

Dudley Metropolitan Borough

Minutes of the proceedings of the Council at the meeting held on Monday, 2nd March, 2015 at 6.00 pm at the Council House, Dudley

Present:

Councillor M Aston (Mayor)
Councillor S Waltho (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, S Ali, A Aston, M Attwood, N Barlow, C Baugh, C Billingham, H Bills, D Blood, R Body, P Bradley, D Branwood, P Brothwood, K Casey, D Caunt, I Cooper, B Cotterill, J Cowell, T Crumpton, W Duckworth, C Elcock, B Etheridge, S Etheridge, M Evans, A Finch, K Finch, J Foster, A Goddard, N Gregory, M Hanif, P Harley, R Harris, D Hemingsley, S Henley, Z Islam, R James, L Jones, K Jordan, I Kettle, P Lowe, I Marrey, J Martin, P Miller, M Mottram, N Neale, G Partridge, C Perks, D Perks, M Roberts, H Rogers, D Russell, R Scott-Dow, K Shakespeare, G Simms, D Sparks, A Taylor, E Taylor, H Turner, K Turner, S Turner, D Tyler, D Vickers and Q Zada together with the Chief Executive and other Officers.

Prayers

The Mayor's Chaplain led the Council in prayer.

71 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors S Arshad, C Hale, T Herbert, P Martin, M Wilson and M Wood.

72 Declarations of Interests

Declarations of interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members:

Councillor T Crumpton – All matters affecting schools – Non-pecuniary interest as a relative worked as a supply teacher.

Councillor A Aston – All matters relating to West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) – Pecuniary interest as an employee of WMAS.

Councillor S Turner – Any references to matters concerning Dudley College – Pecuniary interest in view of his employment as a Lecturer.

Councillor G Simms – Issues relating to Looked After Children – Non-pecuniary interest in view of her employment with an independent fostering agency.

Councillor Q Zada – Issues relating to Children, Young People and Families – Non-pecuniary interest as an employee of Black Country Partnership NHS Trust.

Councillors M Evans, D Hemingsley and D Sparks – Any matters relating to Castle Hill Development and all references to Dudley Zoo – Non-pecuniary interests as Trustees of Dudley Zoo.

Councillor D Tyler – Any matters relating to Castle Hill Development and all references to Dudley Zoo – Non-pecuniary interests as a Co-opted Member in relation to Dudley Zoo.

The Chief Executive, Directors and Chief Officers – Any references to the organisational restructure and the Pay Policy Statement – Pecuniary interests due to their employment with Dudley MBC.

Councillor K Turner – Any reference to Voluntary Group funding – Non-pecuniary interest as Chairman and Director of Age Concern, Stourbridge and Halesowen.

Councillors H Turner and K Turner – Any reference to School Services – Non-pecuniary interest as their Granddaughter presently taught at a primary school in Dudley Borough.

73 **Suspension of Council Procedure Rules**

It was moved by Councillor P Lowe, seconded by Councillor S Turner and

Resolved

That, under Council Procedure Rule 22.1, the time restriction of five minutes referred to in Council Procedure Rule 14.4, be suspended to enable the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Lead Spokespersons for the other Opposition Groups to speak for longer than five minutes on Minute No. 74 below and to enable the Cabinet Member for Finance to speak for longer than five minutes to exercise his right of reply to the debate.

74 **Revenue Budget Strategy and Setting the Council Tax 2015/2016**

A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Chief Officer (Finance and Legal Services) was submitted, setting out recommendations concerning the deployment of General Fund revenue resources, a number of statutory calculations that had to be made by the Council and the Council Tax to be levied for the period from 1st April, 2015 to 31st March, 2016.

It was moved by Councillor S Turner and seconded by Councillor P Lowe that the recommendations, as set out in the report submitted to the meeting, be approved and adopted.

Following a speech by Councillor D Vickers on behalf of the Conservative Group, the following amendment was moved by Councillor D Vickers:-

“That the recommendation at paragraph 89 of the report submitted to the meeting be replaced by the following:-

- That the Strategic Director for People be authorised to undertake a review to identify opportunities for procurement savings and better integration across home to school transport and children’s and adults’ social care transport.
- That this review be targeted to achieve procurement savings of 5% (£85,000) in 2015/16, rising to 7.5% (£127,500) in 2016/17 and 9% (£153,000) in 2017/18 and savings from integration of £5,000 in 2015/16 rising to £10,000 in 2016/17 and £15,000 in 2017/18.
- That subject to identification of alternative savings as set out above, plans to save £130,000 by removing local authority transport provision from children attending specialist nurseries be withdrawn.
- That members note that, subject to identification of alternative savings as set out above, the effect over the three years of the Medium Term Financial Strategy would be broadly neutral.
- That a further report be brought to Cabinet and Council in due course so as to report the results of the proposed review and to authorise amendments to the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.”

The amendment was duly seconded by Councillor T Crumpton. Following discussion, the amendment was put to the meeting and carried. The motion, as amended, became the substantive motion on which there was further debate.

Following a speech by Councillor P Brothwood on behalf of the UKIP Group, the following amendment was moved by Councillor P Brothwood and seconded by Councillor B Etheridge:-

“That, in addition to the recommendations set out in the report submitted to the meeting, the following recommendations also be approved and adopted:

- That free off-street parking be introduced on Saturdays and Sundays and that the timing of this change be determined as set out below.
- That from 1st April 2015 a 20% reduction be applied to the basic allowance for all members.

- That from at April 2015 a 50% reduction be applied to the special allowances for the Mayor, the Leader, Cabinet Members, Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees.
- That the post of Chief Executive be deleted and that the functions of the Head of Paid Service be added to one of the Strategic Director posts and that the timing of this change be such as to allow compliance with relevant employment laws and regulations.
- That the salaries of Strategic Directors and Chief Officers be reduced by 20% but that a supplement of £20,000 be added to the salary of the Head of Paid Service and that the timing of this change be such as to allow compliance with relevant employment laws and regulations.
- That it be noted that the full year cost of free off-street parking on Saturdays and Sundays would be £513,000 and that the full year savings from the proposed changes to members' allowances and senior management structures and salaries would be £780,000, giving a net saving in a full year of £276,000.
- That the Assistant Director (Human Resources and Organisational Development) be authorised to take all necessary steps to implement the proposed changes to structures and terms and conditions subject to compliance with relevant employment laws and regulations.
- That the introduction of free off-street car parking be delayed, subject to the timing of changes to senior management structures and salaries, such that there be no net cost in 2015/16.
- That a further report be brought to Cabinet and Council in due course so as to authorise amendments to the budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Pay Policy Statement.”

Following a debate, the amendment was put to the vote and lost.

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 16.4, at the demand of in excess of six members present at the meeting, the voting on the above amendment was recorded as follows:-

For (7)

Councillors P Bradley, P Brothwood, R Scott-Dow, B Etheridge, S Etheridge, S Henley and D Perks.

Against (51)

Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, S Ali, A Aston, M Attwood, C Baugh, C Billingham, H Bills, D Blood, R Body, D Branwood, K Casey, D Caunt, I Cooper, B Cotterill, J Cowell, T Crumpton, W Duckworth, C Elcock, A Finch, K Finch, J Foster, N Gregory, M Hanif, P Harley, R Harris, D Hemingsley, Z Islam, K Jordan, I Kettle, P Lowe, I Marrey, J Martin, P Miller, M Mottram, G Partridge, C Perks, M Roberts, D Russell, K Shakespeare, G Simms, D Sparks, A Taylor, E Taylor, H Turner, K Turner, S Turner, D Tyler, D Vickers, S Waltho and Q Zada.

Abstained (5)

Councillors M Evans, A Goddard, L Jones, N Neale and H Rogers.

Following a speech by Councillor K Turner on behalf of the Independent Group, the report was the subject of general debate by Members.

At the conclusion of the debate, Councillor S Turner was afforded and exercised his right of reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.11(b). The motion was then put to the vote and it was

Resolved

- (1) That the budget for 2015/16, and service allocations (including the Public Health budget) as set out in the report, be approved.
- (2) That the statutory amounts required to be calculated for the Council's spending, contingencies and contributions to reserves; income and use of reserves; transfers to and from its collection fund; and Council Tax requirement, as referred to in Section 67(2)(b) be now calculated by the Council for the year 2015/16 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as shown below:-
 - (a) £687.213000m being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act (*The Council's spending, contingencies, contribution to reserves and specified transfers from the general fund to the collection fund*).
 - (b) £590.542000m being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Sections 31A (3) of the Act (*The Council's income, use of reserves, and specified transfers from the collection fund to the general fund*).

- (c) £96.671000m being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- (d) £1125.3541 being the amount at (c) above divided by the Council Tax base of 85,902.74 calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

(e) Dudley Council Tax for each Valuation Band

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
750.24	875.28	1000.31	1125.35	1375.43	1625.51	1875.59	2250.71

being the rounded amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) 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 valuation 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 bands.

(f) Precepts for each Valuation Band

That it be noted for the year 2015/16, that the major precepting authorities have issued the following amounts in precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
West Midlands Police	71.03	82.87	94.71	106.55	130.23	153.91	177.58	213.10
West Midlands Fire and Rescue	36.62	42.73	48.83	54.94	67.14	79.35	91.56	109.87

- (3) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts in Appendix 10 to the report, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, agrees the following levels of Council Tax for Dudley Council services for 2015/16.

Valuation Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
857.89	1000.88	1143.85	1286.84	1572.80	1858.77	2144.73	2573.68

- (4) That the 2014/15 budgets be revised to reflect the variances set out in paragraphs 9 and 11 of the report.
- (5) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as set out in the report, be approved.
- (6) That the Council determine that a referendum relating to Council Tax increases is not required in accordance with Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (7) That Cabinet Members, the Chief Executive and Directors be authorised to take all necessary steps to implement the proposals contained in the report, in accordance with the Council's Financial Management Regime.
- (8) That the Chief Executive and Directors be reminded to exercise strict budgetary control in accordance with the Financial Management Regime and care and caution in managing the 2015/16 budget, particularly in the context of commitments into later years and the impact that any overspending in 2015/16 will have on the availability of resources to meet future budgetary demands.
- (9) That the Chief Officer (Finance and Legal Services) be authorised to approve the realignment of budgets in due course to reflect the new Directorate structure, including the allocation of the £1m savings from the review of senior management.
- (10) (a) That the Strategic Director for People be authorised to undertake a review to identify opportunities for procurement savings and better integration across home to school transport and children's and adults' social care transport.
- (b) That this review be targeted to achieve procurement savings of 5% (£85,000) in 2015/16, rising to 7.5% (£127,500) in 2016/17 and 9% (£153,000) in 2017/18 and savings from integration of £5,000 in 2015/16 rising to £10,000 in 2016/17 and £15,000 in 2017/18.

- (c) That subject to identification of alternative savings as set out above, plans to save £130,000 by removing local authority transport provision from children attending specialist nurseries be withdrawn.
 - (d) That members note that, subject to identification of alternative savings as set out above, the effect over the three years of the Medium Term Financial Strategy would be broadly neutral.
 - (e) That a further report be brought to Cabinet and Council in due course so as to report the results of the proposed review and to authorise amendments to the budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.”
- (11) That the creation of Budget Challenge Teams, as set out in paragraph 55, be noted.
- (12) That the Pay Policy Statement 2015, as set out in Appendix 12 to the report, be approved.

Under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the voting on the above motion was recorded as follows:-

For (36)

Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, S Ali, A Aston, C Baugh, C Billingham, H Bills, R Body, D Branwood, K Casey, I Cooper, B Cotterill, J Cowell, T Crumpton, A Finch, K Finch, J Foster, M Hanif, R Harris, D Hemingsley, Z Islam, K Jordan, P Lowe, I Marrey, J Martin, M Mottram, G Partridge, C Perks, D Russell, G Simms, D Sparks, E Taylor, S Turner, D Tyler, S Waltho and Q Zada.

Against (9)

Councillors P Bradley, P Brothwood, W Duckworth, B Etheridge, S Henley, D Perks, R Scott-Dow, H Turner and K Turner

Abstained (18)

Councillors M Attwood, N Barlow, D Blood, D Caunt, C Elcock, M Evans, A Goddard, N Gregory, P Harley, R James, L Jones, I Kettle, P Miller, N Neale, H Rogers, K Shakespeare, A Taylor and D Vickers.

The meeting ended at 8.52pm

MAYOR

CL/64