

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **COUNCIL** held on 22 February 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present

Councillors

R F Radford (Chairman)
G Barnell, J Bartlett, E J Berry, J Buczkowski, W Burke,
J Cairney, R J Chesterton, S J Clist, Mrs C Collis,
Mrs F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, L J Cruwys, Mrs C P Daw,
R J Dolley (Vice Chairman), J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans,
Mrs S Griggs, P J Heal, B Holdman, D J Knowles, F W Letch,
Mrs E J Lloyd, B A Moore, Miss J Norton, S J Penny, S Pugh,
D F Pugsley, Mrs E J Slade, C R Slade, Mrs M E Squires,
R L Stanley, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, A White, A Wilce,
Mrs N Woollatt, J Wright and A Wyer

Apologies

Councillors

N V Davey and R M Deed

123 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr N V Davey and R M Deed.

124 Public Question Time

Kate Clayton-White

Our Comments and questions relate to the minutes of the Economy PDG (EPDG) dated the 12 January agenda item 10 reports (b). We think that the cabinet officers running Mid Devon Council show a complete disconnect from the day to day difficulties faced by the public, we faced inflation busting increases in food and energy bills so the decision to raise car parking charges by eye watering amounts is very hard to swallow and for some people unaffordable.

We rent an allocated space because we live on a town centre street with limited parking our annual rent will be increasing by 115% from £425 to £912.50. We cannot identify the meetings where this increase was discussed and who agreed it. The need for a review of car parking charges was raised by the EPDG on the 12 January but the cabinet seems to have publicised and imposed this huge increase before the recommended review has even taken place.

Their decision making process is hidden behind a veil of secret part 2 discussions, the results of which are unavailable to the press and to us the public. I use the word publicise very loosely, there has been no publicity at all. Communication from the Council has been dire, we only found out through a chance conversation with a neighbour. The Council uses email to remind us that fees are due yet can't seem to use the same simple system to inform us of the increases. We suspect there will be many people who do not even know.

Last week's press release stated that material costs have escalated our car sized piece of tarmac is not swept or tended in any other way by council employees, we cannot see how the higher material costs could possibly lead to this huge increase

which will by the way generate an extra £28k per year from 51 spaces, cabinet meeting minutes from the 29 November contain financial monitoring information from last year which seem to show that the four year forecast for car park income is £30k ahead of budget.

If this is correct the only possible justification of such a huge increase must be to use car park renters and users as a cash cow to sure up financial deficiencies in other areas administered by the council who's unexplained actions, lack of transparency and secretive decisions would seem fit to propel them head long into the rotten borrowed section of a future edition of private eye. So my question is, what was so commercially sensitive about raising car parking charges that the decision making process had to take place under private part 2 rules, i.e. in secret and why has the cabinet increased the charges before the recommended review has even occurred?

Neil Barclay –

I completely second what was said by my neighbour Kate Clayton-White just now, and my feelings and that of many of the residents I've spoken to are exactly the same, regarding the parking.

Paul Elstone –

Question 1

A Local Newspaper has quoted the Leader as asking for an external fraud investigation involving 3 Rivers and this Council. A written reply on Monday to a question I previously asked, states that a Fraud Investigation has not yet been commissioned. The Reply also indicates there is no intention to investigate 3 Rivers. There is Information in the public domain which justifies including 3 Rivers in any fraud investigation:

- 1) 3 Rivers paid four hundred and twenty thousand pounds (£420,000) for the land at Bampton that a professional land valuer said was only worth Two hundred and Thirteen thousand pounds (£213,000).
- 2) For their Bampton development, 3 Rivers gave one set of viability figures to the Cabinet in their Business Case asking for Council Loans but gave different figures to the Council's Planning Committee.
- 3) When building materials were removed from St Georges Court. It is understood that an MDDC Executive Officer wrote an email which it was said these events should be kept confidential.

Will the MDDC Chief Executive Officer implement an external fraud investigation that fully includes 3 Rivers?

Question 2

At the Scrutiny Committee Meeting, that called-in the Cabinet decision to continue to loan money to 3 Rivers, a former Cabinet Member said the cost of winding up 3 Rivers could be as high as Ten Million Pounds (£10,000,000). Detailed asset and liability calculations using the various financial data available reveals the loss would be around Seven Hundred Thousand pounds. Not ten million. Unless there is substantial and serious information being hidden from the public this figure was just scare mongering in an attempt to influence the Scrutiny Committee decision. Any

potential loss to the Council would be public money, not 3 Rivers, so this figure cannot be commercially sensitive and should be made public. Will the MDDC S151 Officer provide a realistic estimate of the true loss figure?

Question 3

The budget proposal before you reveals the intent to mothball the Children's Paddling Pools at Tiverton and Crediton to save money. Paddling Pools perhaps most used by disadvantaged children. Obviously this Council and its Officers have no shame. This given this Council is already writing off loans that 3 Rivers say they cannot repay and have admitted a major loss at St Georges Court, despite this the Cabinet supported by Executive Officers still voted to continue to support this poorly managed, poorly governed, loss making company. I understand the Environment PDG did not approve this action so how is this decision to mothball paddling pools justified?

Jo Webber –

I'm here regarding the proposed increase in car parking charges in around Mid Devon, car park ticket machines proposed 100% plus increase, on street parking permits up to 100% plus increase. Is Mid Devon totally unaware that the UK is going through a cost of living crisis, a car park is the first port of call for any tourist or new shoppers to Tiverton, what sort of welcome is that? Our local population that have stood by our local independents to shop local through these past Covid years, what sort of thank you is that?

The local businesses owned and employing local people would risk reduced footfall due to the higher costs of parking, this will have a domino effect and Mid Devon will have more empty units, is that your plan? We should be so proud of our three market towns situated in the heart of Mid Devon, we should strive to offer an exciting and varied selection of specialist shops and tourist attractions in our area, work together to make Mid Devon a special memorable experience for both tourism and shopping, not remembered for its extortionate car parking charges. Mid Devon have you realised everyone who lives, works in and around Tiverton will be affected by this outrageous proposal. My Question is, Mid Devon have you consulted with businesses or local residents regarding your imminent proposed increases in car parking charges? And if you haven't why not?

Sophia Beard –

This is on the topic of car park charge increases, my name is Sophia Beard and I am speaking as a representative of the Tiverton Town Centre Partnership which represents all businesses within the Tiverton Town Centre. I'm a business owner myself and a resident in the town centre and have been privileged to have been part of this community for over 30 years. In discussion with the other businesses and members of the Town Council I would like to outline the concerns that have been raised over the last week which will conclude with a question for yourselves and will be followed by the submission of a petition at the appropriate point on the agenda.

Having had many, many, many conversations with people, both residents, business owners, members of the Town Council over the past week there is no way for me to impress upon you the strength of feeling that there has been since this news arrived all to the negative, let's be clear, Tiverton being a rural community oh and actually before I continue I would like to hark to the I will add every single sentiment that Kate made, that every single sentiment that Jo made and particularly every single

sentiment that the gentleman before made as well in terms of the transparency because this all comes down to part of the problems that we have.

Inherently, raising car park charges is not the issue, the issues are many fold we understand that prices are rising indeed it is affecting everybody, however, you have a decision made by a Cabinet for which there is no legal quorum currently so how you can justify setting a hare running with a variation notice that is due to expire on the 7th of March without a consultation period is confusing to say the least. Procedure in terms of the actual notice period that any other businesses and residents have had on this as Kate so eloquently put, some are still in the dark about it, many don't know about it but many as I'm sure have come to light but only in the last week.

That is unacceptable, particularly in regards to the disproportionate impact this is going to have, now my colleagues in Cullompton who will deal with one car park rises, my colleagues in Crediton who have 2 car parks affected, Tiverton will be affected with 7 different car parks, so not only is it disproportionate in the percentage rises which it is very difficult to see that any formula has been used across as it has been noted some are going up by 100% some are 200%.

It's a very scatter gun approach as to how you actually worked out these figures in any case and that comes back round to this lack of consultation, lack of transparency, lack of transparency in terms of the procedure for speaking here tonight and submitting our questions and our petitions having only had a weeks' notice, we do have a 1000 names to hand in this evening that have been gathered from local residents, from shoppers, from the local businesses and we have been delighted with the outpouring of support that we have had from all those callers concerned over this issue.

As I said at the headline this isn't about whether or not you put up car parking charges that's fine, the fact is what you're not doing is doing it reasonably, proportionally within procedure possibly without quorum and legality and these are all serious concerns.

Another concern is that asking the business owners, the residents, the staff and their employees to plug up a shortfall of mismanaged funds by Mid Devon District Council in respect of perhaps other projects to do with 3 Rivers or anything else is unacceptable, you cannot justify a cash grab from these communities for that purpose if your budget needs to be balanced and that is something that you need to look at, but I tell you what we're not the ones who are going to pay for it in this way.

I understand that you have a budget that needs to go through on the 11 March I also understand that you have a number of Councillors who have now been misplaced and the agenda for this evening you know goes on and on with other questions as to do with how this has been managed. So my question is and as I say largely I shouldn't have to remind you of the fact that as a rural community servicing the outline villages, every single person in this area and in this district whether in Tiverton, Crediton or Cullompton or any of the surrounding villages, the first thing you do when you need to do anything is to get into your car.

Because the bus services and transport services around here are not reliable enough to support the ageing population, the young population, just generally farmers they are getting in their cars and they are travelling. The issue the town centre partnership

has and the work we are doing to promote Tiverton town centre is to draw people in and stop them because every single time someone from these surrounding villages gets in their car they have a choice, they have a choice whether come into our town centre and support our local businesses or whether they head off to Taunton or they head off to Exeter or whether they head off anywhere else.

The fight that we have ladies and gentlemen is to keep them here in town, your proposal in these increase in charges is so disgustingly disproportionately, arrogantly, counterproductive and counterintuitive to that aim that we really need you to listen the petition that will come in at section 6 has got 1000 signatures on it, we have had less than a weeks' notice to get that together.

And my question is this with specific regard to the wideset concerns and context that are being raised tonight by myself and the others in the room in respect of the quorum, procedure, transparency of process absence of the sufficient consultation and the disproportionate proposal both with the amount and impact on Tiverton town centre, its businesses, its employees, its residents and its customers, will members of the council agree to cease the countdown to the 7 March of the notice of variation and return to the issue with the appropriate mandate following your re-election of the council in May?

Ros Nichols –

I'm a partner in a local business, RoseTime Flowers, but I also represent my colleagues at Westcotts, Chartered Accountants & Business Advisors at the Tiverton and the Crediton offices. I've written to several local councillors already voicing concerns about the increase in parking charges that's already been talked about, for our flower shop we park our delivery van in market place behind the old Halifax in an allocated space because it's near the shop, to learn that this is increasing to £912.50 is somewhat shocking and to put it in context that's like saying our £25 bouquet would cost you £54, we'd be out of business within a month, for my Westcotts colleagues their daily charge in the multi-storey carpark will double, some work 2 days in Tiverton and 2 days in Crediton, so an annual permit isn't an option, many others who are on national living wage can't afford an annual permit, paying in one go.

To give them the option to pay quarterly increases that annual charge to £700 if you pro rata it. Surely a pay for what you use option would be fairer in the multi storey carpark because why should you pay for 10 hours parking when you only want 5.5. More importantly, the increase in the hourly rates in all the town centre carparks will discourage shoppers into the town and footfall will fall again, this is not the way forward to encourage people to use the array of shops and facilities the town has, which is clearly struggling already and if the decision makers bothered to look would know that this town is dying So my question for the council is to justify this ridiculous outrageous increases without surveying the actual users of the carparks, they are your customers, you've got to look after them just like we got to look after ours.

Hon Ald. David Nation –

Question 1

I am very pleased to read the proposal in Motion 591 and hope very much that the Council supports it. Around 20 years ago I was amongst the overwhelming majority of councillors who supported the introduction of the Cabinet system. Some will be aware that I withdrew my support for it after a number of developments indicated that it was not working as I had been led to believe that it would. Cllr Woollatt's words describe exactly the democratically damaging effect of the Cabinet system and I would ask all councillors to accept at last that a committee structure will allow far more members to take an active part in decision-making and begin to restore the faith of the Mid Devon electorate in the significance of their vote.

Question 2

It is apparent from reading the minutes that there is growing concern amongst members about the lack of information available to the public regarding matters dealt with in Part 2 and the enormous financial implications of the decisions made in camera for the Council's, and therefore council tax payers, funds. Coupled with the inability of most councillors to influence these vital decisions, I wonder if the Council Leader would agree with me that this is a situation more suited to autocratic regimes such as that in Russia that our Ukrainian friends are currently paying such a high price to combat?

Ashley Wilce –

Question 1

The officers of this Council added documents to the Agenda for this meeting only hours before the meeting, rather than the 5 days that it should be. Would the person responsible for the decision to do that, please tell me, now, why Parliament would have bothered to have included the prior publishing requirements in both the 72 Act and the 2012 Regulations, and to provide contingency for urgent documents to be considered, if those publication rules did not apply and could be ignored at will, as this Council is doing?

Could the person also tell me how they expect members to read and properly consider the contents of documents, if they have only been sent to them hours before a meeting? Does the person responsible not think that such actions are likely to result in Council decisions being challenged, on that basis alone, especially when there can be 100s of pages, as at least one of the added documents is, this evening. If so, that person should be aware of a Planning Consent granted by Northumberland County Council that was overturned on Appeal to the High Court, on the basis of relevant documents not having been published according to the rules.

A clear example of the need to abide by the rules is the fact Councillor Woollatt has had to have a very late amendment accepted for this evening, which was published only a few hours ago.

Democracy should not suffer just because the Chief Executive is incapable of providing efficient and effective democratic services. I call on Councillors to stand up for democracy and to refuse to consider those items that have been improperly added to the Agenda, both tonight and going forward.

Question 2

I note that there is a Budget Report included in the papers. Does the Council intend to vote on the budget this evening? If so, since there is no Agenda item for that decision, and the law states that there can be no discussion of any item that is not on the agenda, can the Monitoring Officer please tell me how that is going to lawfully take place?

Question 3

The Agenda states that there is a Motion to remove Cllr Deed as Leader and that a vote will follow to elect a replacement. This is an improper motion that should not have been allowed by the Monitoring Officer or Chief Executive, since it is contrary to the Constitution. Under the Constitution, if the Leader leaves office for any reason we will already automatically have a new Leader, and that clearly isn't Cllr Deed.

Further, the Constitution clearly states that an election for a Leader can only take place at the Annual Meeting. It goes on to say that, contingent upon the Leader no longer being Leader, the responsibility for leading the Council must pass to another member of the Executive, until the Annual Meeting; surely, the incumbent Leader until the Annual Meeting must therefore be Cllr Knowles, as the sole surviving Cabinet member? So, why was this Motion allowed?

Question 4

Given all these examples of maladministration, I must ask, what is this Council paying the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer for? They are being paid vast sums to make sure that the business of the Council is being run properly - almost £120k a year in the case of the Chief Executive - isn't it time that they were made to do it?

The Chairman, thanked those who spoke and explained that a written response would be provided in due course.

125 Declarations of Interest under the Code of Conduct

The following interests were declared:

- Cllr R Dolley, declared a personal interest that he lived in Tiverton.
- Cllr B G J Warren, declared a personal interest that some residents within his ward own businesses in Tiverton and was aware of parking charges issues.
- Cllr C J Eginton declared a personal interest as he owns a business in Tiverton and had attended Tiverton Town Centre Partnership meetings.
- Cllr Mrs N Woollatt declared a personal interest as she received correspondence that related to the car parking charges.
- Cllr Mrs C Daw declared a personal interest, she had been spoken to by shopkeepers in Tiverton.
- Cllr D J Knowles declared a personal interest as he had received letters and associated with one of the public speakers.
- Cllr S J Clist declared a personal interest that he had received letters and associated with one of the public speakers.
- Cllr F Letch declared a personal interest that he had received a petition in Crediton.

- Cllr J Cairney declared a personal interest that he owns a business in Crediton.
- Cllr B Holdman declared a personal interest as he had been contact by residents to do with matters on the agenda.
- Cllr Mrs E Slade declared a personal interest as she was approached by residents in relations to items on the agenda.
- Cllr Mrs S Griggs – declared a personal interest as she had been contacted by residents to do with matters on the agenda.
- Cllr R Stanley declared a pecuniary interest in that he is a director of 3 Rivers Developments Ltd.

126 Minutes

It was **MOVED** by Cllr A Wilce, Seconded by Cllr G Barnell that:

“We move onto the next item of business and the minutes now be referred to the next meeting of the Council”

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

127 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman presented a long service Award to Jenny Kane, the Chairman and Members of the Council thanked her for 25 years of service to Mid Devon District Council.

128 Order of Agenda Items

It was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt, Seconded by Cllr A Wilce that:

“The order of the agenda be changed so that the recommendations of Scrutiny of the 13 February be taken before the recommendations of Cabinet of the 7 February which contains the budget, as the scrutiny recommendations if approved will have an impact on what can be agreed within the budget, in the Cabinet’s recommendations within 7 February report. If that isn’t done then there will be an undermining of the recommendations from Scrutiny.”

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

129 Appointment of the Leader of the Council

It was **MOVED** by Cllr G Barnell, Seconded by Cllr B A Moore:

“That we appoint a Leader of the Council.”

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

The Chairman sought nominations from Members of the Council, which were as followed:

It was **MOVED** by Cllr Mrs C Daw, Seconded by Cllr Mrs E Lloyd that:

“Cllr B G J Warren be appointed as Leader of the Council”

An **AMENDMENT** was **MOVED** by Cllr R Chesterton, Seconded by Cllr C Slade that:

“Cllr C J Eginton be appointed as Leader of the Council for the remainder of the municipal year.”

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **FAILED**.

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

It was then:

RESOLVED that Councillor B G J Warren be elected Leader of the Council.

130 **Petitions**

Petitions were received in relation to the increased parking charges.

131 **Notices of Motions**

1. Motion 590 (Councillor S Penny – 16 January 2023)

The Council has before it a **MOTION** submitted for the first time:

The Council agrees that a review of the current practice of housing allocation by Devon Home Choice takes place. A number of residents have raised concerns over the lack of available social housing opportunities for the people of Mid Devon within the current scheme.

The **MOTION** was **MOVED** by Councillor S J Penny and Seconded by Councillor F W Letch

In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council had ruled that this Motion be dealt with at this meeting.

Consideration was given that:

- A review was necessary.
- It was challenging for local people to remain in their local area.
- Mid Devon District Council’s own policy needed to be reviewed and it was felt that there was a lack of available social housing opportunities.
- There was a need for affordable homes to be built.

Cllr G Barnell **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, Seconded by Cllr R Evans that:

“The Scrutiny Committee to conduct an investigation both into the allocation policy and into the delivery of social and affordable rented housing by the Council.”

Therefore the amended motion would read:

This Council agrees that a review of the current practice of housing allocation by Devon Home Choice takes place, together with a review of the Council's performance and plans in delivering affordable and social rented housing. A number of residents have raised concerns over the lack of available social housing opportunities for the people of Mid Devon within the current scheme. The Council resolves to ask the Scrutiny Committee to commission this review and to report to Council and Cabinet as soon as possible.

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **CARRIED**.

2. Motion 591 (Councillor Mrs N Woollatt – 8 February 2023)

The Council has before it a **MOTION** submitted for the first time:

That this Council recognises that in order for the taxpayers to have faith in the ability of the Mid Devon District Council to make effective and transparent decisions that there has to be a fundamental change in the decision making process.

That this Council also acknowledges that in a mature democracy there is a need for inclusive government which enables all members to make a valuable contribution in the running of the Council.

Therefore this Council resolves to change from the Cabinet system of governance to a modernised Committee system to be implemented from the Annual Meeting of 2024.

The **MOTION** was **MOVED** by Councillor N Woollatt and Seconded by Councillor L Taylor.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 14.4, the Chairman of the Council had ruled that this Motion be dealt with at this meeting.

Consideration was given to:

- On the 17 March 2021, Council voted to retain the Cabinet system. That work was undertaken by the Governance Working Group be noted.
- That the method of governance should not be imposed onto the new administration.
- This resolution would not commit the Council to a Committee system. This motion implied that council moved away from the Cabinet system.
- Should be referred to the Standards Committee.
- Should not go back to the old Committee system style.
- This would be for a modernised Committee system.
- There's the possibility for savings to be made with the Committee system.
- This topic had been discussed at the Standards Committee.
- The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer stated that if members indicate to go to a Committee system we would take this as a steer to go away and start preparing the governance framework for this type of system and that it would need to be brought back to Full Council for a final decision at some point in the future.

Cllr J Downes **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, Seconded by Cllr C J Eginton that:

This motion be referred to the Standards Committee to be reviewed.

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have **FAILED**.

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

3. Motion 592 (Councillor C J Eginton – 9 February 2023)

This motion was withdrawn.

132 Cabinet - Report of the meeting held on 3 January 2023

Cllr D J Knowles presented the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3 January 2023.

1. Council Tax Base (Minute 113)

Cllr D J Knowles **MOVED** Seconded by Cllr E J Eginton:

THAT the recommendations of the Cabinet as set out in Minute 113 be **ADOPTED**.

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

Reason for the Decision: as stated in the report.

133 Cabinet - Report of the meeting held on 31 January 2023

Cllr D J Knowles presented the report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 31 January 2023.

134 Scrutiny Committee - Report of the meeting held on 13 February 2023

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 February 2022.

1. Decisions of the Cabinet (Minute 76)

Cllr S J Clist **MOVED**, Seconded by Councillor G Barnell:

THAT the recommendations 1, 3, 4 and 5 of the Scrutiny Committee as set out in Minute 76 be **AGREED**.

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

135 **Car Parking Charges**

Cllr R Chesterton **MOVED**, Seconded by Cllr R Dolley that:

“Officers are asked by Full Council to stop the process of the parking charges coming in on the 7 March.”

Cllr J Downes **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, Seconded by Cllr Mrs S Griggs that:

“That we look to take the money out of budget, but the steer is that we’ll be taking the Economy PDG recommendation which was in line with inflation, reviewing the excessive that were placed in the budget for extended stay and permits.

“That we put a stop to the process that is happening on 7 March I think that’s key to me to be in there and a review an urgent review from the Economy PDG.”

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

136 **Cabinet - Report of the meeting held on 7 February 2023**

Cllr A Wilce **MOVED**, Seconded by Cllr G Barnell that:

“That we move on to the next item of business and refer this one that we’ve been dealing with to the next another meeting of the Full Council.”

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.

137 **Council Tax Resolution 2023/2024**

The Council had before it a *report of the Deputy Chief Executive setting the Council Tax for 2023/2024.

Cllr G Barnell **MOVED**, Seconded by Councillor B A Moore:

That the Council approve the formal Council Tax Resolution as laid out in Appendix 1, subject to the approval by each Precepting Authority of its own Precepts as included within this report.

With regard to the draft Council Tax Resolution in respect of the year 2023/2024:

The Chairman then **MOVED** in accordance with Procedure Rule 19.7:

“**THAT** the vote in respect of this item shall be by roll call.”

A roll call of Councillors present at the meeting was then taken:

Those voting **FOR** the **MOTION**: Councillors: G Barnell, J Bartlett, EJ Berry, W Burke, R J Chesterton, C A Collis, F J Colthorpe, D R Coren, C P Daw, R J Dolley, J M Downes, C J Eginton, R Evans, S Griggs, P J Heal, D J Knowles, F W Letch, B A Moore, J Norton, D F Pugsley, R F Radford, C Slade, E J Slade, M E Squires, R L Stanley, L D Taylor, B G J Warren, A White, A Wilce, N Woollatt, J Wright, A Wyer.

Those voting **AGAINST** the **MOTION**: Councillors: J Buczkowski, J Cairney, S J Clist, L Cruwys, B Holdman.

The **MOTION** was declared to have been **CARRIED** and it was accordingly:

RESOLVED that the recommendations within the report be approved.

Reason for Decision: there is a need for the Council to set the Council Tax for 2023/24.

Note: *Report previously circulated, copy attached to the minutes.

138 Scrutiny Committee - Report of the meeting held on 16 January 2023

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 16 January 2023.

139 Scrutiny Committee - Report of the meeting held on 20 February 2023

Cllr A Wilce **MOVED**, Seconded by Cllr G Barnell that:

“This item, we move on from this item, and it’s referred to the next Council meeting as insufficient notice had been given for the documents.”

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have **FAILED**.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 20 February 2023.

140 Audit Committee - Report of the meeting held on 24 January 2023

The Vice Chairman of the Audit Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 24 January 2023.

141 Environment Policy Development Group - Report of the meeting held on 10 January 2023

The Chairman of the Environment Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 10 January 2023.

142 Homes Policy Development Group - Report of the meeting held on 17 January 2023

The Chairman of the Homes Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 17 January 2023.

143 Community Policy Development Group - Report of the meeting held on 24 January 2023

The Chairman of the Community Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 24 January 2023.

144 Economy Policy Development Group - Report of the meeting held on 12 January 2023

The Chairman of the Economy Policy Development Group presented the report of the meeting held on 12 January 2023.

145 Planning Committee - Report of the meeting held on 4 January 2023

The Chairman of the Planning Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 4 January 2023.

146 Planning Committee - Report of the meeting held on 18 January 2023

The Chairman of the Planning Committee presented the report of the meeting held on 18 January 2023.

147 Standards Committee - Report of the meeting held on 8 February 2023

Cllr A Wilce **MOVED**, Seconded by Cllr Mrs N Woollatt:

“That we move onto the next item of business and this matter stands referred to the next meeting of the Full Council as it having been sufficient time for consideration.”

Upon a vote being taken the **MOTION** was declared to have **CARRIED**.

148 Members Allowances and the Recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel

The Council had before it a report of the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer setting out the recommended Members' Scheme of Allowances for 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The District Solicitor outlined the contents of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Cllr R Evans **MOVED** an **AMENDMENT**, Seconded by Cllr R Dolley that:

“All Members accept no increase in Council allowances or special responsibility allowances for the year 2022/23. This will save the Council approximately £13,000. For 2023/24, a basic allowance of some £6,000 is paid to all Members, then the special responsibility allowances that will allow for. This would be as follows:

“Based on the £6,000 paid basic allowance the Leader, whoever that would be, would receive the basic allowance plus the basic allowance x2; the Deputy Leader, all Cabinet Members, Chairs of Planning and Scrutiny would get the basic allowance plus another allowance x1; 4 PDG Chairs and the Audit Chair would get the basic allowance and the allowance x0.5; Chair of Council would get the basic allowance and the allowance x0.5; and the Chairs of Standards and Licensing would get the basic allowance and the allowance x0.25.”

Cllr J Buczkowski **MOVED** a **SECOND AMENDMENT**, Seconded by Cllr B Holdman that:

“No increases are made for 23/24, so there is essentially a freeze on all allowances and the retrospective for 22/23 again is frozen as was in the original proposal.”

Upon a vote being taken, the **SECOND AMENDMENT** was declared to have **FAILED**.

Upon a vote being taken, the **AMENDMENT** was declared to have been **CARRIED**.
(Cllr L Taylor Abstained)

Note: *Report previously circulated, copy attached to minutes.

149 **Questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 13**

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 13.2.

150 **Special Urgency Decisions**

With regard to any decisions taken under Rule 16 (of the Constitution) Special Urgency taken since the last meeting. The Chairman informed the meeting that no such decisions had been taken in that period.

151 **Questions to Cabinet Members**

Cllr C J Eginton asked the Leader if he could ensure that Cllr R Deed would not remain the Cabinet Member for Finance. The Leader of the Council noted that a written answer would be given.

Cllr C Slade asked the Leader when a new Cabinet could be expected and how many Cabinet appointments does he intend to make. The Leader explained that a meeting with the Chief Executive had been arranged and Councillors would be approached and Councillors would be informed accordingly.

Cllr R Chesterton asked the Leader if he would commit to have Cabinet Members ready to be asked questions at the next Full Council meeting. The Leader explained that in the short time available Cabinet Members would still be understanding their remits but would try to answer as best they can.

152 **Members Business**

The Leader thanked Members for their support.

(The meeting ended at 22:20)

CHAIRMAN