

COUNCIL

Wednesday, 25th February, 2015

Present:- The Mayor, Councillor Mrs Linda Hailstones – in the Chair

Councillors Miss Walklate, Welsh, Mrs Johnson, Mrs Burnett, Cooper, Becket, Mrs Beech, Hambleton, Matthews, Mrs Hambleton, Wemyss, Wilkes, Mrs Williams, Williams, Mrs Astle, Fear, Hailstones, Allport, Eagles, Kearon, Taylor.J, Waring, Miss Olszewski, Loades, Holland, Bailey, Miss Cooper, Jones, Miss Reddish, Robinson, Mrs Shenton, Mrs Simpson, Sweeney, Tagg, White, Miss Mancey, Mrs Burgess, Eastwood, Baker, Mrs Peers, Plant, Stringer, Stubbs, Turner, Mrs Winfield, J Tagg, Harper, Huckfield, Naylor, Northcott, Owen, Proctor, Mrs Braithwaite, Wallace and Woolley

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Heesom, Cllr Rout and Cllr Bates.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

Prior to consideration of the minutes a number of members paid tribute to Cllr Mrs Anne Heames who had sadly passed away recently.

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meetings be agreed as a correct record.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Before commencing with the announcements, a minutes silence was held in remembrance of Cllr Mrs Anne Heames.

The Mayor reminded Members that the annual Civic Mass would be held on Sunday at Holy Trinity Catholic Church.

Tickets were now on sale for a concert by Newcastle Male Voice Choir and Newcastle Ladies Choir that would be held at Newcastle Methodist Church on Saturday 7 March at 7.30pm. The concert was in aid of the Mayor's Charity Fund.

The Mayor also urged Members to purchase tickets for the Spring Ball that was to be held in The Ballroom of Keele Hall on Friday 27 March.

5. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX 2015/2016

A report was submitted setting out the recommendations of Cabinet for the Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2015/16 and the recommendations for setting the 2015/16 Council Tax.

The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Support Services introduced the report and thanked the Executive Director for Finance and Resources and his team for all of the work that had gone into preparing and balancing the budgets.

The following amendment was moved by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Sweeney:

To add at the end of the existing recommendations in Appendix A the words:

That the proposed cut (ref A7 of appendix C. page 31) of £15,000 in the grant to Parish/Town Councils for concurrent functions be removed. That this be funded by reducing the proposed contribution to the Revenue Investment Fund (ref A8 of appendix C page 31) from £50,000 to £35,000.

A vote was taken on the amendment as follows:

29 voted in favour
0 voted against
27 abstained

The amendment was carried.

A second amendment was proposed by Cllr Sweeney and seconded by Cllr Loades:

To add at the end of the existing recommendations in Appendix A the words:

That option 4 of the report of the Concurrent Funding Task and Finish Group be implemented to "Establish a more closely monitored system". In particular: that a cross-party monitoring group be established. Prior to any grant money being issued in April 2015 individual Towns and Parishes would need to provide this group with proof that the grant for 2014/15 has been used in full and for its intended purpose. Failure to do so could result in an amount equivalent to any shortfall being deducted from the grant for 2015/16.

AND that the cross-party group pursue other matters the group feels is of concern for future arrangements.

A vote was taken with all Cllrs voting in favour of the amendment which was carried.

A third amendment was proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Sweeney:

To add at the end of the existing recommendation in Appendix A the words:

That this Council recommends that the number of cabinet members be cut from seven to six and the savings made be allocated to the Revenue Investment Fund

The Leader clarified that only he could determine the number of Cllrs on Cabinet within the restrictions of the Council's constitution and it was therefore confirmed that the amendment was a recommendation to the Leader rather than a decision to be made by Council.

A vote was taken in relation to making the recommendation to the Leader and was as follows:

27 voted in favour
29 abstained

An amendment was moved by Cllr Miss Reddish and seconded by Cllr Sweeney as follows:

To add at the end of the existing recommendation in Appendix A the words:

3. That the current expenditure (estimated at £35,000+) on servicing the Local Action Partnerships be reviewed in order to:

- a) investigate if it is giving value for money,**
- and**
- b) explore alternative ways of operating local community partnerships.**

The Portfolio holder confirmed that she consented to the amendment and that a report would be brought to Cabinet in March.

All members were in favour of the amendment which was carried.

The Executive Director for Resources and Support Services confirmed that the agreed amendments would require some changes to the figures in Appendix B page 25 of the agenda as follows:

Under Central Services the estimate for 2015/16 would now be £3,455,410 and the basic Band D Council Tax figure would be 98.04.

Under Net Operating Expenditure the figure for the contribution to/ (from) Revenue Reserves would be (£604,530) for the Estimate 2015/16 and the figure for Basic Band D council Tax would be (£17.15).

Members then moved to vote on the new substantive motion which was moved by Cllr Shenton and seconded by Cllr Stubbs.

A named vote was taken and all members present voted in favour.

Resolved:

- (a) That the Revenue Budget for 2015/16 be approved, as set out in Appendix B (with the above amendments).
- (b) That the Council Tax at Band 'D' be £176.93, unchanged from 2014/15.
- (c) That the Capital Programme to 2015/16 be approved as set out in Appendix F, together with the Prudential Indicator relating to the Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions on the Council Tax, as set out in paragraph 8.6.
- (d) That the minimum balances requirement be confirmed as £1,300,000, unchanged from a year ago.
- (e) That a budget of £139,280 be approved in respect of Keele master-planning costs to be funded from an earmarked reserve established by transferring an equivalent amount into it from the General Fund revenue account, being the estimated council tax surplus of £139,280 which will be credited to the revenue account in 2015/16.
- (f) That with respect to the discretion allowed by reforms to Council Tax legislation detailed within The Local Government Finance Act 2012 for charges in respect of Class C exemptions, that the current 100 per cent discount for 56 days be reduced to 28 days and thereafter this be reduced to 0 per cent, with an occupation period of at least 42 days required before a further 100% exemption can be applied.

(g) That it be noted that at its meeting on the 15 January 2014 the Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2015/16:

- (i) 35,242 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, as its council tax base for the whole Council area for the year (Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"))
- (ii) For dwellings in those parts of the Council's area to which a Parish precept relates as in the table below:

Kidsgrove	6,387
Loggerheads	1,859
Audley	2,450
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill	564
Chapel and Hill Chorlton	194
Keele	331
Madeley	1,413
Maer	253
Silverdale	1,410
Whitmore	803

(h) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2015/16 (excluding Parish precepts) is £6,235,370.

(i) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2015/16 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

- (i) £72,486,159 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.
- (ii) £65,945,083 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act.
- (iii) £6,541,076 being the amount by which the aggregate at (i)(i) above exceeds the aggregate at (i)(ii) 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).
- (iv) £185.60 being the amount at i (iii) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (g (i) 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).
- (v) £305,709 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act.
- (vi) £176.93 being the amount at (i) (iv) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (i) (v) above by item T (g (i) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item (Parish precept) relates.

(vii) **Part of the Council's Area**

	£ p
Audley Parish Council	194.43
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	194.19
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	192.41
Keele Parish Council	200.27
Kidsgrove Town Council	191.70
Loggerheads Parish Council	198.23
Madeley Parish Council	221.53
Maer Parish Council	195.57
Silverdale Parish Council	188.91
Whitmore Parish Council	206.57

Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (i) (vi) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above, divided in each case by the amount at (g) (ii) above calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(viii) **Valuation Bands**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Kidsgrove Town Council	127.80	149.10	170.40	191.70	234.30	276.89	319.50	383.40
Loggerheads Parish Council	132.15	154.18	176.20	198.23	242.28	286.33	330.38	396.46
Audley Parish Council	129.62	151.22	172.83	194.43	237.64	280.84	324.05	388.86
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	129.46	151.03	172.61	194.19	237.35	280.49	323.65	388.38
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	128.27	149.65	171.03	192.41	235.17	277.92	320.68	384.82
Keele Parish Council	133.51	155.76	178.02	200.27	244.78	289.27	333.78	400.54
Madeley Parish Council	147.68	172.30	196.91	221.53	270.76	319.98	369.21	443.06
Maer Parish Council	130.38	152.11	173.84	195.57	239.03	282.48	325.95	391.14
Whitmore Parish Council	137.71	160.66	183.62	206.57	252.48	298.37	344.28	413.14
Silverdale Parish Council	125.94	146.93	167.92	188.91	230.89	272.86	314.85	377.82
Other Parts of Borough Area	117.95	137.61	157.27	176.93	216.25	255.56	294.88	353.86

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

- (j) That it be noted that for the year 2015/16 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:-

Precepting Authority **Valuation Bands**

Council - 25/02/15

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Staffordshire County Council	698.19	814.55	930.91	1047.28	1280.01	1512.74	1745.47	2094.56
Staffordshire Fire Authority	45.97	53.64	61.30	68.96	84.28	99.61	114.93	137.92
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Staffordshire	118.41	138.14	157.88	177.61	217.08	256.55	296.02	355.22

- (k) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (i) (viii) and (j) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2015/16 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

Valuation Bands

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
Kidsgrove Town Council	990.37	1155.43	1320.49	1485.55	1815.67	2145.79	2475.92	2971.10
Loggerheads Parish Council	994.72	1160.51	1326.29	1492.08	1823.65	2155.23	2486.80	2984.16
Audley Parish Council	992.19	1157.55	1322.92	1488.28	1819.01	2149.74	2480.47	2976.56
Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Parish Council	992.03	1157.36	1322.70	1488.04	1818.72	2149.39	2480.07	2976.08
Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council	990.84	1155.98	1321.12	1486.26	1816.54	2146.82	2477.10	2972.52
Keele Parish Council	996.08	1162.09	1328.11	1494.12	1826.15	2158.17	2490.20	2988.24
Madeley Parish Council	1010.25	1178.63	1347.00	1515.38	1852.13	2188.88	2525.63	3030.76
Maer Parish Council	992.95	1158.44	1323.93	1489.42	1820.40	2151.38	2482.37	2978.84
Whitmore Parish Council	1000.28	1166.99	1333.71	1500.42	1833.85	2167.27	2500.70	3000.84
Silverdale Parish Council	988.51	1153.26	1318.01	1482.76	1812.26	2141.76	2471.27	2965.52
Other Parts of Borough Area	980.52	1143.94	1307.36	1470.78	1797.62	2124.46	2451.30	2941.56

- (l) That the proposed cut (ref A7 of appendix C. page 31) of £15,000 in the grant to Parish/Town Councils for concurrent functions be removed. That this be funded by reducing the proposed contribution to the Revenue Investment Fund (ref A8 of appendix C page 31) from £50,000 to £35,000.

- (m) That option 4 of the report of the Concurrent Funding Task and Finish Group be implemented to "Establish a more closely monitored system". In particular: that a cross-party monitoring group be established. Prior to any grant money being issued in April 2015 individual Towns and Parishes would need to provide this group with proof that the grant for 2014/15 has been used in full and for its intended purpose. Failure to do so could result in an amount equivalent to any shortfall being deducted from the grant for 2015/16. AND that the cross-party group pursue other matters the group feels is of concern for future arrangements.

(n) That the current expenditure (estimated at £35,000+) on servicing the Local Action Partnerships be reviewed in order to:

- a) investigate if it is giving value for money,
- and
- b) explore alternative ways of operating local community partnerships.

6. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015/2016

A report was submitted requesting Council to approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16, including the Prudential Indicators, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy contained within it.

Resolved:

- (a) That the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2015/16 be approved.
- (b) That the Prudential Indicators contained within the report be approved.
- (c) That the Investment Strategy contained within the report be approved.
- (d) That the Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy contained within the report be approved.

7. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2015

A report was submitted requesting Members to consider and approve the Capital Strategy 2015 to 2019.

Two amendments had been submitted as follows:

Amendment 1

To delete recommendation (b)

Amendment 2

To add an additional recommendation:

In the interests of transparency and open government a cross party scrutiny working group be set up to listen to the concerns of local residents before any green space is sold for development.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources stated that a Cabinet Panel along the lines of the cross party scrutiny working group recommended in amendment 2 was already in the process of being set up following a resolution of the Cabinet in February 2014.

The mover of the second amendment therefore agreed to withdraw the amendment.

Cllr Sweeney moved the first amendment which was seconded by Cllr Fear.

A vote was taken as follows:

26 in favour
28 against

1 abstention

The amendment fell.

A vote was then taken on the original motion as follows:

33 in favour

22 abstentions

Resolved:

- a) That the Capital Strategy be approved.
- b) That in future the Capital Strategy be approved by the Cabinet, without Council approval being required.
- c) That, in respect of recommendation b), Financial Regulation B1 (a) be amended by the deletion of "Capital Strategy" from the list of elements of the policy framework which are to be approved by Full Council and that Procedural Regulation Bf23 be amended by deleting the words in italics below:

Bf23 The Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) shall ensure that a Capital Strategy is produced and revised annually. He shall submit the Strategy to the Cabinet for consideration and to the Full Council for approval.

8. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2015

A report was submitted in relation to The Localism Act 2011, which required local authorities to prepare and publish a pay policy statement for each financial year. The statement set out the authority's policies relating to the remuneration of its chief officers, the remuneration of its lowest paid employees and the relationship between the remuneration of its chief officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not chief officers.

Resolved:

That the Pay Policy Statement attached at Appendix A to this report be approved and published on the council's website by 31 March 2015.

9. SCHEME OF DELEGATION IN RELATION TO PLANNING FUNCTIONS

To update the current Planning Scheme of Delegation to reflect recommendations arising following the recent Planning Peer Review.

The following amendment was moved by Cllr Fear and seconded by Cllr Miss Reddish:

To delete the existing recommendation and replace it with:

The revised Planning Scheme of Delegation set out in the Appendix to this report be referred back to the Planning Committee for further consideration to take account of points raised by the Council at its meeting on 25 February 2015 and that a revised version be brought to the Council at its meeting on 15 April 2015.

Members considered the amendment and voted as follows:

28 in favour
25 against
1 abstention

The amendment was there carried and became the new substantive motion on which a vote was taken as follows:

27 in favour
2 against
24 abstentions

Resolved:

That the revised Planning Scheme of Delegation set out in the Appendix to this report be referred back to the Planning Committee for further consideration to take account of points raised by the Council at its meeting on 25 February 2015 and that a revised version be brought to the Council at its meeting on 15 April 2015.

10. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

A report was submitted to improve the efficiency and accessibility of the Constitution and to ensure that it is up to date and fully complies with the law.

Resolved:

- a) That Council adopts the amendments to the Constitution recommended by the Constitution Review Working Group and endorsed by the Finance, Resources and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee as listed below:
 - I. That the redrafted Member Code of Conduct be agreed,
 - II. That the revised Elected Member/Officer Relations Protocol be adopted,
 - III. That having been reviewed by the Finance, Resources & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee the updated version of Appendix 12 (Contract Procedure Rules) of the Constitution be adopted by Full Council,
 - IV. That the suggested wording relating to the appointment of Honorary Aldermen be included in the Constitution.
 - V. That both sections in the constitution that refer to urgency provisions be replaced with one new urgency clause as suggested in the report.
 - VI. That diarised meetings of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group are no longer required.
- b) That the Constitution Review Working Group continues its review of the Constitution.

11. STATEMENT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

A report was submitted by the Leader of the Council on the activities and decisions of Cabinet and items included on the Forward Plan.

12. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Verbal and written reports were received from the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees.

13. REPORTS OF THE CHAIRS OF THE REGULATORY COMMITTEES

Verbal and written reports were received from the Chairs of the regulatory committees.

14. QUESTIONS TO THE MAYOR, CABINET MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

The Leader confirmed that full written response would be provided to the questions that had been submitted.

15. MOTIONS OF MEMBERS

No motions had been submitted.

16. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS AND UPDATE ON PREVIOUS PETITION SUBMITTED

On 3rd February 2015, the Council received a petition from Mr Tim Cooper in relation to Land at the Butts and its inclusion in the Joint Local Plan. Mr Cooper was in attendance at the meeting to present the petition to Members

The petition had been signed by 302 residents and due to the fact that it related to a local issue affecting no more than two electoral wards within the Council area it met the criteria to be considered by Full Council.

Members thanked Mr Cooper and those who had signed the petition.

Following consideration of the petition and presentation by Mr Cooper, Council considered the following options:

- To take the action the petition requests
- To not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate; or
- to commission further investigation into the matter (for example, by a relevant committee).

Resolved:

As the actions requested by the petition were not within the remit of the Council it was resolved that the matters highlighted be referred back to the Cabinet for additional consideration.

17. STANDING ORDER 18 - URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

THE MAYOR, COUNCILLOR MRS LINDA HAILSTONES
Chair