

## COUNCIL

*At a meeting of the Council on Wednesday, 4 March 2015 in the Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall*

Present: Councillors Osborne, S. Baker, J. Bradshaw, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Cassidy, Cole, Dennett, Edge, Gerrard, Gilligan, Harris, P. Hignett, R. Hignett, S. Hill, V. Hill, Horabin, Howard, Jones, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, MacManus, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, Nolan, Osborne, Parker, Philbin, Polhill, C. Plumpton Walsh, N. Plumpton Walsh, Ratcliffe, Joe Roberts, June Roberts, Rowe, Sinnott, G. Stockton, Thompson, Wainwright, A. Wall, Wallace, Wharton, Woolfall, Wright and Zygadlo

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M. Bradshaw, Fry, Lea, Logan, Morley and J. Stockton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, A. Scott, I. Leivesley, G. Meehan, D. Parr and E. Dawson

Also in attendance: One member of the public

	<i>Action</i>
<p>COU63 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <p>The Mayor made the following announcement:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All Councillors were invited to support the 'Nightstop' sleepover for homeless persons event on Friday 6 March 2015 from 7.30pm. Nightstop Communities Northwest was one of the Mayor's chosen charities for 2014/15.</li></ul>	
<p>COU64 BUDGET 2015/16 (MINUTE EXB 127 REFERS)</p> <p>The Executive Board had considered a report setting out a recommendation to Council in respect of the Budget, Capital Programme and Council Tax for 2015/16. Since then the Cheshire Fire Authority and the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner had set their budgets and council tax precepts and these had been included in the report to full Council.</p> <p>The report included detail on the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Medium Term Financial Strategy;</li><li>Budget Consultation;</li><li>Review of the 2014/15 Budget;</li><li>2015/16 Budget;</li><li>the Local Government Finance Settlement;</li></ul>	

- Budget Outlook;
- Halton's Council Tax;
- Parish Precepts;
- Average Council Tax;
- Police Precept;
- Fire Precept;
- Total Council Tax;
- Capital Programme;
- Prudential Code; and
- School Budgets.

The Executive Board had recommended that Council adopt the resolution set out in Appendix A of the report, which included setting the budget at £101.452m and the Band D Council Tax for Halton (before Parish, Police and Fire precepts) of £1,204.01.

Councillor Wharton, Resources Portfolio Holder, thanked all the Officers involved for their support in producing this budget and wished to record his thanks to the Members of the Executive Board, the Budget Working Group and the Chairs of the Policy and Performance Boards for their contribution. In addition he thanked the Leader for his help and support in delivering this budget.

Members were advised that, under Standing Order 16(3), a recorded vote was required on all matters that related to decisions on the setting of Council Tax.

The following Members voted FOR the motion:

Councillors S. Baker, J. Bradshaw, D. Cargill, E. Cargill, Cassidy, Cole, Dennett, Edge, Gerrard, Gilligan, Harris, P. Hignett, R. Hignett, S. Hill, V. Hill, Horabin, Howard, Jones, M. Lloyd Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, C. Loftus, K. Loftus, A. Lowe, J. Lowe, MacManus, McDermott, A. McInerney, T. McInerney, Nelson, Nolan, Osborne, Parker, Philbin, C. Plumpton Walsh, N. Plumpton Walsh, Polhill, Ratcliffe, Joe Roberts, June Roberts, Rowe, Sinnott, G. Stockton, Thompson, Wainwright, Wall, Wallace, Wharton, Woolfall, Wright and Zygadlo.

There were no votes against the motion.

There were no abstentions.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the policies outlined in this paper be adopted, including the Budget for 2015/16, the savings set out in Appendix B and the Capital Programme set out in Appendix F;
- 2) that it be noted that at the meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 the Council agreed the following:

- (a) The Council Tax Base 2015/16 for the whole Council area is 32,100 (item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the Act)); and
- (b) For dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates, be set out as follows:

Parish	Tax Base
Hale	649
Daresbury	153
Moore	320
Preston Brook	324
Halebank	488
Sandymoor	948

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which special items relate.

- 3) calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2015/16 (excluding Parish precepts) is £38,648,721;
- 4) in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Sections 31 to 36), the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2015/16 and agreed as follows:
- (a) £314,972,845 – being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the said Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
- (b) £276,262,017– being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) £38,710,828 – being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year (item R in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act).
- (d) £1,205.94– being the amount at 3(c) above (item R), all divided by item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish

precepts).

- (e) £62,107– being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act, each individual Parish precept being:

	£
Hale	16,000
Daresbury	4,000
Moore	4,416
Preston Brook	8,500
Halebank	13,625
Sandymoor	15,566

- (f) £1,204.01 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by item T (2(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

- (g) Part of the Council's Area

	£
Hale	1,228.66
Daresbury	1,230.15
Moore	1,217.81
Preston Brook	1,230.24
Halebank	1,231.93
Sandymoor	1,220.43

being the amounts given by adding to the amounts at 3(e) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(h) Part of the Council's Area

Band	Hale	Daresbury	Moore	Preston Brook	Hale bank	Sandy moor	All other Parts of the Council's Area
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
A	819.10	820.10	811.87	820.16	821.28	813.62	802.67
B	955.62	956.78	947.18	956.85	958.17	949.22	936.45
C	1,092.14	1,093.47	1,082.50	1,093.55	1,095.05	1,084.83	1,070.23
<b>D</b>	<b>1,228.66</b>	<b>1,230.15</b>	<b>1,217.81</b>	<b>1,230.24</b>	<b>1,231.93</b>	<b>1,220.43</b>	<b>1,204.01</b>
E	1,501.70	1,503.52	1,488.44	1,503.63	1,505.69	1,491.64	1,471.57
F	1,774.74	1,776.89	1,759.06	1,777.02	1,779.46	1,762.85	1,739.13
G	2,047.76	2,050.25	2,029.68	2,050.40	2,053.21	2,034.05	2,006.68
H	2,457.32	2,460.30	2,435.62	2,460.48	2,463.86	2,440.86	2,408.02

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(f) and 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- 5) it is further noted that for the year 2015/16 the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

	£
A	104.15
B	121.51
C	138.87
<b>D</b>	<b>156.23</b>
E	190.95
F	225.67
G	260.38
H	312.46

- 6) it is further noted that for the year 2015/16 the Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 for

each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

	£
A	46.97
B	54.80
C	62.63
<b>D</b>	<b>70.46</b>
E	86.12
F	101.78
G	117.43
H	140.92

- 7) that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 4h, 5 and 6 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2015/16 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

B a n d	Hale	Dares bury	Moore	Preston Brook	Hale bank	Sandymoor	All other Parts of the Council' s Area
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
A	970.22	971.22	962.99	971.28	972.40	964.74	953.79
B	1,131.93	1,133.09	1,123.49	1,133.16	1,134.48	1,125.53	1,112.76
C	1,293.64	1,294.97	1,284.00	1,295.05	1,296.55	1,286.33	1,271.73
<b>D</b>	<b>1,455.35</b>	<b>1,456.84</b>	<b>1,444.50</b>	<b>1,456.93</b>	<b>1,458.62</b>	<b>1,447.12</b>	<b>1,430.70</b>
E	1,778.77	1,780.59	1,765.51	1,780.70	1,782.76	1,768.71	1,748.64
F	2,102.19	2,104.34	2,086.51	2,104.47	2,106.91	2,090.30	2,066.58
G	2,425.57	2,428.06	2,407.49	2,428.21	2,431.02	2,411.86	2,384.49
H	2,910.70	2,913.68	2,889.00	2,913.86	2,917.24	2,894.24	2,861.40

being satisfied that:

- (a) The total amount yielded by its Council Taxes for the said financial year will be sufficient, so far as is practicable, to provide for items mentioned at 4(a) to (c) above; and, to the extent that they are not, to be provided for by any other means.
- (b) Those amounts which relate to a part only of its area will secure, so far as is practicable, that the precept or portion of a precept relating to such part will be provided for only by the amount yielded by such of its Council Taxes as relate to that part.

- 8) the Operational Director, Finance be authorised at any time during the financial year 2015/16 to borrow on behalf of the Council by way of gross bank overdraft such sums as he shall deem necessary for the purposes of this paragraph, but not such that in any event the said overdraft at any time exceeds £10m (£0.5m net) as the Council may temporarily require.

COU65 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2015/16  
(MINUTE EXB 125 REFERS)

The Executive Board had considered a report which proposed the Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16, appended to the report and which detailed the following:

- Reporting requirements;
- Treasury Management issues;
- Capital Prudential Indicators 2015/16 to 2017/18;
- Borrowing;
- Annual Investment Strategy; and
- Minimum Revenue Provision.

RESOLVED: That the policies, strategies, statements and prudential and treasury indicators outlined in the report, be adopted.

Operational  
Director  
Finance

COU66 2014/15 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME (MINUTE EXB 126  
REFERS)

The Executive Board had considered a report of the Operational Director, Finance, on the 2014/15 revised Capital Programme.

The Council's Capital Programme had been revised to reflect a number of changes in spending profiles and funding, as schemes developed. These were detailed in Appendix 1.

RESOLVED: That the revisions to the Council's 2014/15 Capital Programme set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report be approved.

Operational  
Director  
Finance

COU67 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2015/16

Council considered a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which contained details of the Council's recommended Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 (the Statement).

The Localism Act 2011 required every local authority to prepare a pay policy statement each year, which detailed the Council's approach to a range of issues relating to the pay of its employees.

The report detailed the following information:

- Background to the Pay Structure;

- Senior Management Remuneration;
- Recruitment of Chief Officers;
- Additions to Salaries of Chief Officers;
- Pension Contributions;
- Payments on Termination;
- Publication;
- Lowest Paid Employees: and
- Accountability and Decision Making.

RESOLVED: That the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16 be adopted.

## COU68 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following motion was moved and seconded by Councillors Dave Thompson and Tom McInerney respectively:

### **Water service charges**

Council resolves:

- 1) To write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs expressing the concern of Council at both current charges and proposed further water service charges affecting Halton Council.
- 2) Council asks the Secretary of State to note that surface water highway drainage charges applied by United Utilities to local authorities are already charged at the highest rates in England and Wales. Her attention is drawn to United Utilities proposing to phase-in new and further charges for Council premises and open spaces from April 2016 at a time when this Council has sustained prolonged and unprecedented reductions in budget.
- 3) The Secretary of State is asked to note the significant difference between what Council's within the United Utilities region are charged and what level of water service charges are applied to local authorities by all other water and sewerage companies in other regions.

The following examples are noted:

- This Council pays £13,168 a year, through site area charges on premises that United Utilities class as Band 7, yet the same charging method used in Yorkshire Water would result in a charge of just £377. The higher the charging band the greater the disproportionate level of charging there is between what United Utilities apply to this Council and that charged in other regions.
- Department for Education CFR data shows that in 2012/13, schools in the North West region paid a total of £27 million for water/sewerage, whereas schools in the South East paid £11

million. Both regions roughly have similar numbers of schools and pupils yet an extra £16 million of added charges are applied in our region.

- Halton pays £37.78 in water charges per school child, the comparative costs in the Windsor and Maidenhead LEA area are just £10.22. Both areas have similar numbers of schools and pupils, yet Halton is ranked 4<sup>th</sup> highest nationally and Windsor has one of the lowest charges in England & Wales.
  - United Utilities have indicated intent to phase in added charges to the six Greater Merseyside local authorities of £2,430,000 from April 2016. No other district outside the North West will face such extensive additional charging.
- 4) Council calls upon the Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs to commission an independent review of the differing scale of charges facing public sector services for water and sewerage services, similar in scope to the 2009 Walker Review of household charging.

She is asked to revise guidance on concessionary schemes that relate to section 43 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 to make clear that community assets managed by local authorities can be included within a concessionary scheme.

RESOLVED: That the motion be agreed.

COU69 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Council considered:

- (1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of Council during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

*(N.B. Councillor Margaret Ratcliffe declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business as she was a serving Magistrate, and left the room during consideration of the item).*

COU70 JOHN BRIGGS HOUSE AND THE POLICE & MAGISTRATES SITES  
(MINUTE EXB 129 REFERS)

Executive Boards had considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on proposals for John Briggs House and the Police and Magistrates Court sites in Widnes.

RESOLVED: That the addition to the Capital Programme of a scheme for the demolition and fencing of the Police and Magistrates Court sites, as set out in the report, be approved.

Strategic  
Director -  
Children  
and  
Enterprise

*Meeting ended at 7.17 p.m.*