

MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON, ON THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2009 AT SIX THIRTY O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

PRESENT: HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR Councillor B Markham (in the Chair).

COUNCILLORS: Beardsworth, Capstick, Caswell, I. Choudary, Church, Clarke, Collins, J. Conroy, R. Conroy, Crake, De Cruz, Davies, Edwards, Garlick, Glynane, Golby, Hadland, Hawkins, Hill, B. Hoare, Hollis, Lane, Larratt, C. Lill, J. Lill, Malpas, I. Markham, Mason, Matthews, Meredith, Mildren, Palethorpe, Perkins, Reeve, Scott, Simpson, Taylor, P. D. Varnsvery, P. M. Varnsvery, Wilson, Woods and Yates

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors J Conroy, R Conroy and De Cruz declared personal interests in Item 10 "Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2009/10 and Budget Projections 2010/11 and 2011/12" as housing tenants.

2. MINUTES.

The minutes of the meetings of Council held on 8 December 2008 and 19 January 2009 were signed by the Mayor.

3. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from Councillors S Chaudhury and Duncan.

The Mayor, on behalf of the Council, congratulated Councillor S Chaudhury and his wife on the recent birth of their son.

The Mayor welcomed Councillor Golby to his first meeting of the Council.

4. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Mayor proposed that Council Procedural Rules be suspended so as not to place time limits on speakers' contributions during discussion of the meeting's Agenda. This proposal was agreed by the Council.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND PETITIONS

None.

6. CORPORATE PLAN 2009-2012

Councillor Woods submitted a report that set out the Council's Corporate Plan for

2009/12 subject to the final detail on targets being agreed. Councillor Glynane seconded the recommendation.

- RESOLVED:** (1) That the draft Corporate Plan attached to the report be approved subject to the addition of detailed targets arising from the Service Planning process.
- (2) That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council be authorised to finalise the Corporate Plan and associated action plan in line with the Budget decisions, Service Plans and any other consequent changes.

7. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2009-10 TO 2011-12

Councillor Mildren submitted a report that set out the Council's Capital Strategy for 2009/10 to 2011/12, presented the proposed Capital Programme for 2009/10 and Outline Proposals for 2010/11 to 2011/12 and outlined the Capital Programme Funding Proposals for 2009/10 and future years. Councillor Perkins seconded the recommendation.

- RESOLVED:** (1) That the Capital Strategy for 2009/10 to 2011/12 as set out in Annex A of the Report to Cabinet be approved.
- (2) That the Capital Programme for 2009/10 including future year commitments as set out in Annex B to the Cabinet Report be approved.
- (3) That the capital financing principles to be applied in 2009/10 as set out in the Capital Strategy (Annex A to the Cabinet Report) be approved.
- (4) That the proposed financing of the Capital Programme for 2009/10 and future years as set out at paragraph 3.2.10 and Annex C of the Cabinet Report be approved.
- (5) That Cabinet be authorised once the programme has been set to approve new capital schemes and variations to existing schemes during 2009/10 subject to the funding being available and the schemes being in accordance with the objectives and priorities of the Council.
- (6) That the contribution of each new scheme in the 2009/10 Capital Programme to the Council's Corporate Priorities for 2009/12 as set out in Annex D of the Cabinet Report be noted.
- (7) That the Outline Bids for Future Years as set out in Annex E of the Cabinet Report be noted.

8. COUNCIL WIDE GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2009-10 TO 2011-12

Councillor Woods submitted a report, which set out the outcome of the consultation process on the 2009/10 General Fund Budget and the Final Formula Grant Settlement for 2009/10 and which sought approval for the 2009/10 General Fund Budget and Council Tax increase for 2009/10 and Indicative Budgets and Council Tax increases for 2010/11 and 2011/12 as recommended by Cabinet. Councillor Woods also circulated an Addendum that set out an amendment to the Budget Report as a result of and since the Cabinet meeting on 19 February 2009. Councillor Mildren seconded the recommendation as amended.

Councillor Clarke proposed and Councillor Capstick seconded:

“That this Council amends its 2009/10 Revenue Budget as follows:

- (a) Reduce Councillor expenses to the levels as at 3 May 2007. (saving £98,450)

Remove from the budget Restructuring of Human Resources for 2009/10. (saving £76,387)

Further reduction in Agency Staff Expenditure by £63,000 total across all departments except neighbourhood environmental services. (saving £63,000)

That this saving of £237,837 be used for re-allocation on the following expenditure:

Retain Neighbourhood Management Service at its current staff level. (£186,000)

Retain Public Toilets at current levels/scrap Richmond initiative. (£51,730)

- (b) That a sum of £75,000 from the Council’s reserves be ring fenced and if required made available for the use of subsidy for a reduced Northampton Balloon Festival organised by the Council or in partnership with any interested outside body.”

The Council debated the amendment.

Upon a request for a recorded vote:

There voted for the amendment; Councillors Capstick, I Choudary, Clarke, Davies, C Lill, J Lill, Mason, Reeve and Scott.

There voted against the amendment Councillors Beardsworth, Church, Collins, J Conroy, R Conroy, Crake, De Cruz, Garlick, Glynane, Golby, Hawkins, B Hoare, Hollis, Lane, I Markham, Matthews, Meredith, Mildren, Palethorpe, Perkins, Simpson, Taylor, P D Varnsberry, P M Varnsberry, Wilson, Woods and Yates.

There abstained; the Mayor and Councillors Caswell, Edwards, Hill, Larratt and

Malpas.

The amendment was lost.

Councillor Hadland proposed and Councillor Palethorpe seconded:

- “(1) To invest a total of £145,000 from the actions below to maintain the current level of funded Neighbourhood Wardens at fifteen.
- (2) Reduce the Councillor allowances back to the pre-1 April 2008 level to provide a saving of £98,000.
- (3) Fund the remaining balance of £47,000 from General Reserves.”

The amendment was debated by the Council.

On a request for a recorded vote:

There voted for the amendment Councillors Capstick, Caswell, I Choudary, Clarke, Davies, Edwards, Golby, Hadland, Hill, Lane, Larratt, C Lill, J Lill, Malpas, Mason, Palethorpe, Reeve and Scott.

There voted against the amendment Councillors Beardsworth, Church, Collins, J Conroy, R Conroy, Crake, De Cruz, Garlick, Glynane, Hawkins, B Hoare, Hollis, I Markham, Matthews, Meredith, Mildren, Perkins, Simpson, Taylor, P D Varnsvery, P M Varnsvery, Wilson, Woods and Yates.

There abstained; the Mayor.

The amendment was lost.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the feedback from consultation with the public, organisations and the Overview & Scrutiny Committees, be considered and welcomed (detailed at Annexes 1 and 2 of the report).
 - (2) That the Council’s representations on the provisional formula grant settlement be noted (Annex 3 of the report).
 - (3) That the projected 2008/09 outturn position of £66,000 under spend (as at the end of December 2009) be noted.
 - (4) That the changes to the proposed budget (detailed at Annex 4 of the report), in light of the consultation responses and the final formula grant settlement, be noted.
 - (5) That the issues and risks detailed in the Section 151 Officer’s statement on the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of the reserves (detailed at Annex 9 of the report) be

acknowledged.

- (6) That a General Fund budget for 2009/10 of £32.4m (detailed in Annex 5 of the report) for the Council's own purposes be approved.
- (7) That the increase in Council Tax by 3.9% for 2009/10 for the Council's own purposes (ie excluding County, Police and Parish precepts) be agreed.
- (8) That the reserves strategy of protecting balances wherever possible to allow the option of supporting future years' budgets, aiming for a minimum level of unallocated general fund reserves of £2.6m at the end of 2009/10 having regard to the outcome of the financial risk assessment and remaining at this level over the medium term be confirmed.
- (9) That the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Support be delegated authority to implement all budget options and restructurings.
- (10) That the Director of Finance and Support in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, and where appropriate the relevant Director and Portfolio Holder, be delegated authority to transfer monies from earmarked reserves should that become necessary during the financial year.

9. COUNCIL TAX 2009-10

Councillor Mildren submitted a report that set out the final precept determinations from Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Police Authority and Northampton Borough Council. Councillor Perkins seconded the motion.

RESOLVED: Northampton Borough Council (hereinafter referred to as "the Council" in this resolution) calculated the following amounts for the year 2009/10 in accordance with various regulations and resolves for the financial year 2009/10 to:

1. Set the General Fund Budget Requirement for the Council at £33,197,629 calculated as follows:

	£
a) Net Expenditure on Council Services	32,293,527
b) Parish Council Precepts	904,102
c) Total General Fund Budget Requirement	<u>33,197,629</u>

2. Note that, arising from the decision of the Council at this meeting and decision taken by Parish Councils, the amount of

Special Items included in the Budget Requirement set out at (1) above is £1,910,589 calculated as follows:

	£
a) Council Special Expenses	1,006,487
b) Parish Council Expenses	904,102
c) Total Special Items	<u>1,910,589</u>

3. Note that (in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 – “the Act”) the Council has calculated the following amounts:

a) £66,166 being the Council Tax Base (in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992) and the Local Authorities (calculation of tax base) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 and (No2) Regulations 2003) for the year.

b) That the sums shown in Annex B Schedule A column (2) being the amounts of Council Tax Base for dwellings in those parts of the area set out in column (1) of the schedule to which one or more special items relate.

4. Set the following amounts in accordance with sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

	£		
a)	Gross Expenditure	127,377,884	Gross expenditure including Parish precepts in accordance with s32(2) (a)-(e) of the Act
b)	Gross Income	94,180,255	Gross income including the use of reserves in accordance with s32 (3) (a)-(c) of the Act
c)	Budget Requirement	<u>33,197,629</u>	The budget requirement in accordance with s32(4) of the Act being the amount by which the aggregate at 4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act
d) i)	Redistributed Non Domestic Rates	-15,308,723	From the finance settlement
ii)	Revenue Support Grant	-3,533,451	From the finance settlement
iii)	Transfer from Collection Fund	86,252	Collection Fund deficit in accordance with s97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and regulations

			made under s98 of the 1988 Act
iv)	Total of d)(i) to (iii) inclusive	<u>-18,755,922</u>	Formula grant, special grants and Collection Fund deficit
e)	Amount to be raised from Council Taxes	14,441,707	Item (c) + (d)(iv)
f)	Basic Amount of Council Tax	218.26	Item (e) divided by tax base (resolution 3(a)) – this represents the weighted average Council Tax at Band D including Parish precepts but excluding County Council and Police Authority in accordance with s33(1) of the Act
g)	Total of Special Items	1,910,589	This represents the total of Parish precepts and other special items in accordance with s34(1) of the Act (as shown at 2 above)
h)	Basic Amount of Council Tax for dwellings in parts of the area to which no special items relate	189.39	Item (e) – (g) divided by tax base (resolutions 2(a)) in accordance with s34(2) of the Act
i)	Basic Amount of Council Tax for dwellings in parts of the area to which one or more special items relate	Sums in column (5) of Annex B Schedule A	Item (h) plus column 3 of Schedule A in Annex B (excludes Police Authority) – this represents the Band D Council Tax by Parish including Parish precepts but excluding Fire and Police in accordance with s34(3) of the Act
j)	Basic Amount of Council Tax as in (h) for each Council Tax Band	Sums shown in Schedule B Annex A	This represents the Council Tax by Parish and by each valuation band including Parish precepts but excluding Fire and Police in accordance with s36(1) and s5(1) of the Act

5. Note that Northamptonshire County Council and Northamptonshire Police Authority, in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Act 1992, have stated the amounts of precepts shown in Schedule C of Annex B for each category of dwelling.

6. Set, as a result of items 4 and 5 above, the amounts of Council Tax shown in Schedule D in Annex B, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown in the Schedule.

Schedules

Schedule A

	(1) Council Tax Base	(2) Special Expenses	(3) Special Expenses Charge	(4) Basic Amount of Council Tax excluding Special Expenses	(5) Basic Amount of Council Tax including Special Expenses
		£	£	£	£
Area:					
Billing	2,567	175,048	68.19	189.39	257.58
Collingtree	514	8,160	15.88	189.39	205.27
Duston	5,172	346,332	66.96	189.39	256.35
Great Houghton	286	21,063	73.65	189.39	263.04
Hardingstone	743	77,156	103.84	189.39	293.23
Upton	1,302	5,250	4.03	189.39	193.42
Wootton	6,331	378,956	59.86	189.39	249.25
Unparished Area	49,251	898,624	18.25	189.39	207.64
	66,166	1,910,589			

Schedule B – Amount of Council Tax for Each Council Tax Band

Valuation Bands	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Area:								
Billing	171.72	200.34	228.96	257.58	314.82	372.06	429.30	515.16
Collingtree	136.85	159.65	182.46	205.27	250.89	296.50	342.12	410.54
Duston	170.90	199.38	227.87	256.35	313.32	370.28	427.25	512.70
Great Houghton	175.36	204.59	233.81	263.04	321.49	379.95	438.40	526.08
Hardingstone	195.49	228.07	260.65	293.23	358.39	423.55	488.72	586.46
Upton	128.95	150.44	171.93	193.42	236.40	279.38	322.37	386.84
Wootton	166.17	193.86	221.56	249.25	304.64	360.03	415.42	498.50
Unparished Area	138.43	161.50	184.57	207.64	253.78	299.92	346.07	415.28

Schedule C – Major Precepting Authorities Council Tax for Each Council Tax Band

Valuation Bands	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Northamptonshire County Council	662.23	772.60	882.97	993.34	1,214.08	1,434.82	1,655.57	1,986.68
Northamptonshire Police Authority	124.44	145.18	165.92	186.66	228.14	269.62	311.10	373.32

Schedule D – Aggregate Council Tax for Each Council Tax Band

Valuation Bands	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Area:								
Billing	958.39	1,118.12	1,277.85	1,437.58	1,757.04	2,076.50	2,395.97	2,875.16
Collingtree	923.52	1,077.43	1,231.35	1,385.27	1,693.11	2,000.94	2,308.79	2,770.54
Duston	957.57	1,117.16	1,276.76	1,436.35	1,755.54	2,074.72	2,393.92	2,872.70
Great Houghton	962.03	1,122.37	1,282.70	1,443.04	1,763.71	2,084.39	2,405.07	2,886.08
Hardingstone	982.16	1,145.85	1,309.54	1,473.23	1,800.61	2,127.99	2,455.39	2,946.46
Upton	915.62	1,068.22	1,220.82	1,373.42	1,678.62	1,983.82	2,289.04	2,746.84
Wootton	952.84	1,111.64	1,270.45	1,429.25	1,746.86	2,064.47	2,382.09	2,858.50
Unparished Area	925.10	1,079.28	1,233.46	1,387.64	1,696.00	2,004.36	2,312.74	2,775.28

10. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET 2009/10 AND BUDGET PROJECTIONS 2010/11 AND 2011/12

Councillor Mildren submitted a report that sought approval to the overall HRA budget for 2009/10 and forecasts for 2010/11 and 2011/12, the approval of the HRA rent increases and other charges for 2009/10, to approve the medium term planning option submitted in Annex D of the report and to provide an update on the ongoing work on the direction of the HRA. Councillor Beardsworth seconded the recommendations.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the average rent increase of 5.65% per dwelling per week be approved in line with the Government's rent restructuring regime, convergence in 2023/24, to take effect from 1 April 2009.
 - (2) That the Medium Term Planning options at Annex D of the report and the revised contributions to/from working balances be approved.
 - (3) That the HRA budget for 2009/10 set out in Annex A of the report be approved and the indicative budgets for 2010/11 and

2011/12 be noted.

- (4) That Warden and Call Care charges (including Eleanore House) be increased by 2% in line with Northampton Supporting People (as shown in Annex C of the report).
- (5) That the heating service charges be increased by 5.00% (as shown in Annex C of the report).
- (6) That garage charges be increased by 5.00% (as shown in Annex C of the report).
- (7) That the feedback from consultation through the Overview & Scrutiny Committees be welcomed (detailed at Annex E of the report) and noted.

11. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS FOR CAPITAL FINANCE 2009-10 TO 2011-12

Councillor Mildren submitted a report that set out the Council's range of Prudential Indicators for 2009/10 to 2011/12 in accordance with the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. Councillor Perkins seconded the recommendation.

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That approval be given to the Prudential Indicators required under the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities as set out in paragraph 3.2.2 of the report to Cabinet.
 - (2) That in line with the guidance notes to the Prudential Code issued by CIPFA, approval be given to the delegation of authority to the Section 151 Officer to make adjustments between the "borrowing" and "other long term liabilities" categories within the overall total of the indicators for the operational boundary and the authorised limit for external debt as shown at paragraph 3.2.2 (G) and (H).

12. TREASURY STRATEGY 2009-10 TO 2011-12

Councillor Mildren submitted a report that set out a Treasury Management Policy Statement Practices and Schedules for 2009/10 and the Treasury Strategy for 2009/10. Councillor Perkins seconded the recommendations:

- RESOLVED:**
- (1) That the Treasury Management Policy Statement be approved.
 - (2) That the Treasury Management Practices (TMPs) and TMP Schedules for 2009/10 be approved.
 - (3) That approval be given to the Treasury Strategy for 2009/10, incorporating:

- (i) The Capital Financing and Borrowing Strategy for 2009/10 including:
 - The Council's policy on the making of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for the repayment of debt, as required by the Local Authorities (Capital Finance & Accounting) (Amendments) (England) Regulations 2008.
 - The Affordable Borrowing Limit for 2009/10 as required by the Local Government Act 2003.
 - (ii) The Investment Strategy for 2009/10 as required by the DCLG (formerly ODPM) Guidance on Local Government Investments issued in 2004.
- (4) That the proposed Debt Financing Budget 2009/10 to 2010/11 (paragraph 3.2.15 and Annex D of the Cabinet report) be noted.
 - (5) That adherence to the Council's policy on reserves and balances (paragraph 3.2.16 of the Cabinet report) be noted.
 - (6) That compliance with the requirement under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce a balanced budget (paragraph 3.2.17 of the Cabinet report) be noted.

13. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE MAYOR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

None.

The meeting concluded at 22.13 hours