

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the COUNCIL held in Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 21 February 2018.

PRESENT: Councillor R J West – Chairman.

Councillors J D Ablewhite, T D Alban, K M Baker, C E Bober, Mrs B E Boddington, D Brown, P L E Bucknell, G J Bull, S Cawley, Mrs S Conboy, J E Corley, S J Criswell, J W Davies, D B Dew, Mrs A Dickinson, Mrs L A Duffy, M Francis, R Fuller, I D Gardener, D A Giles, Mrs S A Giles, J A Gray, S Greenall, T Hayward, B Hyland, P Kadewere, Mrs R E Mathews, D J Mead, J P Morris, J M Palmer, P D Reeve, Mrs D C Reynolds, T D Sanderson, M F Shellens, L R Swain, Mrs J Tavener, Mrs S L Taylor, R G Tuplin, D M Tysoe, D R Underwood and J E White.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors E R Butler, R C Carter, B S Chapman, Mrs A Donaldson, L George, R Harrison, R B Howe, Mrs P A Jordan, K D Wainwright and D Watt.

### 54. PRAYER

The Archdeacon of Huntingdon and Wisbech, Hugh McCurdy, opened the meeting with a prayer.

### 55. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman presented to the Council an account of the activities both he and the Vice-Chairman had attended since the last meeting. The Chairman referred to his attendance at the civic carol service in St Ives and wreath laying in Peterborough before Christmas. He also reported upon the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award ceremony at Comberton Village college and the Holocaust Memorial Day with Councillor Mrs B E Boddington last month. He also reported upon his success at achieving second place, albeit a shared place, at the recent annual pancake flipathon.

### 56. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13th December 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. In so doing Councillor Mrs S A Giles referred to an outstanding response on 'rough sleepers', whereby the Managing Director undertook to provide a full response following the meeting.

**57. MEMBERS INTERESTS'**

No declarations were received.

**58. 2018/19 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (2019/20 TO 2022/23)**

The Chairman reminded Members of the decision made by the Council to suspend Council Procedure Rule 11 (Rules of Debate) to enable a full debate to be made by Members on the 2018/19 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy in an open manner. The Council therefore

**RESOLVED**

that Council Procedure Rule 11 (Rules of Debate) be suspended for the duration of the discussion on Minute No. 58, during which time the common law rules of debate be observed by Members and applied by the Chairman.

In conjunction with a report by the Head of Resources and PowerPoint presentation (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book), the Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources presented to Members the 2018/19 Revenue Budget, the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2019/20 to 2022/23, the Treasury Management Policy, Strategy and Prudential, Treasury Management and Commercial Investment Strategy (CIS) Indicators for 2018/19 and other associated matters for the Council's consideration and approval.

In accordance with Section (30)2 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the Council also considered proposals for levels of Council Tax in 2018/19 for various parts of the Huntingdonshire district.

In his opening remarks, Councillor Gray drew Members attention to the highlights of the budget for the forthcoming year, including proposals for an increase in Council Tax of 2% that was lower than state pension and wage increases and ultimately more affordable. Members also noted that the minimum level of general fund reserves was set to increase to £2.7m as a result of the grant settlement from Government, the Council's policy to increase Council Tax and the savings, income and growth built into the 2018/19 budget and MTFS.

Attention was drawn to specific changes in service budgets and the resultant impact on the final budget, including commercialisation and service changes for CCTV, increase in homelessness resources as a consequence of new legislation, changes to charging for planning services, income from car parking with no changes to car parking fees currently, significant contribution of £190k to the budget from the Leisure and Health Service, substantial investment in ICT for the roll out of the Council Anywhere project and income from the CIS.

Councillor Gray reminded Members of the process of consideration of the draft budget, from informal Cabinet in December 2017 with Senior Officers through to consideration of the draft and final budget at Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet. He reported that this was the seventh budget that he had delivered but had by far involved the most robust discussions and thanked all Members for their input.

In comparing past and future budgets, Members attention was drawn to forthcoming changes that would be emerging through the transformation programme to deliver services for its residents in an efficient and effective manner with the savings ring-fenced to deliver more efficiencies across Council services. Councillor Gray also appraised Members with the increase in capital investment specifically in Disabled Facilities Grants, with an increase from £300k in the current year to £800k in 2018/19 to reflect the increasingly important interaction with social care and the ageing population.

In referring to the success of One Leisure, Councillor Gray reported that the extension of the lease at St Neots had now been signed thereby allowing the long awaited investments of the 3G pitch and swimming pool, with investment already taken place in St Ives, Huntingdon and Ramsey centres.

An assumption of a 2% increase in Council Tax over the next four years had been provided to account for the removal of the Revenue Support Grant as of 2019/20 and Councillor Gray advised Members that in 2018/19 the Council would meet its objective of being self-financing and free from Government grant. In comparing previous budgets, Members noted that in 2012 £3.6m was being taken out of the General reserve and in 2018/19 £3m was being placed into the General reserve ensuring the protection of front line services for residents. Councillor Gray reported that this had been achieved by balancing services that residents want, whilst maintaining reserves and setting a Council Tax level that was affordable to its residents.

In relation to the CIS, a key part of the Council's overall budget strategy, Councillor Gray reported that the Council had currently been in discussions regarding some options in the district and also referred to phases two and three of the CIS that would involve investments in housing and retail in an attempt to revitalise the town centres.

Members noted the thresholds in place for short and long term borrowing and the self-imposed limit of not reducing the level of reserves to lower than 15% as proposed by Overview and Scrutiny. Councillor Gray reported upon the Treasury Management activity that had been reviewed fully by Members previously and stressed the importance of minimising risk through its investments.

In concluding his presentation, Councillor Gray thanked Officers and Members for their input into delivering the 2018/19 budget that had resulted into the Council remaining financially stable and strong with clear ambitions to drive forward change and develop new ways of working.

Councillor Gray moved the recommendations which were duly seconded by the Executive Leader, Councillor G J Bull.

In response and on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group and Leader of the Principal Opposition Group, Councillor Mrs S J Conboy thanked the Executive Councillors and Officers for providing ongoing stability and support for the 2% increase in Council Tax despite the Liberal Democrat Group proposing a similar increase in previous years. In so doing Councillor Mrs Conboy drew attention to concerns in relation to the risks associated with running at the lowest possible reserve rate with not much margin for error but also indicated her hope for HDC Ventures that may play an important part in maintaining the overall

budget.

Members noted Councillor Mrs Conboy's concerns in relation to continued staff absences impacting of services, but welcomed the investment in homelessness that would assist the increased demands on emergency shelter accommodation and the provision of temporary accommodation as an alternative to Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Councillor Mrs Conboy noted that the decision to maintain the Customer Service Centres had been a factor in the overspend of the budget and requested that engagement be made at an earlier stage of the budget setting and policy making process in order that further pressure is not experienced that may benefit one area at an overall cost to the District. Furthermore, concern was expressed of an increased risk to flooding in the District and the demand that would be placed upon the flood risk payment provision.

Councillor D A Giles, on behalf of the HDC Independent Group, referred to the imbalance of investment of the CIS out of area compared with in the District and hoped that the balance would change to invest more in the District resulting in increased business rates and employment opportunities.

On behalf of UKIP, Councillor P D Reeve outlined their support for much of the strategy and endorsed the work of the Cabinet and Officers but not endorsement of an increase in Council Tax.

Councillor R G Tuplin and P Kadewere indicated their support for the budget and thanked Councillor Gray for the clear presentation.

Councillor T Hayward expressed his concern for the reduction of resources in the Audit Team as highlighted in correspondence from the Internal Audit and Risk Manager and his concern that the reduced resources may impact upon the governance of the Council. In response Councillor Gray had confidence that the Council had the right balance of resources, this had confirmed by the external auditors but undertook to re-examine the resourcing level in the Audit Team at Councillor Hayward's request.

In response to a question from Councillor T D Sanderson, Councillor Gray confirmed that the forecast outturn of overspend was estimated to be £700k.

Councillor S Greenall highlighted his concerns in relation to the level of overspend on the hired staff budget for 2017/18 and the budget allocation for 2018/19 of £200k. He suggested that this budget allocation may need further review.

In congratulating Councillor Gray and Officers on the budget, Councillor M F Shellens outlined his concerns in relation to voting on the recommendations as a single item, in particular his concerns where the budget is dependent upon commercial income that can go up and down. He also highlighted an issue in relation to car parking in Huntingdon, with particular congestion at the weekends that could ultimately deter shoppers away from the town and requested the investigation of an additional tier to the Princes Street Car Park in the forthcoming year.

Councillor Sanderson referred to the level of overspend in the budget this year as a result of some budgets being cut too far and too fast.

He indicated his concerns for the 177 families that remained homeless, the continual borrowing for the CIS and failure to follow Government advice to pass down further funding assistance to Town and Parish Councils.

Councillor D B Dew congratulated Members on the budget and referred to the target set to work together with Overview and Scrutiny that should be commended that their opinions had been considered and dealt with through the draft budget setting process. He referred to the success of One Leisure and car parking that had been generating significant income and support for the CIS. Although anti-increase of Council Tax, Councillor Dew understood the requirement to maintain levels with inflation and outlined this support for the budget.

In referring to the proposed Council Tax increase Councillor T D Alban suggested that the vulnerable needed to be protected, whilst maintaining services at a level that residents could afford to pay and outlined his support for this budget.

Councillor R Fuller indicated his support for the budget but in response to comments made by Councillor Sanderson he explained that the Council had been doing more than it had ever done assisting those in need and had been there for residents in times of crisis. He referred to the demand being met for temporary accommodation for those in need and the funding of £189K allocated to meet the demands imposed by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. In referring to the 177 homeless figure quoted by Councillor Sanderson, this had referred to residents in temporary accommodation and not sleeping rough on the streets. Councillor Fuller also referred to investment of £260k in the front line planning process that would assist in speeding up the planning application system.

By reference to the Transformation Programme, Councillor S Cawley indicated that it had produced a number of savings and efficiencies and although not naturally in support of an increase in Council Tax, the District Council's element was lower than had been precepted by Huntingdon Town Council with 50% of their budget on staff as opposed to 17% of the District Council's budget allocation on staff.

Councillor D M Tysoe referred to the robust discussions and debate at Overview and Scrutiny and in indicating his support for the budget, he welcomed the forward plan to identify further income through the CIS and other innovative approaches to support the removal of the Revenue Support Grant.

In concluding the discussion he thanked Members for their contributions and although disagreed with the comments by Councillor Mrs Conboy on running at too low a level of reserves he concurred that there were risks associated with investment in the CIS with levels of income going up and down and had therefore requested Overview and Scrutiny to look at the level of income that had been generated, with a view to looking at further investment into housing and retail in the future. Councillor Gray agreed that the levels of absences had been higher than they wanted, but equally wanted Officers to be proud of working for the Council.

The investment in the CIS had yielded a higher return, resulting in the Council re-investing the return into front line services and Councillor Gray referred to the opportunities to invest further in Huntingdonshire



**and Parish Council Taxes.**

- (iv) the Council Tax requirement for **£236.08** 2018/19 divided by the tax base (T) in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act  
**District plus average Town/Parish Council Tax (item iii divided by District taxbase)**
- (v) the aggregate of all "Special Items" referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act **£5,946,820**  
**The total value of Parish/Town precepts included in i and iii above.**
- (vi) the Basic Amount of Council Tax for 2018/19 being item iv less item v divided by the tax base (T) in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act. **£138.56**  
**The District Council's Band D Tax for 2018/19**
- (vii) the basic amounts of Council Tax for 2018/19 for those parts of the District to which one or more special items (Parish/Town precepts) relate in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act are shown by adding the Huntingdonshire District Council amount to the appropriate Parish Council amount in column "band D" set out in Table 1 attached to the Agenda of the meeting of the Council held on 21st February 2018.
- (viii) the amounts to be taken into account for 2018/19 in respect of dwellings listed in particular valuation bands in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act are shown by adding the Huntingdonshire District Council amount to the appropriate Parish Council amount for each of the valuation bands in the columns "bands A to H" set out in Table 1 attached to the Agenda of the meeting of the Council held on 21st February 2018.
- (e) that the amounts of precept issued to the Council by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Fire Authority and for each Parish Council for each of the categories of dwellings listed in different valuation

bands in accordance with Section 40 of the Act shown in para 6.3 be noted.

- (f) that, having regard to the calculations above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act, hereby sets the figures shown in para 6.4 as the amounts of Council Tax for 2018/19 for each of the categories of dwelling shown. ***This is the total Council Tax to be collected, incorporating the requirements of all of the relevant bodies, for each town or parish area.***
- (g) that the Council notes that, in accordance with Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the basic amount of its Council Tax for 2018/19 is not excessive. ***The basic amount at b(vi) above is not excessive as defined by the Government.***

#### Tax Base 2018/19

Abbotsley	258	Holywell-cum-Needingworth	973
Abbots Ripton	130	Houghton & Wyton	793
Alconbury	558	Huntingdon	7387
Alconbury Weston	286	Kimbolton & Stonely	591
Alwalton	117	Kings Ripton	83
Barham & Woolley	29	Leighton Bromswold	79
Bluntisham	736	Little Paxton	1557
Brampton	1,911	Morborne	10
Brington & Molesworth	158	Offord Cluny & Offord D'Arcy	505
Broughton	90	Old Hurst	104
Buckden (incorporating Diddington)	1,173	Old Weston	96
Buckworth	50	Perry	271
Bury	621	Pidley-cum-Fenton	165
Bythorn & Keyston	149	Ramsey	2,822
Catworth	151	St Ives	5,920
Chesterton	61	St Neots	10,963
Colne	369	Sawtry	1,871
Conington	70	Sibson-cum-Stibbington	229
Covington	44	Somersham	1,377
Denton & Caldecote	27	Southoe & Midloe	154
Earith	589	Spaldwick	243
Easton	78	Stilton	773
Ellington	235	Stow Longa	70
Elton	290	The Stukeleys	615
Farcet	519	Tilbrook	124
Fenstanton	1,198	Toseland	39
Folksworth & Washingley	353	Upton & Coppingford	87
Glatton	130	Upwood & The Raveleys	429
Godmanchester	2,530	Warboys	1,428
Grafham	237	Waresley-cum-Tetworth	145



Great & Little Gidding	126	Water Newton	44
Great Gransden	449	Winwick	46
Great Paxton	368	Wistow	225
Great Staughton	322	Woodhurst	157
Haddon	25	Woodwalton	84
Hail Weston	246	Wyton-on-the-Hill	420
Hamerton & Steeple Gidding	50	Yaxley	2,930
Hemingford Abbots	332	Yelling	151
Hemingford Grey	1,274		
Hilton	450	TOTAL	<b>60,984</b>
Holme	235		

(h) that future savings targets of £1.0m of Net Expenditure by 2022/23 (Appendix 2) be approved; and

(i) that the 2018/19 Treasury Management Policy, Strategy and Indicators and the Annual Minimum Revenue Policy (Appendix 3) be approved.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Order) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 the following Members voted for, against or abstained from the Motion –

For the Motion – Ablewhite, Alban, Baker, Bober, Boddington, Brown, Bucknell, Bull, Cawley, Conboy, Corley, Criswell, Davies, Dew, Dickinson, Francis, Fuller, Gardener, Gray, Greenall, Hayward, Hyland, Kadewere, Mathews, Mead, Morris, Palmer, Reynolds, Swain, Tavener, Tuplin, Tuplin, Tysoe, Underwood, West and White.

Against the Motion – Duffy, Reeve and Sanderson.

Abstentions – D Giles, S Giles, Shellens and Taylor.

## **59. REVIEW OF THE CODE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CODE OF PROCUREMENT**

By way of a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Councillor M F Francis, Chairman of the Corporate Governance Committee presented details of the outcome of reviews of the Codes of Financial Management and of Procurement as endorsed by the Corporate Governance Committee at their meeting on 17th January 2018. The Codes were reviewed regularly to ensure they reflected current legislation and the changing needs of the Council.

In addition to the recent introduction of new policies and changes to existing policies, a primary source of changes to the Codes was the establishment of HDC Ventures. The latter would need to be included within the Council's Statement of Accounts and required the Council to refer to it in its advertisements and notices. Whereupon, it was

**RESOLVED**

that the revised Code of Financial Management and the Code of

Procurement as appended to the report now submitted be approved.

## **60. CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT POLICY**

In conjunction with a report by the Head of Community (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Councillor Mrs A Dickinson, Executive Councillor for Community Resilience, Well-Being and Regulatory Services appraised the Council with a presentation on a Corporate Enforcement Policy for the District Council, comprising two documents designed to standardise enforcement across the Council's regulatory services. Attention was drawn to the formal policy document that set out the principles of enforcement, whilst adhering to the regulatory and legislative framework to assist individuals and businesses to ensure compliance with the law. The second document sets out the operational guidance of how enforcement would be carried out, detailing the alternative approaches for different breaches and enforcement action.

Having noted that the draft policy had been designed to ensure a consistent approach from the Council's regulatory services, Members noted that the draft documents had been discussed by the Development Management Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Communities and Environment), Licensing and Protection/Licensing Committees and the Cabinet and Members views had been taken into account, it was

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Corporate Enforcement Policy Statement and Corporate Enforcement Policy as appended to the report now submitted be approved; and
- (b) that the Head of Community and Head of Development Services be authorised to make minor editorial changes to the Corporate Enforcement Policy Statement and Corporate Enforcement Policy which by definition make no change to the scope or meaning of the Policy.

## **61. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2018/19**

In compliance with the requirements of Sections 38 - 43 of the Localism Act 2011, Councillor S Cawley, Executive Councillor for Transformation and Customers presented a report by the HR Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) in connection with the District Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2019/19.

The Statement, which is required to be approved by the Council by 31st March 2018 was now produced annually and detailed the Council's policies relating to Officer remuneration.

Accordingly and having noted that a copy of the Pay Policy Statement would be publicised on the Council's website along with data on senior salaries under the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency 2011, it was moved by Councillor Cawley, duly seconded and

RESOLVED

that the Policy Statement for 2018/19 be approved.

**62. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES - ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT**

Having regard to a report by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) in respect of the terms of the Members' Allowances Scheme which provided for an annual adjustment of allowances in accordance with the automatic index mechanism of 2%, the Executive Leader referred to the lack of pay increases for Council employees and had acknowledged staff performance. In debating the proposal, Councillor P D Reeve moved and it was duly seconded by Councillor L A Duffy that the following amendment be made to the recommendations of the report by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager that –

the Council scrap all Members Allowances and Special Responsibility Allowances.

Upon being put to the vote the Motion by Councillor Reeve was declared to be LOST.

Having been reminded of the original proposal, the Council

RESOLVED

that there be no increase in Members' allowances in the financial year 2018/19.

**63. LEAD AND DEPUTY INDEPENDENT PERSONS**

In conjunction with consideration of the item at the meeting of the Corporate Governance Committee on 17th January 2018, the Chairman of the Committee, Councillor M Francis presented to the Council a report by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking the re-appointment of the Lead and Deputy Lead Independent Persons for a further two year period.

Councillor Francis reminded Members that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, it was necessary for the Council to appoint one or more Independent Persons and acquainted the Council with the backgrounds of the proposed appointments.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the re-appointment of Mrs Gillian Holmes and Mr Peter Baker to the posts of Lead and Deputy Independent Persons respectively be reaffirmed for a further two year period to 30th April 2020 without the need for further ratification in each year by the Council at its Annual Meeting.

**64. QUESTIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE CABINET**

Councillor J M Morris outlined a series of questions directed towards Councillor Fuller on action the Council proposed to take to reduce the

number of long term empty homes in the District and with 400+ homes empty for more than six months what has the Council done to bring them back into use. He further questioned whether the Council would consider exploring the option of offering financial assistance to owners of long term empty homes to assist with renovation to make them habitable and consideration to the implementation of an Empty Homes Strategy.

In response, Councillor Fuller referred to the technical definition of empty homes being over two years and with 122 empty homes across the whole District it represented the second lowest in the County and 0.2% of the District's housing stock. He explained that there may be a series of reasons why the homes had remained empty, from probate issues through to gaps in tenancies. He reminded Members of their adoption of the Housing Strategy last year with a policy on empty homes that had been considered by a cross-party working groups and approved. In conclusion, the Chairman suggested that Members would benefit from a briefing on the subject to further clarify any misunderstandings as he suggested that this was a concern for many Members.

In response to a question by Councillor T Hayward on closure of the level crossing at Buckden and The Offords, Councillor Fuller explained that representations had been made previously to the Minister and Network Rail on this issue that had been assimilated into discussions on the East/West rail link and a response had been expected imminently. Councillor Hayward further questioned the potential for re-treeing the A14 following the decimation of the route of trees and planting, with Highways England indicating that planting would commence as each section had been completed and Councillor Fuller undertook to take on-board the issue raised with a view to continuing discussions.

Arising from a question from Councillor T D Sanderson, Councillor Fuller explained that the Council's responsibility for homeless families did not end until they had been adequately provided for.

Councillor P Kadewere requested an update on the issues raised at the previous Council meeting of the post master at the Oxmoor, whereby the Executive Leader had referred the matter previously to the Commercial Estates Team and undertook to follow up the issue again. He further raised a question in relation to the closure of shops within the Town Centres and what the Council could do to assist revitalise these locations. In response, Councillor Gray referred to his presentation and the CIS focus at looking at opportunities for investment in the High Street and would look to work with retailers in all of the market towns to take forward this vision.

Councillor P L E Bucknell raised a question in relation to the proposal in Warboys for two waste treatment plants for biomass energy to burn waste wood and process polluted water and highlighted residents' concerns in relation to the location and operating hours and whether the Council had replied to the consultation on the planning application. In response Councillor Fuller explained that although he did not have the power to influence planning applications the Executive Leader and Councillor Mrs J Tavener had made representations to him previously and although the matter rested with the County Council he undertook contact the Head of Development to ensure that a representation had been submitted on this matter.

**65. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY - UPDATE**

In conjunction with the decision summaries of the recent meetings of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Councillor G J Bull presented an update of their activities by way of a PowerPoint presentation. Copies of which are appended in the Minute Book.

Councillor Bull reported that the LEP had been absorbed into the Combined Authority, as at end March 2018 a new business board would be created under the Chairman of the Leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council, Councillor Roberts and sharing the Chief Executive with the Combined Authority.

Members were provided with an update on Mass Rapid Transport, improving links to Cambridge and investigation of potential mass transport options, with approval of a £600k budget to progress these ideas, including two tunnels under Cambridge for use by road worthy vehicles.

Councillor Bull reported that the budget had been approved by the Combined Authority, with no precept to the constituent authorities. He further reported on more changes to the Portfolio Holders and the potential to consider moving to three portfolios – Transport and Infrastructure, Housing and Economic Development. Members also noted that a steering group had been established for the St Neots Masterplan and business plans were under development for submission and consideration by the Combined Authority.

Attention was also drawn to the Combined Authority four year plan summary that outlined the strategic objectives of the Combined Authority and the projects and programmes in place to deliver these objectives.

Councillor T D Alban raised a question in relation to the rapid transport issue and the unintended consequences of the guided bus having a detrimental impact on bus services and concern for similar issues occurring, whereby Councillor Bull explained that a review of the bus subsidy programme was underway and would be in place later in the year.

Councillor T Hayward provided an update on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He provided a summary of discussions at their previous meetings and advised Members that the Committee had been looking at forthcoming decisions of the Combined Authority and held a special meeting for the budget on 12th February 2018, whereby concerns were raised in relation to how it had been set up and the scope of the business consultation had not been broad enough. He further reported upon the issues of the LEP and the Committee concluded that the budget could not be completed until the costs had been incorporated into it for the LEP. There was concern over the lack of detail and the £175m in reserves and questioned what this had been earmarked for. Members also requested further clarity on the forward plan of the Combined Authority.

Councillor Hayward reiterated his concerns with the further changes

in Portfolio Holders and concern for these Members to fully understand their Portfolios and the associated budget. In outlining his concern for the four year plan, he highlighted to Members the difficulty with getting the background to the reasons for why decision had been taken by the Combined Authority, but had indicated that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were represented by a good cross party of Members.

Arising from a question by Councillor Mrs S J Conboy on the cancellation of the meeting with the Mayor of the Combined Authority, Councillor Hayward confirmed that the meeting would be rescheduled.

On behalf of the Council, Councillor J A Gray thanked Councillor Hayward for his diligence and work in ensuring good governance of the Combined Authority.

Councillor T D Sanderson confirmed that he had not attended the Audit and Governance Committee and was therefore unable to report.

#### **66. OUTCOMES FROM COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

A copy of the list of meetings held since the last meeting of the Council held on 13th December 2017 is appended in the Minute Book and Members were advised that any issues or questions could be raised in relation to these meetings.

#### **67. REPRESENTATION OF POLITICAL GROUPS ON DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

A report was submitted by the Elections and Democratic Services Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) relating to the principles of proportionality to be applied to the appointment of Committees and Panels in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Part II of the Local Government Act 2000 following the change in membership of the HDC Independent Group.

Whereupon it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the allocation of seats on Committees and Panels to political groups and non-aligned Members be determined as set out in the report now submitted; and
- (b) that the requirements for appointments to advisory/sub-groups in paragraph 5.3 be noted.

#### **68. VARIATIONS TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND PANELS**

Further to Minute No. 67 ante, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that Councillors C E Bober and J E Corley continue as Members of the Development Management Committee as Independent Group Members;

- (b) that Councillor P D Reeve be appointed to the Licensing and Protection/Licensing Committee in place of Councillor J E Corley;
- (c) that Councillor J E Corley be appointed to the Licensing and Protection/Licensing Committee in place of Councillor R G Tuplin;
- (d) that Councillor D A Giles be appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economy and Growth) in place of C E Bober;
- (e) that Councillor T Hayward and B S Chapman be appointed to the Employment Committee in place of Ms L A Duffy and C E Bober;
- (f) that Councillor Mrs S J Conboy be appointed to the Senior Officers Committee in place of Councillor B S Chapman; and
- (g) that the Cabinet be advised to report that Councillor D R Underwood be appointed to the membership of the Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Joint Group.

The meeting ended at 9.34pm.

Chairman