	1,762.07	2,082.44	2,402.82	2,883.38
Norton Fitzwarren	963.40	1,123.96	1,284.54	1,445.10	1,766.24	2,087.37	2,408.50	2,890.20
Nynehead	958.46	1,118.20	1,277.95	1,437.69	1,757.18	2,076.66	2,396.15	2,875.38
Oake	955.93	1,115.24	1,274.58	1,433.89	1,752.54	2,071.17	2,389.82	2,867.78
Otterford	945.59	1,103.18	1,260.79	1,418.38	1,733.58	2,048.77	2,363.97	2,836.76
Pitminster	957.77	1,117.39	1,277.03	1,436.65	1,755.91	2,075.16	2,394.42	2,873.30
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	961.75	1,122.03	1,282.34	1,442.62	1,763.21	2,083.78	2,404.37	2,885.24
Sampford Arundel	971.46	1,133.36	1,295.28	1,457.18	1,781.00	2,104.81	2,428.64	2,914.36
Staplegrove	953.62	1,112.55	1,271.50	1,430.43	1,748.31	2,066.18	2,384.05	2,860.86
Stawley	957.06	1,116.56	1,276.08	1,435.58	1,754.60	2,073.61	2,392.64	2,871.16

Stoke St Gregory	963.58	1,124.17	1,284.78	1,445.37	1,766.57	2,087.76	2,408.95	2,890.74
Stoke St Mary	956.41	1,115.80	1,275.22	1,434.61	1,753.42	2,072.21	2,391.02	2,869.22
Taunton	947.58	1,105.50	1,263.44	1,421.36	1,737.22	2,053.07	2,368.94	2,842.72
Trull	960.19	1,120.21	1,280.26	1,440.28	1,760.35	2,080.40	2,400.47	2,880.56
Wellington	963.86	1,124.49	1,285.15	1,445.78	1,767.07	2,088.35	2,409.64	2,891.56
Wellington Without	958.92	1,118.73	1,278.56	1,438.37	1,758.01	2,077.64	2,397.29	2,876.74
West Bagborough	960.42	1,120.48	1,280.56	1,440.62	1,760.76	2,080.89	2,401.04	2,881.24
West Buckland	957.48	1,117.06	1,276.65	1,436.22	1,755.38	2,074.54	2,393.70	2,872.44
West Hatch	957.33	1,116.88	1,276.44	1,435.99	1,755.10	2,074.21	2,393.32	2,871.98
West Monkton	960.41	1,120.47	1,280.55	1,440.61	1,760.75	2,080.88	2,401.02	2,881.22
Wiveliscombe	962.06	1,122.40	1,282.75	1,443.09	1,763.78	2,084.46	2,405.15	2,886.18

**APPENDIX
B**

TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPTS

Parish/Town Council	2014/15			2015/16			Council Tax Increase
	Tax Base	Precept Levied	Council Tax Band D	Tax Base	Precept Levied	Council Tax Band D	
		£	£		£	£	
Ash Priors	77.15	-	-	80.62	-	-	0.00%
Ashbrittle	91.49	1,800	19.67	91.07	1,905	20.92	6.32%
Bathealton	85.52	500	5.85	86.75	500	5.76	-1.42%
Bishops Hull	1,066.11	21,000	19.70	1,098.26	21,000	19.12	-2.93%
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	1,051.08	32,321	30.75	1,075.15	36,176	33.65	9.42%
Bradford on Tone	285.36	5,500	19.27	284.52	6,250	21.97	13.97%
Burrowbridge	200.22	4,900	24.47	203.92	5,000	24.52	0.19%
Cheddon Fitzpaine	612.72	13,900	22.69	611.88	13,874	22.67	-0.05%
Chipstable	130.11	2,223	17.09	127.21	2,350	18.47	8.12%
Churchstanton	348.93	8,681	24.88	353.59	8,974	25.38	2.01%

Combe Florey	120.42	2,250	18.68	119.75	2,500	20.88	11.73%
Comeytrowe	1,955.60	23,154	11.84	1,955.48	23,153	11.84	0.00%
Corfe	132.54	1,500	11.32	128.91	2,000	15.51	37.09%
Cotford St Luke	764.65	16,065	21.01	755.37	16,626	22.01	4.76%
Creech St Michael	952.22	26,948	28.30	957.82	29,111	30.39	7.40%
Durston	58.89	600	10.19	58.23	600	10.30	1.13%
Fitzhead	116.15	2,844	24.49	116.86	2,995	25.63	4.67%
Halse	139.93	2,000	14.29	143.01	2,000	13.99	-2.15%
Hatch Beauchamp	252.87	4,000	15.82	257.15	4,000	15.56	-1.66%
Kingston St Mary	425.85	5,508	12.93	428.70	5,508	12.85	-0.66%
Langford Budville	228.27	4,500	19.71	228.61	4,500	19.68	-0.15%
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	204.14	3,938	19.29	207.41	3,995	19.26	-0.15%
Milverton	569.28	14,000	24.59	574.56	14,000	24.37	-0.92%
Neroche	245.73	4,484	18.25	237.51	4,446	18.72	2.58%
North Curry	692.49	15,342	22.15	706.54	16,469	23.31	5.21%
Norton Fitzwarren							-3.78%

	904.74	25,122	27.77	946.60	25,292	26.72	
Nynehead	162.35	4,250	26.18	165.76	3,200	19.31	-26.25%
Oake	320.09	5,000	15.62	322.36	5,000	15.51	-0.70%
Otterford	168.69	-	-	166.18	-	-	0.00%
Pitminster	451.84	8,899	19.70	459.77	8,400	18.27	-7.24%
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	576.15	14,000	24.30	577.61	14,000	24.24	-0.25%
Sampford Arundel	124.91	4,800	38.43	123.72	4,800	38.80	0.96%
Staplegrave	743.74	11,800	15.87	788.65	9,500	12.05	-24.08%
Stawley	133.37	2,400	18.00	139.56	2,400	17.20	-4.44%
Stoke St Gregory	352.08	9,000	25.56	355.72	9,600	26.99	5.58%
Stoke St Mary	198.81	3,236	16.28	199.43	3,236	16.23	-0.31%
Taunton	14,206.18	42,292	2.98	14,395.62	42,900	2.98	0.00%
Trull	994.65	18,000	18.10	1,004.56	22,000	21.90	21.02%
Wellington	4,355.37	108,666	24.95	4,482.33	122,816	27.40	9.82%
Wellington Without	292.04	5,640	19.31	300.18	6,000	19.99	3.50%
West Bagborough	163.53	2,500	15.29	157.40	3,500	22.24	45.45%

West Buckland	419.36	7,483	17.84	416.48	7,428	17.84	-0.05%
West Hatch	135.80	2,330	17.16	132.29	2,330	17.61	2.65%
West Monkton	1,105.07	27,379	24.78	1,276.68	28,379	22.23	-10.28%
Wiveliscombe	1,046.48	25,000	23.89	1,048.77	25,910	24.71	3.41%
Totals	37,662.97	545,755	14.49	38,348.55	574,623	14.98	3.41%

(e) Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2015/2016

The Executive had given consideration to the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates for the 2015/2016 Financial Year. It also included details of the proposed increase in Average Weekly Rent for the year where a 2.2% increase has been recommended.

2015/2016 would be the fourth 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 Proposed Budget was based on assumptions and estimates on expenditure requirements and income projections, in order to deliver the updated Business Plan.

Dwelling rents for approximately 5,800 properties provided annual income of over £24,000,000 for the HRA.

Local authorities had both the power and duty to set their own rent. However, in December 2000 Central Government had set out a policy for social rents in England to be fair, affordable and less confusing for tenants. Local Authorities and Housing Associations had been required 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 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. However, the Government had recently amended its guidance in this respect and full convergence could not now be obtained.

2014/2015 was the final year that a convergence factor could be included in the rent calculation and the continuing budget impact of this change was that the Council would lose the potential to increase rent income by approximately £242,000 per year from 2015/2016 onwards.

From 2015/2016 the Government had altered the basis for calculation of guideline rent increases, from RPI plus ½%, to CPI plus 1%.

In line with the national rent guidance and the service need identified in the Business Plan, it was proposed that the average weekly rent for dwellings for 2015/2016 should be set at the guideline rent of £83.88, an increase of 2.2% or £1.82 per week.

The budget for non-dwelling rents and charges for services and facilities was based on a 2.3% increase.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Adkins, it was

Resolved that:-

(1) The Average Weekly Rent increase of 2.2% be approved; and

(2) The Housing Revenue Account budget for 2015/2016 be agreed.

(f) Support and Funding for the Arts and Creative Industries

At its January meeting, the Executive considered requests for financial assistance from two organisations within the Arts and Creative Industry sector.

The applications were from:-

- **Arts Taunton** – This was the new umbrella organisation that sought to draw together Cultural and Arts organisations in Taunton Deane creating a vibrant, coordinated programme of activity.

The former Taunton Cultural Consortium had been rebranded to take on the new name Arts Taunton. The new brand had a strapline of “Driving prosperity through culture”. However the re-branding involved costs particularly around publicity materials which included a new website. These costs were estimated to be a maximum of £10,000 which the Council has been asked to consider funding; and

- **Hestercombe Gardens Trust**

The trust had applied for a grant of £10,000 for each of the next two financial years 2015/2016 and 2016/2017. This would enable continued delivery of the Contemporary Arts Gallery at Hestercombe House. This funding would create leverage for access to significant match funding.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (i) A Supplementary Estimate of £10,000 for 2014/2015 from General Fund Reserves to enable a grant to be made to support Arts Taunton be approved; and
- (ii) A Supplementary Estimate of £20,000 from General Fund Reserves to enable a grant be made to the Hestercombe Gardens Trust be also approved. The funds would be held in an earmarked reserve with £10,000 available in both the 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 financial years.

(Councillor Mrs Hill (Deputy Mayor) declared a personal interest in the above recommendation as a Trustee of the Friends of Hestercombe.)

9. 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.

(g) Movement of the Tourist Information Centre (TIC) to part of The Market House, Taunton – Request for funding

The TIC had been located in Paul Street adjacent to Taunton Library since 1996.

The Taunton Rethink document had previously made reference to the relocation of the TIC possibly to the Coal Orchard site in conjunction with a regenerated Brewhouse Theatre or to a site in North Street.

As neither of these options were currently available, the possible use of part of The Market House in Fore Street, Taunton has been considered.

The proposed location of the TIC in the western end of the building would complement the letting of the ground floor and basement areas to a good quality restaurant chain. This is in part due to the quality of the proposed design incorporating a new glazed area within the arches of the Market House which will create a new entrance to this area of the building.

The final benefit of this proposed move would be the reduction of costs associated with the current lease at the Library. Overall savings should be in the region of £10,000 per annum.

The company JP Gainsford had been instructed to provide an initial design, provide indicative costings, secure necessary access permissions and project manage any agreed build.

The indicative costing for the work was £120,000 although this represented a maximum cost and included an appropriate contingency which linked to the age of the building.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (1) The principle of moving the Tourist Information Centre to The Market House be agreed; and
- (2) The inclusion of a capital budget of £120,000 within the General Fund Capital Programme, to be funded from the Growth and Regeneration (New Homes Bonus) Reserve be also agreed.

(The Chief Executive (Penny James), the Section 151 Officer (Shirlene Adam) and the Assistant Chief Executive (Bruce Lang) all declared prejudicial interests in the following item and left the meeting during its consideration.)

(h) Localism Act 2011 – Pay Policy Statement

The Localism Act 2011 had made it a requirement for all Local Authorities to prepare a Pay Policy Statement each year for approval by Members.

The first Statement was prepared in 2012 and was considered by Scrutiny and the Executive before approval by Full Council. However, due to the fact that the document was largely unchanged for the third year, the 2014/2015 Statement had again been reported directly to Full Council.

The 2015/2016 Statement covered the 'joint working' arrangements with West Somerset Council and the approvals made by Council on 12 November 2013.

The Statement had to include policies on which remuneration of its Chief Officers and its lowest paid employees (and the relationship between them) were based.

The Statement was also required to:-

- Set out arrangements for the remuneration of Chief Officers on appointment;
- Set out arrangements for payments on termination of employment for Chief Officers even if covered by other approved policies;
- Set out arrangements for the re-employment of Chief Officers; and
- Be published on the Council's website.

On the motion of Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams, it was

Resolved that the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/2016 be approved.

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

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Mayor suggested that responses to questions asked of the Executive Councillors should be made in writing outside of the meeting and circulated to all Members. This was agreed.

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

Councillor Williams's report covered the following topics:-

- Budget Setting;
- New Homes Bonus;
- Swimming Pool;
- Firepool, Taunton;
- The Market House, Taunton;
- Investment in Taunton Deane;
- Broadband;
- A358 and Business Park; and
- Archie Project.

(ii) **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.

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

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

- Deane Housing Development;
- Welfare Reform;
- Anti-Social Behaviour;
- Affordable Housing;
- Pathways for Adults (P4A); and
- Deane Helpline – New Contract with Aster Property.

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

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

- Corporate and Client Services;
- Corporate Health and Safety;
- Customer Contact Centre;
- Health and Wellbeing;
- Legal and Democratic Services;
- Resources; and
- Revenues and Benefits.

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

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

- Monkton Heathfield Governance Board;
- Comytrowe Urban Extension;
- Joint Management and Shared Services (JMASS) Project;
- Car Parks; and
- Communications.

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

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

- Taunton Deane Strategic Partnership;

- New One Teams;
- New Psychoactive Substances (Legal Highs);
- Town Centre Wardens; and
- Children's Centres.

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

The report from Councillor Cavill covered:-

- Business Support;
- Support for Inward Investors;
- Refurbishment of The Market House;
- Town Centre Events;
- Additional Growth Deal Funding;
- Firepool – The Emerging Plan; and
- Marketing and Tourist Information Centre (TIC)

(viii) **Environmental Services and Climate Change (Councillor Hunt)**

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

- Environmental Health / Licensing;
- Somerset Waste Partnership
- Climate Change; and
- Crematorium.

(Councillors Ross, P Smith and Tooze left the meeting at 8.51 p.m. Councillor Gill Slattery left at 9.06 p.m. Councillor D Reed left at 9.10 p.m. Councillor Ross left at 9.25 p.m. Councillors D Wedderkopp and A Govier left the meeting at 9.40 p.m. Councillors Mrs Messenger and Swaine left at 9.42 p.m.)

(The meeting ended at 10.00 pm.)

