

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Gernon Road,
Letchworth Garden City on Thursday 4 August 2005

PRESENT: *Councillors: Mrs. A.G. Ashley, A. Bardett, David Billing, Judi Billing, Simon Bloxham, P.C.W. Burt, P. Clark J.M. Cunningham, W.M. Davidson, Tricia Gibbs, Ms. F.R. Hill, G.C. Hollands, T.W. Hone, A Hunter, Sal Jarvis, Steve Jarvis, David Kearns, Mrs L. Kercher Ian Knighton, A. Kingman, Sandra Lunn, Ian Mantle, Peter Maddell, H.M. Marshall, Lawrence McNamara, D. Miller, M.R.M Muir, Mrs L.A. Needham, Lawrence Oliver, M. Paterson, Derek Sheard, F.J. Smith, Martin Stears, Mrs. C.P.A. Strong, R.A.C. Thake, Michael Weeks, F.R.B. Wordsworth, and A.D. Young.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Strategic Director of Financial and Regulatory Services and the Democratic Services Manager.*

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.J. Barnard, J.F. Barry, Gary Grindal, D.J. Horrell, Robert Inwood, Joan Kirby, Deepak Sangha, R. Shakespeare-Smith, Tony Hartley, Karry Omer and Ms. S. Wren.

18. MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor F.J. Smith, seconded by Councillor T.W. Hone and

RESOLVED: that, subject to it being noted that Cllr Kingman was present at the meeting, that the minutes of the Annual Council held on 12 May 2005 be approved as a true record.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

20. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No items were presented under public participation.

21. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(1) Honorary Alderman Audrey Carss

The Chairman announced with regret that Honorary Alderman Audrey Carss died on 6 June 2005.

(2) John Goldsmith

The Chairman announced with regret that former Councillor John Goldsmith died on 22 May 2005.

(3) Jack Wilkinson

The Chairman announced with regret that former Councillor Jack Wilkinson died on 19 May 2005.

The Council stood in silence for one minute.

(4) Cllr Howard Marshall

It was with great pleasure that the Chairman presented Cllr Howard Marshall, with an engraved decanter and framed Council Resolution, in recognition of his service as Chairman of the Council during the Civic Year 2004/2005.

(5) Long Service Award – Roger Corr

The Chairman announced that during his lengthy service Roger has worked in the Administration Department, the Accounts Department and for the past 11 years he has worked as an Inspection/Collections Officer for the Revenues Department.

In his current role, Roger visits all Commercial and Domestic properties, where there may be a case for a valid exemption or discount that reduces liability. The importance of this role is to ensure that we collect Local Taxation efficiently and effectively.

Roger also visits those customers that apply for a reduction in their Council Tax due to a disability. This is a very sensitive area of work, where strict legislation is applied.

Roger is a friendly, conscientious member of staff, who is very well thought of by his colleagues.

It was moved by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr F.J Smith and

RESOLVED: that the Council place on record its sincere thanks to Roger Corr for his long and valuable service.

22. REVISIONS TO FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS

The Council considered the draft minute of the Cabinet held on 14 June 2005 (minute 32 refers). A copy of the report considered by Cabinet was included with the agenda.

It was moved by Councillor Hone, seconded by Councillor Smith and

RESOLVED: that the revised Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders set out within Appendices C and D to the report be adopted.

REASON FOR DECISION: to enable the Council to agree the changes as part of the annual review of its financial management arrangements.

23. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2006/2011

The Council considered the draft minute of the Cabinet held on 26 July 2005 (minute 47 refers).

It was moved by Councillor Hone, seconded by Councillor Smith and

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Financial Management Strategy outlined in the report of the Strategic Director of Finance and Regulatory Services be adopted and communicated to officers as the medium term financial framework for the Service and Financial Planning process.

It was moved by Councillor Kearns, seconded by Councillor Stears and

RESOLVED:

- (2) that consideration of Special Expenses for 2006/2007 onwards be deferred and considered at the meeting of the Council to be held on 22 September.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) Adoption of a Financial Strategy and communication of the contents of the Strategy will assist in the process of forward planning the use of Council resources and in budget setting for 2006/2007 to 2010/2011 culminating in the setting of the Council Tax precept in February 2006.
- (2) To permit further consideration to be given to the Special Expenses scheme.

24. BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

The Council considered the draft minute of the Cabinet held on 26 July 2005 (minute 51 refers). A copy of the Report considered by Cabinet was made available.

It was moved by Councillor Knighton, seconded by Councillor Smith and

RESOLVED: that the District's Local Biodiversity Action Plan be adopted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To provide a planning framework to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the District.

25. ALLOTMENTS STRATEGY

The Council considered the draft minute of the Cabinet held on 26 July 2005 (minute 52 refers). A copy of the report considered by Cabinet was made available.

It was moved by Councillor Knighton, seconded by Councillor Smith and

RESOLVED: that the Allotments Strategy for North Hertfordshire be adopted.

REASON FOR DECISION: to meet the Council's strategic priority to promote first class leisure and cultural facilities to contribute to healthy living for all our citizens.

26. MOTION

Due notice having been given in accordance with Standing Order 11.4 the following Motion was moved by Councillor F.J. Smith, seconded by Councillor Hone and

RESOLVED: that the name of the Community Engagement Portfolio be changed to the "Community Engagement and Rural Affairs" Portfolio.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Chairman.....