

Council – 24 February 2015

Minutes of the meeting of **Council** held on **24 February 2015** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr Mrs J R Lumley
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs H L A Glynn

Cllr J C Burton	Cllr D Merrick
Cllr Mrs L A Butcher	Cllr Mrs J A Mockford
Cllr M R Carter	Cllr T E Mountain
Cllr T G Cutmore	Cllr R A Oatham
Cllr J H Gibson	Cllr Mrs C E Roe
Cllr K J Gordon	Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr J Hayter	Cllr S P Smith
Cllr N J Hookway	Cllr Mrs M H Spencer
Cllr Mrs D Hoy	Cllr D J Sperring
Cllr M Hoy	Cllr M J Steptoe
Cllr K H Hudson	Cllr I H Ward
Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill	Cllr Mrs C A Weston
Cllr Mrs C M Mason	Cllr Mrs B J Wilkins
Cllr J R F Mason	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs C I Black, P A Capon, Mrs T J Capon, R R Dray, J Griffin, Mrs A H Hale, B T Hazlewood, J L Lawmon, M Maddocks and Mrs J E McPherson.

OFFICERS PRESENT

A Dave	- Chief Executive
A Bugeja	- Head of Legal, Estates and Member Services
Y Woodward	- Head of Finance
R Evans	- Head of Environmental Services
J Raveendran	- Assistant Director, Resources
J Bostock	- Assistant Director, Democratic Services
M Power	- Committee Administrator

32 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 December 2014 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 10 February 2015 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

33 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman reported on the various civic and other events she had attended since the last Council meeting, including the Rochford Civic Carol Service, as well as Carol Services held in other areas; the launch of the

Southend Mencap Diamond Jubilee Year; the Mushroom Theatre Company VIP Grand Opening Celebration of Equal People Performing Arts, a visit to Basildon Women's Aid and the 70th anniversary Holocaust Memorial Day event.

34 MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Council received the Minutes of Executive and Committee Meetings held between the period 6 December 2014 to 13 February 2015.

35 REPORT ON URGENT DECISIONS

Pursuant to Overview and Scrutiny procedure 15(f), Council received a report on decisions that had been taken as a matter of urgency and not subject to call in.

36 REPORT OF THE LEADER ON THE WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE

Council received the following report from the Leader of the Council on the work of the Executive:-

"This is the ninth Council meeting for the 2014/15 municipal year and I would like to welcome all Members.

Since the last ordinary Council meeting I am delighted to announce that:

- Our Five Year Medium Term Financial Strategy, starting in 2015/16, has been approved.
- Members of the Chief Officer Appointments Committee have completed an Assessment Centre process and appointments have been made to the new Officer Leadership Team.

Since my last Leader's speech into Council, the Executive has met on one occasion, when Performance, Project and Financial Management Reports for the period October to December 2014 were noted.

Other matters that my colleagues and I on the Executive have been dealing with include:-

- Publication of the Employment Land Study Update and agreement of the Rochford Retail and Leisure Study Update as part of the planning evidence base.
- Submitting the amended Rayleigh Centre Area Action Plan to Government for public examination.
- Signing up for full membership of the Essex Procurement Hub to receive specialist assistance in the procurement of large contracts.

- The creation of an Air Quality Management Area for Rayleigh Town Centre and agreement for an action plan to be developed to identify and address sources of nitrogen dioxide.
- An amendment to the Pilot Amenity Vehicle Scheme to alternate weekly collections from Great Wakering and Rochford.
- Agreement to the submission of Rochford District Council's Section 11 Safeguarding Children's Audit and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Audit to the respective Boards.
- Agreement of the provision of allocated funding to provide financial support to voluntary organisations.

The Authority has also recently been short-listed for the South East Region Placemaking Awards for the JAAP and contribution to economic growth.

As always, I will be happy to take any questions from Members in respect of the work of the Executive and I am sure my Executive colleagues will be happy to contribute where appropriate."

37 SETTING THE COUNCIL TAX 2015/16

Council considered the report of the Head of Finance on the level of Council Tax for the year 2015/16.

The Leader of the Council made the following statement:-

"Chairman and, through you, Councillors, members of the public and press.

This is my eleventh budget as Leader of this Conservative Administration. While it comes at a time of continued austerity for the Country as a whole, this Council has made some difficult decisions over the last twelve months that have put us in a strong financial position.

Although we have seen a 24% fall in our income from Business rates and Revenue Support Grant, from £3.68m to £2.79m, this has been partly offset by the increase in New Homes Bonus. However, the Government's last Autumn Statement set the context for the future of Government funding for local authorities. Things are not going to get any easier for District Councils but I am confident that we are now in a strong position to face the future.

Looking to the future, Rochford District Council has adopted a 'vision' which will inspire the organisation to continue to deliver its services to the high standards that have been set. To achieve this vision we will focus on three key themes – Place, Homes and Economic Growth. Despite the challenges faced, we have continued to uphold this vision and have not let services slip. Our achievements over the past year include:-

- The fifth Rochford Art Trail played host to dozens of artists who exhibited their talents in the town's shops, cafes and business.
- One of the best recycling rates in the whole of England - top three for the past four years and topping the table on two separate occasions.
- Providing over ten business events, workshops and seminars and reaching hundreds of businesses.
- Successfully accessing £50,000 of funding for businesses through the Business Southend Growth Hub – one business has accessed £10,000 and a further five applications are awaiting a decision.
- Establishing a Forum for Surface Water Flooding Issues and, in partnership with the County Council, identifying up to £100,000 of funding for local schemes.
- Launching the Keep Safe campaign in Rayleigh - an innovative scheme which raises awareness of vulnerable people and how to protect them.
- Successfully hosting the 11th Wild Woods Day in Hockley Woods.
- The London Southend Airport and Environs Joint Area Action Plan being finally adopted by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Rochford District Council last December. The plans envisage 7,000 jobs being created over ten to fifteen years through the construction of up to 100,000 sqm of new employment space.
- Receiving the Keep Britain Tidy 'Diamond Jubilee Partnership Award' for the 'Love Essex litter campaign'
- Revenues and Benefits being awarded Customer Service Excellence.

The Allocations Plan and the Hockley Area Action Plan were adopted at a meeting of Full Council in February following an independent examination by the Government Planning Inspector which found them both to be sound.

London Southend Airport has enjoyed its busiest year ever with over a million passengers using the airport in 2014, and is now looking forward to even more exciting developments in 2015.

One of the priorities identified during last year's budget process was flood prevention. The Forum for Surface Water Flooding Issues was set up by Rochford District Council in order to bring together groups, including Essex Highways, Anglian Water, the Environment Agency and the Essex County Council Flood Management Team, to work to solve residents' problems. Although Rochford District Council is not responsible for flooding-related issues, it took this action to ensure the various agencies were all pulling in the same direction. The aim of the Forum is to establish who is responsible for

various watercourses, ditches and drains, and then try to ensure that those responsibilities are complied with. At a meeting in October 2014, it was agreed to undertake maintenance work to combat flooding issues at more than thirty areas across the Rochford District.

The Council is on target to deliver the planned reductions in expenditure in 2014/15 of over £800,000. However, as a responsible Council, we will continue to look at areas where costs can be reduced or income generated.

I am, therefore, delighted that the Council is able to agree a freeze to Council Tax for our share of the Council Tax for 2015/16.

Essex County Council and Essex Fire Authority have frozen their parts of the overall tax bill as well, whilst the Police and Crime Commissioner raised their proportion by 1.99%. The Parish and Town Councils average council tax is £40.01, an increase of 0.58% compared to 2014/15.

In conclusion, although Rochford District, and indeed the rest of the United Kingdom, is still suffering from the effects of the economic downturn, we remain committed to providing excellent services to our residents and partners. With this in mind we will be doing all we can to deliver innovative and high quality services under our three key priorities of 'Place, Homes and Economic Growth'.

Chairman, I commend the Rochford District Council Tax for Members' approval."

The Portfolio Holder for Enterprise, Cllr M J Steptoe, was asked to provide details of the membership of the Business Southend Growth Hub and to advise whether the Minutes of meetings are available to the public.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations in the report as follows:-

For (29) Cllrs J C Burton; Mrs L A Butcher; M R Carter; T G Cutmore; J H Gibson; Mrs H L A Glynn; K J Gordon; J Hayter; N J Hookway; Mrs D Hoy; M Hoy; K H Hudson; Mrs G A Lucas-Gill; Mrs J R Lumley; Mrs C M Mason; J R F Mason; D Merrick; Mrs J A Mockford; T E Mountain; R A Oatham; Mrs C E Roe; C G Seagers; S P Smith; Mrs M H Spencer; D J Sperring; M J Steptoe; I H Ward; Mrs C A Weston and Mrs B J Wilkins.

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

Resolved

- (1) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2015/16 (excluding Parish and Town precepts) be £6,316,678.
- (2) That the total for gross expenditure of the District together with the Parish and Town precepts be £35,415,634.
- (3) That the total of income for the District Council be £27,889,714.
- (4) That the Council Tax requirement of the District Council together with the Parish and Town Councils be £7,525,920
- (5) That the basic amount of Council Tax (including Parish and Town Precepts) be £248.99 for the year. This being the Council Tax requirement £7,525,920 divided by the Council Tax base 30,226.2.
- (6) That the total of the sums payable into the general fund in respect of redistributed Business rates and Government grant, including New Homes Bonus and adjustments from the collection fund, be £4,013,713.
- (7) That the total of Parish and Town precepts included within the above is £1,209,242.
- (8) That the basic rate of Council Tax relating to the District Council without Parish and Town precepts is £208.98 which is a 0.00% increase.
- (9) That the total tax for both District and Parishes be as set out in the Schedule, which is attached as **Appendix A** to these Minutes. These sums are calculated 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.
- (10) That the sums given above for Band D but now shown in the particular valuations bands A-H are as set out in the schedule attached as **Appendix B** to these Minutes.
- (11) That the precepts issued to the Council in respect of Essex County Council, Essex Fire Authority and Essex Police Authority for each valuation band A-H are as set out in the schedule attached as **Appendix C** to these Minutes.
- (12) That the total Council Tax for the area for each valuation band A-H is as set out in **Appendix D** to these Minutes. These are the amounts set as Council Tax for the year 2015/16. (HF)

38 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT, ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY STATEMENT 2015/16

Council considered the report of the Head of Finance on the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2015/16.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Cllr S P Smith, advised that the Council currently had no external borrowing; should a borrowing need arise in the future the Chief Financial Officer is obliged under the Council's financial regulations to access the best source of external borrowing. Funding via the Public Works Loan Board or the Local Authority Municipal Bond Agency could be considered; a report would be made to advise Members on any decision made in this respect.

In respect of the Council's Recycling Contract, the intention was to fund the purchase of the new fleet of waste vehicles via internal borrowing in 2015/16.

Resolved

- (1) That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy including the investments instruments, indicators, limits and delegations contained within the report, be noted.
- (2) That the Capital Expenditure Forecasts, as detailed in the report, be noted.
- (3) That the Minimum Revenue Provision policy for 2015/16, as detailed in the report, be noted.
- (4) That the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary for external debt, as detailed in the report, be noted. (HF)

39 RETURNING OFFICER'S FEES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTIONS

Council considered the report of the Chief Executive on approving the Returning Officer's sale of fees and expenses for 2015/16 and arrangements for elections from May 2015.

Resolved

- (1) That the change in count venue for the 7 May 2015 elections from The Mill Arts and Events Centre, Rayleigh to the Clements Hall Leisure Centre, Hawkwell be noted.
- (2) That the availability of sufficient space within existing office accommodation for the checking and storage of ballot papers, postal packs and poll cards and activity to identify the best location for postal vote opening be noted.

- (3) That the fees payable to the Returning Officer be retained at their current level.
- (4) That the schedule of fees paid to staff working on elections in the financial year 2015/16 be noted.
- (5) That the apportionment of the Returning Officer fee in the ratio 50% Returning Officer, 50% Deputy Returning Officers within the core electoral team be endorsed.
- (6) That any fee paid to the Returning Officer or any Deputy Returning Officer with full powers be published on the website. (CE)

40 CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

Council considered the report of the Chief Executive on changes to the Council's Constitution following the leadership and organisational redesign 2014.

In response to questions, Members were advised that:-

- Although Committee reports that are not available at the time an Agenda is published should be made available as soon as possible, there is no specific legal requirement in respect of time scales.
- Meetings are adjourned after three hours unless, having regard to the circumstances at the time and with due regard to reasonableness, a majority of Members vote to continue. Wording around aspects such as this could be considered as part of any future broader review of the Constitution.

Resolved

- (1) That the proposed changes to the Constitution emanating from the Leadership and Organisation Redesign 2014 be adopted. These to include Albert Bugeja and Yvonne Woodward continuing in their roles of Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer respectively until departure arrangements consequent to the redesign are finalised. Following this point the roles will fall to the Assistant Director – Legal, Angela Law (Monitoring Officer) and the Assistant Director – Resource Services, Joseph Raveedran (Section 151 Officer) on an interim basis in line with their contracts of employment.
- (2) That the proposed change to paragraph 6 of Council Procedure Rules, notice of summons to meetings, be adopted.
- (3) That the proposed changes to the Code of Good Practice for Planning Matters to reflect District Council Practice be adopted.

- (4) That it be noted that factual changes to the Contract Procedure Rules to reflect statutory change are imminent. (CE)

41 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Council considered the report of the Chief Executive on the Pay Policy Statement.

During discussion, the following was noted:-

- The proposed Statement was in accordance with work on leadership and organisational redesign. Any further changes to the Statement would be brought to Full Council.
- Although the recommendation of the Hutton Review on Fair Pay was that an organisation's pay multiples are published, Department for Communities and Local Government guidance required only that authorities set out the ratio between the highest paid employee and the average earnings across the organisation.
- Unlike some Authorities, the Council does not employ staff through private companies.

It was observed Members requested that the wording in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.8 of the Statement in relation to staff performance could be given further clarification. It was also observed that, for clarity, the terminology in the first sentence in paragraph 8.1 of the Statement should be amended from 'tax avoidance' to 'illegal tax avoidance'.

Resolved

That the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 be adopted subject to the wording in the first sentence of paragraph 8.1 being amended to read: 'The Council is committed to supporting the Government in tackling all forms of illegal tax avoidance'. (CE)

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

42 MATERIAL RECOVERY FACILITIES CONTRACT

Council considered the exempt report of the Head of Environmental Services on approving a supplementary estimate to cover the likely costs of procuring material recovery facilities.

It was confirmed that further information on the costings/recycling options available to the Council would be included in the proposed report to the Executive. Members were reassured that, when the procurement process is completed and the contract awarded, details, including costs, would be in the public domain. The process will be transparent and clearly defined; value for money would be a key factor.

Resolved

- (1) That a supplementary estimate of £400,000, to make provision for the possible costs of procuring material recovery facilities be approved.
- (2) That authority be delegated to the Executive to award the Material Recovery Facilities contract due on 10 April 2015. (HES)

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Chairman

Date

If you would like these minutes in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

Total Council Tax for Parish/Town Council and Rochford District Council

	Band D Equivalents	Parish Precept	Parish Charge	District Charge	Total Charge
Ashingdon	1,173.40	53,146	45.29	208.98	254.27
Barling	591.30	35,099	59.36	208.98	268.34
Canewdon	509.40	31,019	60.89	208.98	269.87
Foulness Island	69.80	2,438	34.93	208.98	243.91
Great Wakering	1,813.60	55,018	30.34	208.98	239.32
Hawkwell	4,553.40	154,315	33.89	208.98	242.87
Hockley	3,717.30	229,000	61.60	208.98	270.58
Hullbridge	2,227.50	116,566	52.33	208.98	261.31
Paglesham	103.00	4,208	40.85	208.98	249.83
Rawreth	422.60	18,928	44.79	208.98	253.77
Rayleigh	12,046.30	365,989	30.38	208.98	239.36
Rochford	2,724.90	114,370	41.97	208.98	250.95
Stambridge	221.10	23,347	105.59	208.98	314.57
Sutton	52.60	5,799	110.25	208.98	319.23
	<u>30,226.20</u>	<u>1,209,242</u>			

District and Parish/Town Council tax by Bands A - H

	Band D Equivalents	Parish Precept	Parish Charge	District Charge	Total Charge
Ashingdon		53,146	45.29	208.98	254.27
Barling	1,173.40	35,099	59.36	208.98	268.34
Canewdon	591.30	31,019	60.89	208.98	269.87
Foulness Island	509.40	2,438	34.93	208.98	243.91
Great Wakering	69.80	55,018	30.34	208.98	239.32
Hawkwell	1,813.60	154,315	33.89	208.98	242.87
Hockley	4,553.40	229,000	61.60	208.98	270.58
Hullbridge	3,717.30	116,566	52.33	208.98	261.31
Paglesham	2,227.50	4,208	40.85	208.98	249.83
Rawreth	103.00	18,928	44.79	208.98	253.77
Rayleigh	422.60	365,989	30.38	208.98	239.36
Rochford	12,046.30	114,370	41.97	208.98	250.95
Stambridge	2,724.90	23,347	105.59	208.98	314.57
Sutton	221.10	5,799	110.25	208.98	319.23
	52.60				
		1,209,242			
	30,226.20				

	BAND A 6/9	BAND B 7/9	BAND C 8/9	BAND D 1	BAND E 11/9	BAND F 13/9	BAND G 15/9	BAND H 2
Ashingdon		197.77	226.02	254.27	310.77	367.28	423.78	508.54
Barling	169.51	208.71	238.52	268.34	327.97	387.60	447.23	536.68
Canewdon	178.89	209.90	239.88	269.87	329.84	389.81	449.78	539.74
Foulness Island	179.91	189.71	216.81	243.91	298.11	352.31	406.52	487.82
Great Wakering	162.61	186.14	212.73	239.32	292.50	345.68	398.87	478.64
Hawkwell	159.55	188.90	215.88	242.87	296.84	350.81	404.78	485.74
Hockley	161.91	210.45	240.52	270.58	330.71	390.84	450.97	541.16
Hullbridge	180.39	203.24	232.28	261.31	319.38	377.45	435.52	522.62
Paglesham	174.21	194.31	222.07	249.83	305.35	360.87	416.38	499.66
Rawreth	166.55	197.38	225.57	253.77	310.16	366.56	422.95	507.54
Rayleigh	169.18	186.17	212.76	239.36	292.55	345.74	398.93	478.72
Rochford	159.57	195.18	223.07	250.95	306.72	362.48	418.25	501.90
Stambridge	167.30	244.67	279.62	314.57	384.47	454.38	524.28	629.14
Sutton	209.71	248.29	283.76	319.23	390.17	461.11	532.05	638.46

Precepts for Essex County Council, Essex Fire & Rescue Authority, Essex Police Authority and Rochford District Council

County Charge	Police Charge	Fire Charge	District Charge	Total Charge	BAND A 6/9	BAND B 7/9	BAND C 8/9	BAND D 1	BAND E 11/9	BAND F 13/9	BAND G 15/9	BAND H 2
1,086.75				1,086.75	724.50	845.25	966.00	1,086.75	1,328.25	1,569.75	1,811.25	2,173.50
	147.15			147.15	98.10	114.45	130.80	147.15	179.85	212.55	245.25	294.30
		66.42		66.42	44.28	51.66	59.04	66.42	81.18	95.94	110.70	132.84
			208.98	208.98	139.32	162.54	185.76	208.98	255.42	301.86	348.30	417.96

Total Council Tax by Bands A-H

	Band D Equivalents	Parish Precept	Parish Charge	District Charge	County Charge	Fire Charge	Police Charge	Total Charge
Ashingdon	1,173.40	53,146	45.29	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,554.59
Barling	591.30	35,099	59.36	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,568.66
Canewdon	509.40	31,019	60.89	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,570.19
Foulness Island	69.80	2,438	34.93	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,544.23
Great Wakering	1,813.60	55,018	30.34	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,539.64
Hawkwell	4,553.40	154,315	33.89	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,543.19
Hockley	3,717.30	229,000	61.60	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,570.90
Hullbridge	2,227.50	116,566	52.33	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,561.63
Paglesham	103.00	4,208	40.85	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,550.15
Rawreth	422.60	18,928	44.79	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,554.09
Rayleigh	12,046.30	365,989	30.38	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,539.68
Rochford	2,724.90	114,370	41.97	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,551.27
Stambridge	221.10	23,347	105.59	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,614.89
Sutton	52.60	5,799	110.25	208.98	1,086.75	66.42	147.15	1,619.55
	<u>30,226.20</u>	<u>1,209,242</u>						

	BAND A 6/9	BAND B 7/9	BAND C 8/9	BAND D 1	BAND E 11/9	BAND F 13/9	BAND G 15/9	BAND H 2
Ashingdon	1,036.39	1,209.13	1,381.86	1,554.59	1,900.05	2,245.52	2,590.98	3,109.18
Barling	1,045.77	1,220.07	1,394.36	1,568.66	1,917.25	2,265.84	2,614.43	3,137.32
Canewdon	1,046.79	1,221.26	1,395.72	1,570.19	1,919.12	2,268.05	2,616.98	3,140.38
Foulness Island	1,029.49	1,201.07	1,372.65	1,544.23	1,887.39	2,230.55	2,573.72	3,088.46
Great Wakering	1,026.43	1,197.50	1,368.57	1,539.64	1,881.78	2,223.92	2,566.07	3,079.28
Hawkwell	1,028.79	1,200.26	1,371.72	1,543.19	1,886.12	2,229.05	2,571.98	3,086.38
Hockley	1,047.27	1,221.81	1,396.36	1,570.90	1,919.99	2,269.08	2,618.17	3,141.80
Hullbridge	1,041.09	1,214.60	1,388.12	1,561.63	1,908.66	2,255.69	2,602.72	3,123.26
Paglesham	1,033.43	1,205.67	1,377.91	1,550.15	1,894.63	2,239.11	2,583.58	3,100.30
Rawreth	1,036.06	1,208.74	1,381.41	1,554.09	1,899.44	2,244.80	2,590.15	3,108.18
Rayleigh	1,026.45	1,197.53	1,368.60	1,539.68	1,881.83	2,223.98	2,566.13	3,079.36
Rochford	1,034.18	1,206.54	1,378.91	1,551.27	1,896.00	2,240.72	2,585.45	3,102.54
Stambridge	1,076.59	1,256.03	1,435.46	1,614.89	1,973.75	2,332.62	2,691.48	3,229.78
Sutton	1,079.70	1,259.65	1,439.60	1,619.55	1,979.45	2,339.35	2,699.25	3,239.10