

BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 4th March 2013 at Retford Town Hall

Present: Councillor I. J. Campbell (Chair)

Councillors	B. Barker	A. Mumby
	A. Battey	J. W. Ogle
	B. A. Bowles	G. A. N. Oxby
	H. M. Brand	C. Palmer
	H. Burton	D. G. Pidwell
	R. B. Carrington-Wilde	D. Potts
	D. Challinor	J. Potts
	A. Chambers	D. R. Pressley
	P. Douglas	M. W. Quigley
	J. Evans	T. Rafferty
	S. Fielding	A. Rhodes
	G. Freeman	J. B. Rickells
	M. T. Gray	J. M. Sanger
	S. A. Greaves	J. C. Shephard
	M. Gregory	A. Simpson
	F. Hart	M. Storey
	B. Hopkinson	K. Sutton
	K. H. Isard	T. Taylor
	S. Isard	S. Toms
	G. Jones	C. Troop
	J. A. Leigh	J. White
	R. Leigh	G. J. Wynne
	S. May	

Officers in attendance: J Hamilton, M Hill, L Hull, M Ladyman, N Taylor, R Theakstone and S Wormald.

(The Chairman welcomed all present to the full Council Meeting, read out the Fire Alarm/Evacuation Procedure, and reminded those present to switch mobile phones and that no recordings are permitted.)

68. MINUTE'S SILENCE

A minute's silence was held in honour of former councillor Terry Walters who had recently passed away. Mr Walters was first elected in May 1995 and became Chairman of the Council for the 1997/98 municipal year. He was the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Amenities in 2000/01 and the Cabinet Member for Leisure from 2002 to 2004, when he was defeated.

RESOLVED that a minute's silence be held in honour of former councillor Terry Walters.

69. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Entwistle and C Wanless.

70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

Councillor S Fielding declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda No. 11 – Council Tax Resolution and Budget Book 2013/14 (Key Decisions Nos. 336, 337, 338, 339 and 340), as she is the Chair of the Citizens' Advice Bureau; she remained in the meeting.

Councillor D Potts declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda No. 11 – Council Tax Resolution and Budget Book 2013/14 (Key Decisions Nos. 336, 337, 338, 339 and 340), as he is a volunteer at the Citizens' Advice Bureau; he remained in the meeting.

Councillor D R Pressley declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda No. 11 – Council Tax Resolution and Budget Book 2013/14 (Key Decisions Nos. 336, 337, 338, 339 and 340), as he is a volunteer at the Citizens' Advice Bureau; he remained in the meeting.

(b) Officers

There were no declarations of interest by officers on matters to be discussed at the meeting.

71. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20TH DECEMBER 2012 AND THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 29TH JANUARY 2013

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meetings held on 20th December 2012 and 29th January 2013 be approved.

72. COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman's Communications

The Chairman welcomed Dave Case on behalf of the newly formed Bassetlaw District Scouts Association. Mr Case explained that the Retford and Worksop Scouts decided to merge some 4-5 years ago and the Bassetlaw District Scouts Association came into existence in January 2013. A competition had been held for a new badge and the winning design was by a seven-year old Beaver Scout from Manton. Mr Case went on to give some information about the Scout Movement, and development across Bassetlaw. He thanked those Councillors who had given donations towards the new badge, and these Members were all were given a badge.

The Chairman also welcomed Kathy Cowbrough from Fairtrade, who presented the Council with a renewal certificate for the District. Ms Cowbrough urged all present to continue to support the Fairtrade movement by buying Fairtrade products; Bassetlaw being a 'Fairtrade District' will be marked at the entries into the District. Two members of the Fairtrade Steering Group were also present.

Leader's Communications

The Leader acknowledged the recently won award by the Council at Nottinghamshire County Council's Annual Sports Awards, when the Bassetlaw Games was announced as the Sports Project of 2012. He also acknowledged the work of the A1/BDC Anti-Social Behaviour Team in recognition of its work within the District's communities to reduce anti-social behaviour. He has written to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire and voiced the Council's concerns on his draft Police and Crime Plan. He thanked the Council's representative on the Panel, Councillor D Challinor, and the Scrutiny Select Panel for its review on The Future of Policing in Bassetlaw. He has made clear to Paddy Tipping

the requirements for the District, including the retention of police stations in both Retford and Worksop, and the need for the re-opening of the custody suite at Worksop.

The Leader tabled a paper from the East Midlands Ambulance Service which listed the latest proposals to the Service. A map identified 11 hubs and 16 ambulance stations; nothing was marked for Retford. He expressed the District's concerns that the proposals are unacceptable and that an ambulance station is vital for Retford. He said that he would be writing to the East Midlands Ambulance Service and also the Secretary of State to voice these concerns, and also that there is no direct contact with the Ambulance Service, only through the scrutiny process.

Chief Executive's Communications

The Interim Chief Executive had no communications.

73. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There was one question by the public of which notice had been given in accordance with Rules of Procedure Number 10.

From Mr L Duveen:

"Has the Council made any representations to the Head Offices of the local supermarket petrol stations to find out why residents of Worksop are charged 2p to 5p more for a litre of petrol than residents of other towns and cities in the North Midlands and South Yorkshire?"

Reply by Councillor S A Greaves:

"I have not written directly to the head offices but would be happy to do so as the price of fuel is affecting everyone in Bassetlaw. The fact that one can drive a short distance and get fuel at cheaper prices is 'taking the Michael'. Greater fuel competition would also be better and would drive prices down. Sadly, the price will further increase due to the increase in VAT which, again, will not be helpful to residents. However, if the Chancellor sees sense by not introducing this in the forthcoming Budget, then I would be in support of this, as would, no doubt, the Deputy Prime Minister."

74. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

There were three questions by Members of which notice had been given in accordance with Rules of Procedure Number 11.

From Councillor K H Isard:

"Why do you think that nothing is happening on the Vesuvius site?"

Reply by Councillor D R Pressley:

"As Members will be aware, the initial planning application for the former Vesuvius works site was refused by the Planning Committee in December 2009 when the previous Administration was in control of the Council. This refusal meant that the development on a brownfield site would not proceed and during the debate at the Planning Committee, the Leader of the Council made the remark that the jobs were 'only supermarket jobs anyway'. The applicant appealed against the Council's decision and, following a public inquiry in 2011, the appeal was dismissed.

Following the appeal decision, the applicants resubmitted an application which was approved unanimously at Planning Committee in December 2011. The officer recommendation was that, if planning permission was granted, it should be subject to the developer entering into a legal agreement under the provisions of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure: an integrated transport contribution; a bus service contribution; the provision, with freehold, of a football ground (including the provision for five-a-side pitches) and long lease (or the provision of the safeguarded community sports land and funds to the Council); and the provision of speculative employment development (or the provision of land and funds to the Council to deliver employment units).

In the event that such an agreement could not be reached, and thus the benefits of the scheme are reduced or fall away, it was recommended that the application should be reconsidered accordingly.

Following the resolution to grant planning permission, it was expected that the applicants would move quickly to agree a Section 106 so that development could begin on site. Unfortunately, in April 2012, the applicants contacted officers to say that they would need to revise the Section 106 offer due to problems with the viability of the proposed new development as is the case all over the country.

In July 2012, officers commissioned independent surveyors, at the applicants' expense, to assess the applicants' claims about viability. The results of this work, delivered in September 2012, largely confirmed the applicants' claims.

Since this time, the Council has been working with the applicants to secure a Section 106 agreement that will be mutually acceptable and which will secure benefits for the town. Negotiations on a Section 106 agreement will continue until such time as the Council can be satisfied that such an agreement has been achieved, when it will be referred back to Planning Committee for a decision on the revised application.

It is clear that the state of the economy is causing problems for many developers of commercial property and, until we enter more buoyant times, progress with development is likely to remain slow, but we are confident that the development will proceed."

Supplementary question from Councillor K H Isard:

"As Members no doubt remember, there was much made by the press about the Section 106 agreement, and that Worksop Town Football Club was to have a new stadium, no less. In the revised negotiations, is this still a requirement from the Council?"

Reply by Councillor D R Pressley:

"It was the developer who promised a stadium, not the Council. Negotiations are still on-going, and we have met the owner several times to progress negotiations to achieve a conclusion which will be the best for all the community."

From Councillor B A Bowles:

"Is there any truth in the rumour that is currently circulating that it is this Administration's intention to close the Tourist Information Centres in both Retford and Worksop, thus abandoning all encouragement for tourism in Bassetlaw, together with the prospects of increasing the inward investment and benefits to the local economy that tourism already brings to Bassetlaw?"

Reply by Councillor D R Pressley:

“As Councillor Bowles will be aware, a report was considered by Cabinet in February concerning a review of tourism services. This report makes very clear that the Council wishes to strengthen the work it does in this area. Accordingly, it was agreed that, in order to maximise the benefits of tourism within the District, the Council should look to take a more proactive engagement role with local business within, and servicing, the tourism sector to promote and develop these businesses as well as providing appropriate support and co-ordination. We are also looking to promote Bassetlaw as a place to visit and enjoy, and we are working with partners to ensure this happens.

We are aware of our rich heritage and the need to protect its future. We are also aware that tourism can bring much needed revenue to the District which I hope we will all support.

At the same time, it was proposed that, as part of this review, it would be necessary to look at how the Council provides the Tourist Information Service, and whether it would be more effective to do this through other means.

I would emphasise, however, that this is only an initial consultation process and no decisions have been made about TICs or indeed any other aspects of the Council's tourism activities.”

Supplementary question from Councillor B A Bowles:

“If this Administration is so genuine in its promotion of our area, then why has it disregarded or watered down so many recommendations of the ‘Pride in Bassetlaw’ Scrutiny Panel that relate to tourism, when so many witnesses stressed the importance of tourism promotion and expressed their concern that there is no Portfolio Holder with that responsibility?”

Reply by Councillor D R Pressley:

“Cabinet adopted the Scrutiny Panel report in full and is now looking at the best way forward for tourism in Bassetlaw, a place for people to live, work and enjoy. All Members should be supporting this so that Bassetlaw becomes a prime region for people to visit. We have some lovely places in the District, like Clumber Park and Langold Country Park, and these will be improved by CCTV for some rural areas. I hope that all Members will show support.”

From Councillor A Simpson:

“Would the Leader of the Council tell me what progress has been made regarding the request, made over six months ago, to appoint the award of Alderman to ex-councillor Kenneth Bullivant?”

Reply by Councillor S A Greaves:

“I am happy to update Councillor Simpson. A report on this subject is being prepared and will be presented in due course; indeed, it will be finalised faster than Great Britain gets its AAA rating back!”

Supplementary question from Councillor A Simpson:

“Since no further moves appear to have been made on this matter, is it therefore safe to assume that no future serving District Councillor, regardless of time served in the position, have been elected by residents, and despite being elected to any position of honour by Members, will be granted the award of Alderman of Bassetlaw?”

Reply by Councillor S A Greaves:

“I do not understand Councillor Simpson’s concerns. The report is simply taking its course. You must appreciate that most of our time is being taken up with dealing with the horrendous cuts imposed by the Coalition Government.”

75. MOTIONS

The Agenda contained two motions, notice of which had been given in accordance with Rules of Procedure Number 12.

(a) Proposed by Councillor S May and seconded by Councillor A Chambers:

“This Council is alarmed and appalled that couples or lone parents with one child and one earner on the minimum wage will be worse off in the year 2013-14 as a result of changes to working tax credit, child tax credit and child benefit introduced in Budgets since 2010; and believes that the changes that have been introduced are disproportionately hitting working families on the lowest incomes, that this does not make sense economically and is punishing those who wish to work; and calls on the Coalition Government to ensure that those who have less do not have to pay disproportionately more of their income to reduce the deficit than those on higher incomes.”

Councillors K Sutton, D Challinor, B Barker, A Mumby, B A Bowles, M W Quigley, S A Greaves, A Rhodes, J C Shephard, R Leigh, A Chambers, J W Ogle, K H Isard and S May spoke to the motion.

Voting for supporting the motion:

FOR Councillors B Barker, A Battey, B A Bowles, H M Brand, H Burton, I J Campbell, R B Carrington-Wilde, D Challinor, A Chambers, P Douglas, J Evans, S Fielding, G Freeman, M T Gray, S A Greaves, M Gregory, F Hart, B Hopkinson, K H Isard, S Isard, G Jones, J A Leigh, R Leigh, S May, A Mumby, G A N Oxby, C Palmer, D G Pidwell, D Potts, J Potts, D R Pressley, M w Quigley, T Rafferty, A Rhodes, J B Rickells, J M Sanger, J C Shephard, A Simpson, M Storey, K Sutton, T Taylor, S Toms, C Troop, J White and G J Wynne.

AGAINST Councillor J W Ogle.

ABSTAINED None.

RESOLVED that the motion be supported and a letter from Bassetlaw District Council be sent to the Prime Minister.

(b) Proposed by Councillor S A Greaves and seconded by Councillor J Potts:

“This Council believes that withdrawing housing benefit from social housing tenants with unoccupied bedrooms will hit the poor, the vulnerable and the disabled hardest, unfairly penalises parents with sons and daughters in the Armed Forces living at home but away fighting for their country, takes no account of those who need

specialist home care and threatens to disrupt the lives of children in joint custody of divorced or separated parents; recognises that local councils do not have enough one-bedroom housing stock available to enable those who can downsize to do so; and calls upon the Coalition Government to abandon the Housing Benefit Under Occupation Penalty, "The Bedroom Tax", in the forthcoming Budget."

Councillors J Potts, M W Quigley, R B Carrington-Wilde, G A N Oxby, C Troop, S May, D Challinor, J C Shephard, A Simpson, B A Bowles, A Rhodes, D R Pressley, G J Wynne, M Storey and S A Greaves spoke to the motion.

Voting for supporting the motion:

FOR Councillors B Barker, A Battey, B A Bowles, H M Brand, H Burton, I J Campbell, R B Carrington-Wilde, D Challinor, A Chambers, P Douglas, J Evans, S Fielding, G Freeman, S A Greaves, M Gregory, F Hart, B Hopkinson, K H Isard, S Isard, G Jones, J A Leigh, R Leigh, S May, A Mumby, G A N Oxby, C Palmer, D G Pidwell, D Potts, J Potts, D R Pressley, M W Quigley, T Rafferty, A Rhodes, J B Rickells, J M Sanger, J C Shephard, M Storey, K Sutton, S Toms, C Troop, J White and G J Wynne.

AGAINST Councillor M T Gray.

ABSTAINED Councillors J W Ogle, A Simpson and T Taylor.

RESOLVED that the motion be supported and a letter from Bassetlaw District Council be sent to the Prime Minister.

76. REFERRALS

(a) Cabinet – 8th January 2013 – Minute No. 118(a) – Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy (Key Decision No. 347)

RESOLVED that the Environmental Crime Enforcement Policy be approved and implemented.

(b) Audit and Risk Scrutiny Committee – 12th February 2013 – Minute No. 60(b) – External Audit Plan 2012/13

RESOLVED that the KPMG External Audit Plan for 2012/13 be approved.

(c) Cabinet – 14th February 2013 – Minute No. 136(a) - Sheffield City Region Governance Review (Key Decision No. 371)

RESOLVED that the outcomes of the Sheffield City Region Governance Review, including participation in the establishment of a Combined Authority, be formally ratified.

(The meeting was adjourned for a ten-minute comfort break. Councillors P Douglas and D Potts left the meeting at this point and did not return.)

77. REPORT(S) OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

(a) Independent Remuneration Panel

Members were updated on the status of the Independent Remuneration Panel and the status of the annual report on Members' Allowances.

A process of recruitment for a third member of the Panel has been conducted but proved unsuccessful and, as such, the Panel cannot present the findings of its review as it would be operating outside its delegated authority.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the Monitoring Officer be authorised to conduct a review of the role and function of the Independent Remuneration Panel with the outcome being reported back to full Council once it has been concluded.

78. REPORT(S) OF THE INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

(a) Pay Policy Statement

Members' approval was sought for the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2013/14 which was appended to the report.

RESOLVED that the draft Pay Policy Statement be approved and publicised by 1st April 2013.

79. COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION AND BUDGET BOOK 2013/14 (Key Decision Nos. 336, 337, 338, 339 and 340)

(The Council Tax Resolution and Budget Book 2013/14 had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting. A revised Council Tax Resolution and Budget Headlines 2013/14 report, which included the missing figures for Nottinghamshire County Council and the Nottinghamshire Combined Fire and Rescue Authority, had been circulated in advance of the meeting.)

Members were asked to approve the recommendations as set out in the Council Tax Resolution and Budget Headlines 2013/14 report which comprised the Budget Book.

Councillor J Evans, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property, presented the Budget proposals for 2013/14, which were seconded by Councillor S A Greaves.

Councillor A Simpson, Opposition Spokesperson for Finance, responded to the proposals. No alternative Budget proposals were tabled, although some ideas were suggested.

Councillors M W Quigley, D R Pressley, G J Wynne, D Challinor, K H Isard, F Hart and S A Greaves, spoke to the Budget, with Councillor J Evans concluding.

Voting for the proposed Budget:

FOR Councillors B Barker, A Battey, B A Bowles, H M Brand, H Burton, I J Campbell, R B Carrington-Wilde, D Challinor, A Chambers, J Evans, S Fielding, G Freeman, M T Gray, S A Greaves, M Gregory, F Hart, B Hopkinson, K H Isard, S Isard, G Jones, J A Leigh, R Leigh, S May, A Mumby, J W Ogle, G A N Oxby, C Palmer, D G Pidwell, J Potts, D R Pressley, M W Quigley, T Rafferty, A Rhodes, J B Rickells, J M Sanger, J C Shephard, A Simpson, M Storey, K Sutton, T Taylor, S Toms, C Troop, J White and G J Wynne.

AGAINST None.

ABSTAINED None.

RESOLVED that:

1. Within the Budget Headlines 2013/14 report:

- (a) The General Net Fund net budget of £15,162,500 (excluding parish precepts) be approved.
 - (b) A Council Tax band D increase of 0% that retains the amount of £152.82 for Bassetlaw District Council be approved.
 - (c) No use of reserves to fund the budget be approved.
 - (d) The declaration of a nil surplus on the Collection Fund be approved.
 - (e) The Capital Programme for 2013/14 to 2017/18 totalling £6,812,000 be approved.
 - (f) The indicative Capital Programme for 2014/15 to 2017/18 totalling £4,907,000 be approved.
 - (g) The Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2013/14 to 2015/16, incorporating the Borrowing Strategy and the Annual Investment Strategy, be approved.
 - (h) The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement be approved.
 - (i) The Prudential Indicators and Limits be approved.
 - (j) The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator be approved.
 - (k) The Capital Investment Strategy 2013/14 to 2017/18 be approved.
 - (l) The Property Asset Management Plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 be approved.
 - (m) The Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves 2013/14 be noted.
2. The formal Council Tax Resolution, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be approved.
 3. The total Band D Council Tax be approved, as follows:

	2012/13	2013/14	Increase
	£	£	%
Bassetlaw District Council	152.82	152.82	0%
Nottinghamshire County Council	1,193.18	1,193.18	0%
Nottinghamshire Police Authority	166.41	169.65	1.95%
Nottinghamshire Combined Fire and Rescue Authority	69.69	69.69	0%
Sub-total	1,582.10	1,585.34	0.20%
Town and Parish Council (average)	22.98	25.39	10.49%
Total	1,605.08	1,610.73	0.35%

80. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

As there was no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting.