

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 16TH JANUARY 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Chairman), R. J. Laight (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. S. J. Baxter, C. J. Bloore, Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, Mrs. J. M. Boswell, J. R. Boulter, J. S. Brogan, M. A. Bullivant, Ms. M. T. Buxton, R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, Dr. B. T. Cooper, Mrs. R. L. Dent, S. J. Dudley, K. A. Grant-Pearce, Miss P. A. Harrison, R. Hollingworth, Mrs. H. J. Jones, P. Lammas, B. Lewis F.CMI, L. C. R. Mallett, Mrs. C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald, E. J. Murray, J. A. Ruck, C. R. Scurrall, Mrs. E. M. Shannon, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, Mrs. C. J. Spencer, C. B. Taylor, C. J. Tidmarsh, L. J. Turner, M. J. A. Webb, P. J. Whittaker and C. J. K. Wilson

61/12 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R. J. Deeming.

62/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declaration of interest was made:

Item 3 – Council Tax Support

Councillor S. J. Dudley declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item. Councillor Dudley left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

63/12 **WEST MERCIA POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER**

Councillor P. M. McDonald requested that consideration be given to suspending Standing Orders to enable the discussion of a Notice of Motion he wished to put forward in relation to the actions of the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner in appointing his campaign manager as his Deputy Commissioner. Councillor McDonald felt there was now a lack of confidence in the Police and Crime Commissioner and he should be asked to resign his position.

Councillor R. Hollingworth was in agreement with Councillor McDonald that there should be a discussion on this matter, but felt that consideration should be given to placing a cross party Notice of Motion on the Council Agenda for

the meeting on 20th February 2013 and undertook to discuss this further with Councillor McDonald outside the meeting.

Councillor McDonald accepted this as a way forward.

64/12 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 9TH JANUARY 2013**

The meeting was briefly adjourned to allow Members the opportunity to read the recommendations from the Cabinet.

(i) Council Tax Base and National Non Domestic Rate (NNDR) Base

Following the circulation of Appendix 2 containing the NNDR Return, the recommendations from the Cabinet were proposed by Councillor R. Hollingworth and seconded by Councillor Mrs M. A. Sherrey.

Councillor Hollingworth referred to the calculation of the Council Tax Base and the NNDR. The Council Tax Base had been calculated and adjusted by the estimated amount of Council Tax Support discounts available. It was reported that the Council would receive grant for the financial year for an estimated 90% of Council Tax Support. In order to protect the position of Parish Councils the Government had made available an additional payment to be apportioned to the Parishes within the District. The Cabinet had recommended that the sum of £40,020 be allocated to the Parishes in accordance with Appendix 1 to the report and that it be made clear that the payments were made on a one year basis only. .

Councillor Mrs S. J. Baxter commented that whilst she felt the legislation was badly thought out and had been poorly administered by Central Government, the sum allocated to the District Council was in fact £52,180. It was accepted that there was no statutory requirement to allocate the funding to the Parishes but Councillor Mrs Baxter asked for clarification in respect of the remaining £12,160. Councillor R. Hollingworth responded the payments were on the basis of one year only and that it was intended to allocate the £12,160 to the non-parished areas within the District.

Councillor P. M. McDonald queried whether it was appropriate for those Members who were also Parish Councillors to participate in the debate. The Monitoring Officer referred to the advice received from Central Government and the Dispensation to District Councillors approved by the Standards Committee to enable them to debate the Council Tax.

In the ensuing debate some Members expressed the view that since the Council was not required to allocate the funds from Central Government to Parish Councils then the money should be allocated across the District in a transparent manner. This should include non-parished areas. During further discussion, it was agreed that if £40,000 was allocated to the Parish Councils the Council should consider

allocating the balance of the £52, 160 to non-parished areas of the District.

On a requisition under Council Procedure Rule 17.5 the following details of voting on recommendation (d) in respect of payments to be made to the Parish Councils were recorded:

For the recommendation: Councillors Mrs. S. J. Baxter, Dr. D. W. P. Booth, Mrs J. M. Boswell, J. R. Boulter, J. S. Brogan, M. A. Bullivant, R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, Dr. B. T. Cooper, Mrs. R. L. Dent, S. J. Dudley, K. A. Grant–Pearce, Miss P. A. Harrison, R. Hollingworth, Mrs. H. J. Jones, R. J. Laight, P. Lammas, B. Lewis, J. A. Ruck, C. R. Scurrrell, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey, Mrs. C. J. Spencer, C. B. Taylor, C. J. Tidmarsh, L. J. Turner, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker (27)

Against the recommendation: Councillors C. J. Bloore, Ms. M. T. Buxton, L. C. R. Mallett, Mrs. C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald, E. J. Murray, Mrs. E. M. Shannon, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon and C. J. K. Wilson (10)

The meeting was briefly adjourned to consider the most appropriate way to proceed.

On a requisition under Council Procedure Rule 17.5 the following details of voting on recommendation (e) in respect of the allocation of the residual sum of £12,160 to the non parished areas were recorded:

For the recommendation: Councillors Mrs. S. J. Baxter, C. J. Bloore, Dr. D. W. P. Booth, Mrs. J. M. Boswell, J. R. Boulter, J. S. Brogan, M. A. Bullivant, Ms. M. T. Buxton, R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, Dr. B. T. Cooper, Mrs. R. L. Dent, S. J. Dudley, K. A. Grant-Pearce, Miss P. A. Harrison, R. Hollingworth, Mrs. H. J. Jones, R. L. Laight, P. Lammas, B. Lewis, L. C. R. Mallett, Mrs. C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald, E. J. Murray, J. A. Ruck, C. R. Scurrrell, Mrs E. M. Shannon, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey, Mrs. C. J. Spencer, C. B. Taylor, C. J. Tidmarsh, L. J. Turner, M. J. A. Webb, C. J. K. Wilson (36)

Against the recommendation: Councillor P. J. Whittaker (1)

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the whole and parts of the area for 2013/2014 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
- (b) that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the figures calculated by Bromsgrove District Council as its tax base for the whole area for the year 2013/2014 be £33,784.51 and that the calculation for each Parish be as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (c) that the calculation of the NNDR 1 Return as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report be approved;

- (d) that grants totalling £40,020 be paid to the Parish Councils as set out in Appendix 1 to the report and that it be made clear to the Parish Councils that these are made on a one year basis only; and
- (e) that the residual sum of £12,160 be allocated to the non parished areas within the District.

(ii) Emergency Care Grants /Crisis Loans Scheme

The recommendation from Cabinet was proposed by Councillor R. Hollingworth and seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey.

Councillor Hollingworth referred to the background to the proposals which would result in this Council administering the Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans Scheme.

Whilst understanding the background to the proposals Councillor P. M. McDonald expressed concern that such measures were necessary.

RESOLVED that this Council accepts the transfer of funding from Worcestershire County Council to enable a scheme for local provision of emergency funding for vulnerable groups within the District to be developed.

(iii) Council Tax Benefit Support Scheme

The recommendations from Cabinet were proposed by Councillor R. Hollingworth and seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey.

Councillor Hollingworth referred to the reasons behind the proposals which would enable the Authority to support the working poor within the District.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the exemption scheme be amended to limit discount in respect of short term empty property Class C to 50%; and
- (b) that the discount on second homes be removed.

(iv) Service Review – Print Design and Communications

(The recommendations from the Cabinet on this item were considered in public as the staff involved had now been informed. Members were however advised that no reference should be made in public to specific names or salary details)

The recommendations from Cabinet were proposed by Councillor M. A. Bullivant and seconded by Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey.

Councillor Bullivant referred to the review of the service which would result in a more streamlined and efficient process.

Councillor P. M. McDonald queried the true costs and benefits of the Transformation process. Councillor L. C. R. Mallett referred to the split of the savings projected as part of this review being largely in favour of Redditch.

Councillor Hollingworth reminded Members of the overall savings which had been achieved through the Shared Services and Transformation process and improvements to services which had resulted.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the contents of the Print, Design and Communications Service Review be noted; and
- (b) that the proposals arising from the Service Review be approved for implementation.

The meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.

Chairman

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