



<u>Committee and Date</u>
COUNCIL
18 April 2013

<u>Item</u>
<b>3</b>
Public

## MINUTES

MEETING OF SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

HELD ON THURSDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2013

AT 10.00 AM

### PRESENT:

Mr P Adams  
Mr A Bannerman  
Mr T Barker  
Mrs C A Barnes  
Mrs J B Barrow  
Mr K R Barrow  
Mr J T Bebb  
Mr M Bennett  
Mr W Benyon  
Mr T H Biggins  
Mrs K Burgoyne  
Mr V Bushell JP  
Mr G H L Butler  
Mrs A Caesar-Homden  
Mrs K D Calder  
Mr L Chapman  
Mr S F Charmley  
Mr J E Clarke  
Mr G L Dakin  
Mr S Davenport  
Mr A B Davies  
Mr T Davies  
Mrs P A Dee  
Mr D W Evans  
Mr R A Evans

Mrs H Fraser  
Mr J B Gillow OBE  
Mr N J Hartin  
Mrs E A Hartley  
Mr R Huffer  
Mr V J Hunt  
Mr J Hurst-Knight  
Mr S P A Jones  
Mr J M W Kenny  
Mr C J Lea  
Mr D G Lloyd MBE  
Mr C J Mellings  
Mr D J Minnery  
Mr A N Mosley  
Mrs C M A Motley  
Mrs M Mullock  
Mrs E M Nicholls  
Mr P A Nutting  
Mr M J Owen JP  
Mr W M Parr  
Mrs E A Parsons  
Mr M G Pate  
Mr M T Price  
Mr D W L Roberts  
Mr K Roberts

Mrs D M Shingleton  
Mr J Tandy  
Mr M Taylor-Smith  
Mrs R Taylor-Smith  
Mr R Tindall  
Mr G F Tonkinson  
Mr A E Walpole  
Mr S J West  
Mr M Whiteman OBE  
Mrs C Wild  
Mr B B Williams RD  
Mr J M Williams  
Mr L Winwood  
Mr M L Wood  
Mrs T Woodward  
Mr P A D Wynn

## **92. APOLOGIES**

The Speaker reported apologies for absence had been received from Mrs B J Baker, Mrs A M Chebsey, Mr A Durnell, Mr E J Overall, Mr R Hughes, Mrs T Huffer, Dr J E Jones and Mrs H M Kidd.

## **93. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Members were reminded that they must not participate in the discussion or voting on any matter in which they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and should leave the room prior to the commencement of the debate.

## **94. MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2012, as circulated with the agenda papers, be approved and signed as a correct record.

## **95. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **95.1 Chairman's Engagements**

The Chairman referred members to the list of official engagements carried out by himself and the Speaker since the last meeting of the Council on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2012, which had been circulated at the meeting.

### **95.2 New Year's Honours 2013**

The Chairman reported that the following Shropshire residents had been awarded honours in the Queen's New Year's Honours List and advised that he had written to each one of the recipients to congratulate them on their achievement:

#### **Officers of the British Empire**

##### **Mrs Margaret Edwards-Parton**

(Sector Skills Specialist, PA Consulting. For Services to the Life Sciences Industry)

##### **Mrs Sylvia Nina Quayle, TD**

(For voluntary service to SSAFA Forces Help in Shropshire)

##### **Ms Polly Gibb**

(Director Woman in Rural Enterprise. For Services to Rural Enterprise)

## **Members of the British Empire**

### **Mrs Connie Marguerite Baines**

(For services to the Community in Bridgnorth)

### **Mr Donald Hickman**

(For services to the community in Albrighton, Shropshire)

## **British Empire Medal**

### **Mrs Maureen Edwards**

(For Services to the North Shropshire Hunt Pony Club)

### **Mr Christopher John Fryer**

(Group Scout Leader, 1st Bayston Hill Scout Group, Shrewsbury, Shropshire. For services to Children and Young People)

### **Mrs Mandy Painter**

(Fundraiser. For services to Seriously Ill Children through The Starlight Children's Foundation)

## **95.3 Mr Bill Longmore, West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner**

The Speaker introduced the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner, Mr Bill Longmore, to the meeting. Mr Longmore, who was accompanied by Mr Barrie Sheldon – Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, stated that it was a great pleasure to address his own local council. He acknowledged that the Council had faced a difficult task in achieving the budget savings required by the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review and indicated that he had every admiration for the way in which the Council sought value for money in the provision of its services and the police was now looking to do the same, with a rationalisation of roles and services and how the police worked with partner organisations and agencies. He hoped that his experience would stand him in good stead for the task ahead and indicated that he had good ideas to take forward for improving life for all people in the West Mercia area.

Mr Longmore stated that he had always recognised the merits of the police and crime commissioner role and wished to establish a format for the role which could provide a good template for future commissioners to follow. He indicated an interest in working with all local authorities and parishes in the area in establishing this and all input and contributions would be welcomed. In conclusion, he asked Members to come to him with any issues that they felt needed to be addressed and he would take these up with the Chief Constable.

Mr Longmore and Mr Sheldon then answered questions raised by Members, during which the following points were made and indications given:

- In response to concerns raised by Mr Whiteman, Mr Longmore stated that the relocation of the police station in Much Wenlock was being examined to retain a police presence in the town. The Chief Constable would soon be publishing the proposed numbers of police constables for each area and Mr Longmore indicated that he was mindful of the current policing of Much Wenlock and Broseley with only one police constable covering both towns and would keep the position under review.
- Mrs Hartley expressed concerns that a police presence contained to be maintained in Ellesmere and indicated that the Council wished to explore the assistance it could provide in pursuing co-location of the police within the neighbouring Fire Station. Mr Longmore indicated that he would be pleased to explore this further.
- Mr Nutting expressed concern at the prospect of the number of police officers patrolling Shrewsbury Town Centre having to be reduced. Mr Longmore stated that he had visited the town centre police office and had been impressed with its operation. He indicated that no decisions had been made yet on the future of the town centre police office and he undertook to look at this very closely.
- Mr Hartin expressed concern at the rationalisation of police stations and the impact this could have on areas of the County. He sought reassurance that the concerns of communities would be taken into account in the decision making process. Mr Sheldon referred to the changes to be made to the safer neighbourhood police teams and confirmed that front-line policing would be protected but new ways of working to be introduced. In addition, as part of providing effective policing across all communities, he indicated that the number of special constables would be increased and they would now be engaged on a long term basis and the hours of police community support officers would be increased.
- In response to a query from Mr Bennett, Mr Sheldon indicated that the number of custody suites around the County would have to be rationalised in response to operational needs and health and safety requirements.
- Mr Tandy asked if the police could work with the Council to increase the level of taxi licence enforcement. In response, Mr Longmore, asked Mr Tandy to put his request in writing to him and he would take this up with the Chief Constable.
- In response to a query from Mr Hurst-Knight, Mr Sheldon indicated that £300,000 of funding would be provided to ensure that independent domestic violence and sexual abuse advisers

were retained and support forums on those issues. In addition, a West Mercia strategy for tackling domestic violence and sexual abuse would be developed.

- Mr Bannerman stressed the need to ensure that consultation was undertaken on any changes in the policing of Shrewsbury Town Centre before they were implemented. In response, Mr Longmore indicated that he was very mindful of the need to ensure that consultations were undertaken in good time.
- Mrs Shingleton referred to the loss of the dedicated police constable for Cleobury Mortimer and the police presence to be provided as an alternative to the police office in the town and enquired what the police presence would comprise. In response, Mr Longmore stated that he was eager that smaller towns such as Cleobury Mortimer were covered by designated police officers and he would be speaking with the Chief Constable on the matter.
- Mrs Taylor-Smith enquired when the consultation period ended on the reorganisation of police stations and expressed concern that Ludlow had lost its police officer as it was a main town in the County that needed to have a police presence. In response, Mr Longmore indicated that the consultation period for the submission of representations on the reorganisation of police stations was the end of March 2013. He stated further that he was certain that Ludlow would have a police presence but the number of police officers involved would be a matter for the Chief Constable. He undertook to look at this very closely with the Chief Constable.

## **96. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The Speaker indicated that there were no public questions.

## **97. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

The Speaker advised that the following questions had been received in accordance with Procedure Rule 15:

(a) Received from Mr P Nutting:

“Last year (2011/2012) the surplus on the Collection Fund for Shropshire Council was £2.316 million; this followed surpluses of £498,000 (2009/2010) and £541,000 (2010/2011).

This surplus was shared between Shropshire Council, West Mercia Police Authority and Shropshire and Wrekin Fire Authority even though a

significant proportion of the collection fund was collected on behalf of the town and parish councils in the county, who received nothing.

Based on precepts the Town and Parish Councils in Shropshire would share £82,698 of which Shrewsbury Town Council would receive £13,448 as per the attached summary.

The year 2011/2012 was probably slightly out of the normal but a surplus of around half a million pounds is not uncommon and is probably now more likely given the risk averse nature of the billing authority at present, who have further reduced its Collection Rate for 2013/2014. This also has an impact on the council tax base.

Therefore, will the Leader of the Council look into ways of distributing the surplus on the Collection Fund more fairly and return to the Town and Parish Council sector money collected on its behalf.”

	Precepts £	Actual Distribution of surplus £	Revised Distribution of surplus £
<b>Shropshire Council</b>	<b>128,986,000</b>	<b>1,910,000</b>	<b>1,826,674</b>
<b>West Mercia Police Authority</b>	<b>19,547,000</b>	<b>276,000</b>	<b>276,821</b>
<b>Shropshire &amp; Wrekin Fire Authority</b>	<b>9,166,000</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>129,807</b>
<b>Parish &amp; Town Councils</b>	<b>5,839,492</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>82,698</b>
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	<b>163,538,492</b>	<b>2,316,000</b>	<b>2,316,000</b>
 <b>Effective surplus per £1 precept</b>		<b>0.0141618</b>	
 <b>Bridgnorth</b>	<b>518,157</b>		<b>7,338</b>
<b>Broseley</b>	<b>174,615</b>		<b>2,473</b>
<b>Church Stretton &amp; Little Stretton</b>	<b>255,921</b>		<b>3,624</b>
<b>Ellesmere</b>	<b>188,777</b>		<b>2,673</b>
<b>Ludlow</b>	<b>330,988</b>		<b>4,687</b>
<b>Market Drayton</b>	<b>416,080</b>		<b>5,892</b>
<b>Much Wenlock</b>	<b>149,110</b>		<b>2,112</b>
<b>Oswestry</b>	<b>366,000</b>		<b>5,183</b>
<b>Shifnal</b>	<b>353,426</b>		<b>5,005</b>
<b>Shrewsbury</b>	<b>949,575</b>		<b>13,448</b>
<b>Wem</b>	<b>241,502</b>		<b>3,420</b>
<b>Whitchurch</b>	<b>364,637</b>		<b>5,164</b>
<b>Others less than £140,000</b>	<b>1,530,704</b>		<b>21,678</b>
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	<b>5,839,492</b>		<b>82,698</b>

The Leader of the Council, Mr K R Barrow replied:

“There is no statutory mechanism to distribute collection fund surpluses or deficits amongst local preceptors. Legislation is clear about the mechanism for distribution amongst major precepting authorities which for Shropshire Council is limited to West Mercia Police and Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority.

This arrangement pre dates the unitary authority and was the same legislation followed by the former District and Borough Councils.

Now that Council Tax Benefit has been localised and is expressed as Council Tax discounts, the risk attached to the Collection Fund has increased and accordingly collection rates assumptions have been slightly reduced. The collection rates across the population are expected to be more variable, with a higher risk of reduced collection rates being borne by the major precepting authorities potentially in the form of collection fund deficits.

This risk is averaged out as the distribution of the collection fund surplus or deficit is based upon collection rates across the whole county, and this is the area covered by the major precepting authorities. To consider distribution at a local level would also bring into question collection rates at a local level. Before a local parish council could be given a share of the collection fund surplus or deficit, it would need to be established what the collection rate is for their local tax payers, otherwise some Town and Parish Councils would be unfairly cross subsidising others.

Town and Parish Councils do not bear a risk and instead receive their precept at the value they request. This certainty, the lack of a mechanism for distribution beyond major preceptors and the necessary administration costs associated with distribution of many small amounts of money are the reasons for the current arrangements.”

(b) Received from Mr P Nutting:

“I represent the Copthorne area of Shrewsbury and both The Kingswood Estate and The Redwood Estate suffer from serious parking problems caused by the nearby hospitals, and in particular The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. The problem is partly due to a shortage of staff parking at the hospital and therefore some staff choose to leave their cars in nearby residential areas, but also because in the afternoons between 2.00pm and 4.00pm the visitor car parks at the hospital are jam packed and there simply is nowhere for cars to be parked on site. This problem is likely to get worse with the introduction of increased car parking charges at the hospital, the increase in workload due to the hospital introducing more day surgery and also an increase in students at the college facility. I welcome the increase in use of the site as it provides excellent employment opportunities for local people but the problems of car parking on site are not being addressed and this is causing distress to local residents. Swiss Farm Road is a bus route but poor parking means that buses cannot always use the road and poor parking by hospital staff and visitors near peoples’ houses mean that residents are often blocked in their drives. The hospital has planning permission to provide an extra 100 parking spaces but seems reluctant to do the work required due to financial restraints.

Therefore can the portfolio holder look into this problem as a matter of urgency and ask officers to find ways to help ease the pressure on the local residential road network.”

Mr S Jones replied:

“Parking at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital has been a problem for a number of years. The major concern is displacement of cars onto local roads and estates. Many of them are staff, with some visitors also, looking to avoid parking charges. This is not unique to Shrewsbury and it is common to have these issues at any major hospital.

The Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Trust are looking to make changes to their current parking as it reviews the existing travel plan. They are introducing an Automatic Number Plate Recognition system later this year, which will help to make more use of the existing parking spaces currently available. They are also introducing different charges, some to benefit long term patients and more regular visitors, others to encourage people to use alternatives to cars to get to the hospital. Simply offering free parking is not the answer; the physical number of cars for the available spaces is the problem.

As there are proposed changes to charges this has highlighted concern locally, with a fear that there will more parking pressures placed on local roads. For this reason Shropshire Council has been working with the NHS Trust to seek to minimise these impacts. We are working proactively and considering interim and longer term measures with the trust. Communication with the hospital has greatly improved recently and they are looking to appoint someone to specifically address these problems.

Early last year we undertook a consultation with residents on Swiss Farm Road, one of the most affected roads. There was a 70% return rate, of these 70% were in favour of some restrictions and 30% against. Of those in favour there was no clear consensus as to what restrictions to apply. We will continue to work as closely as possible with residents and the Trust and keep under review parking in the area. In reality there needs to be an integrated approach with investment, and changes on the hospital site, integrated travel arrangements and appropriate parking restrictions. It needs to be a balanced approach.

At this time the hospital have planning permission from 2010 for an additional 60 parking spaces, which they have not completed. They have completed a 191 space temporary car park, for which the temporary permission is about to lapse. We are discussing the future of these permissions with the hospital.”



(c) Received from Mr T Clarke:

“Members will recall a headline in Shropshire Star of October 11<sup>th</sup> 2012, publicising the brave re-think on the previous savage axing of all Sunday bus services in the Shrewsbury area.

The Portfolio Holder responsible for public transport was reported as announcing that the extra revenue to be generated from introduction of on-street Sunday parking charges in Shrewsbury, would be used to fund early reinstatement of the Sunday bus services across the town area.

I understand that although the long muted Sunday street parking charges were commenced in Shrewsbury some weeks ago, the entire town area still remains without any Sunday bus services, and the new Arriva garage continues to be closed on that day.

Could the Portfolio Holder please advise us and the many long suffering members of the public who are reliant on public transport, when we can expect our sorely missed Sunday bus services to resume in Shrewsbury, as was promised last October . . . ?”

Mr S Jones replied:

“On the grounds of continuing low usage and the resulting high cost of subsidy, and in response to budget pressures at the time, the Sunday service network ceased in July 2011. This was necessary at the time to allow the focus of limited subsidy on continuing to provide access to work, health and other essential services Monday to Saturday, and was part of the Bus Strategy for Shropshire agreed by Members in 2011.

I fully appreciate the benefits of reintroducing Sunday bus services and as mentioned in the press article from October 2012 we had hoped to consider this following the implementation of Sunday on-street parking charges. I am still hopeful that we may be able to do this however we need to assess the full impact of the above on the Council's budget and the recently announced reduction in the overall financial settlement for the Council leading to a requirement for further savings.”

By way of a supplementary question, Mr T Clarke referred to the administration's proposal to now include the reinstatement of Sunday bus services as an additional budget allocation and enquired rhetorically whether it was his persuasion that had initiated the budget change.

(d) Received from Mr A Mosley:

“Since May 2009 how many staff have left the authority with a redundancy and/or other compensatory payment. Please provide a summary of such staff by pay band.

What has been the total cost of such payments overall and specifically in terms of:

1. Redundancy payments and how many have received these?
2. Payments in lieu of salary and how many have received these?  
How many staff have received in excess of one year's salary in compensation?
3. How many staff, and to what value, have been granted additional pension awards? What has been the additional strain on the pension fund?
4. What other compensatory payments have been given and how many have received these? How many staff went with a compromise agreement and how much did they receive over and above their redundancy and correct notice?

Could you please give details of the numbers who have received total payments of between:

- 10K – 49K
- 50K – 99K
- 100K – 149K
- 150K – 199K
- Over 200K

I would also like formal confirmation as to whether the former Chief Executive's employment with the Council is ended and whether any compensatory payments were made as a consequence."

The Leader of the Council, Mr K R Barrow replied:

"Information is available on page 88 of the Statement of Accounts, Years 2011-2012.

The information in the following table updates this for 2012-2013.

<i>Total no of exit packages by cost band</i>				<i>Total cost of exit packages in each band £'000</i>		
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
£0 - £20,000	57	188	54	476	1,397	441
£20,001 - £40,000	30	58	19	887	1,620	551
£40,001 - £60,000	9	26	7	429	1,207	322
£60,001 - £80,000	9	16	5	613	1,126	334
£80,001 - £100,000	2	4	5	180	334	444
£100,001 - £150,000	3	3	5	373	351	588
£150,001 - £200,000	3	1	1	526	169	182
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>3,484</b>	<b>6,204</b>	<b>2,861</b>

These figures include pension strain, compromise agreements and ending of Fixed Term Contracts. The 2012/13 figures are up until the end of December 2012.

The Chief Executive's employment with Shropshire Council expired on 30th November 2012 by way of contractual notice and therefore no compensatory payment was made."

By way of a supplementary question, Mr A Mosley asked whether the administration was embarrassed by the figures and concerned at the Council being culpable for the loss of jobs leading to economic decline in the County.

In reply, Mr Barrow stated that the payments made were legal entitlements and nobody would be happy with jobs disappearing, but every effort had been made to retain as many staff as possible through the loss of posts and not people.

(e) Received from Mr A Mosley:

"On 13th January I asked the following questions about the appointment, costs and outcomes of work by Odgers.

- When, and by whom, was the appointment made?
- What were the precise terms of appointment and when does any contract come to an end?
- Who have Odgers been reporting to?
- What is the total cost relating to his services and ancillary expenses, including payments to related third parties?
- What has the consultancy achieved?

Some of the answers can now be found in responses to a related FOI and I am pleased that a request that the Audit Committee look into various matters related to this has been agreed.

However, it would appear that other consultants have been used at considerable cost and that similar questions should be asked about their appointment and functioning. Therefore:

Since 2009 what other consultants have been used for matters related to IP&E development, Shared Services and other transformation processes, legal advice, financial advice and any aspects of the commissioning of services. What periods were they engaged for, by whom and at what cost to the Council?"

The Leader of the Council, Mr K R Barrow replied:

"Following a request by Councillor Mosley and Councillor Hartin, the Chair of the Audit Committee has agreed to undertake a review and a

scope for this has been set. It would not be appropriate at this stage to respond to any matters that may be considered as part of that review before it is completed.

It is therefore recommended that a response to the question be deferred until such time as the Audit Committee has had the opportunity to report on its findings.”

By way of a supplementary question, Mr A Mosley indicated that he was aware that a number of other consultants had been engaged for various reasons and asked if the Leader could confirm that he knew the consultants were in the Shirehall.

In reply, Mr Barrow stated that he could see that Mr Mosley was keen on spending money on consultants when it suited him, given the success of the consultants for the Flax Mill renovation assisting in securing funding for the scheme. He indicated that changes would be made for when the Council needed to engage consultants, including the establishment of a global budget for consultants so the amount being spent would be clear to all; all consultants would in future be appointed in consultation with the Leader; and details of all appointed consultants would be published on the Council's website.

(f) Received from Mr A Mosley:

“The post-Christmas community cardboard collection service in Castlefields, and other parts of the County were a great success with many hundreds showing their support for recycling and voicing demands that their kerbside collection service be reinstated.

Given the negative impact on recycling rates and on people’s attitude towards the service, will the portfolio holder countermand the current policy of doing nothing and instigate an urgent review with the intention of reinstating the service at regular intervals forthwith, with a permanent full service in place by spring 2014?”

Mr M Owen replied:

“Firstly we should remember that the decision to remove cardboard from the garden waste bin was forced on the Council and Veolia by a change in composting quality standards. It was not something that we wanted to do and it is not possible to return to that collection method as the new standards still apply and there is no indication that they will be changed.

Rather than doing nothing the response was to introduce an interim measure while looking at a number of alternative methods of collecting cardboard from the kerbside which could be implemented quickly.

A number of alternatives were examined including a dedicated cardboard collection and adding light card to the existing paper collections. Unfortunately, these all cost over £1m per year to run, and in the case of the dedicated collection scheme nearly £6m in the first year including the cost of containers. The principle reason for the increase in annual running costs was the need to either change or add to the existing collection fleet. Given the numerous other pressures on Council budgets the decision was taken to continue with the interim measure of bring banks, funded by Veolia, and use the time to look at options for the medium term in which changes to the collection fleet could be made as planned within the existing contract. In the current financial climate it would be irresponsible to take on significant an extra burden if Veolia could begin service changes in 2014 at no additional collection cost to the Council.

Work has already started to review the entire collection service, in conjunction with Veolia and with support from the Waste Resources Action Programme, a government sponsored body which will provide independent advice at no cost to the Council. This approach will aim to identify options for an optimum collection service for Shropshire, increasing recycling and covering a wider range of materials including cardboard.

We want to make changes, but in a structured way rather than make major and expensive changes to the fleet in the short term to accommodate less than 2% of the total waste that we produce. In the last 12 months, investment by Veolia, particularly in plastics recycling and food waste, has seen the current recycling rate rise to 53%. So while we would like to improve this still further by collecting more material from the kerbside it is clear that the service is performing well despite the cardboard issue.”

By way of a supplementary question, Mr A Mosley indicated that he did not accept the portfolio holder’s view and asked that arrangements be made for the matter to be looked at again in great detail by an early scrutiny of the issue.

In reply, Mr Owen stated that he saw little point in the Council taking on an increase in operational costs to reinstate the collection of cardboard from the kerbside at this stage, when Veolia could take this on in 2014 at no additional cost to the Council. He further emphasised how the time had been reached in the phasing of the contract with Veolia whereby options for accommodating the collection of cardboard from the kerbside in the future could be considered. He then invited the Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups to join him in the investigations, but he did not consider that it was a matter for scrutiny at this stage.

(g) Received from Mrs E A Parsons:

“The Lord Hill Column has been fenced off now for some time and the public would like answers to the following questions:

When will the statue be repaired or made safe?

When is the security fencing likely to be removed from around the statue?

How much has it cost so far to have the Column fenced off in this way?”

Mr R Tindall replied:

“When will the statue be repaired or made safe?”

The Conservation report for the Column has now been received and the recommendations/options within it to either repair or replace the statue are being considered by Officers and Members. English Heritage must be consulted on the options being considered before a solution can be adopted. The options will vary in terms of timescales and costs dependant on whether a decision is taken to repair or replace the statue. We intend to ask Local Members, members of the public, partners and stakeholders for their view ensuring that this is in accordance with English Heritage guidelines.

“When is the security fencing likely to be removed from around the statue?”

The fencing will have to stay in place until the statue has been repaired or replaced or until the statue has been temporarily removed for repair or replacement.

If the statue is repaired, then due to the overall condition of the statue the advice from the Conservation Surveyor is that, as a safety precaution, the Heras fencing should be put around the statue throughout periods of frost expectation every year going forward as it could not be guaranteed that further erosion and breaking off due to rain and frost could never be ruled out.

“How much has it cost so far to have the column fenced off?”

The fencing was placed around the statue first in May 2012 when the first debris fall was reported. Thirty panels were erected at a cost of £300 per month. Cost to December 2012, £2,400. On the advice of the Conservation Surveyor as above and his indicated timescales to effect repair/replacement, the decision was taken to purchase the Heras fencing at a cost of £900 rather than continue rental at £300 per month. At the end of December 2012, further debris fall was experienced and the fencing had to be expanded outwards, the debris falling outside of

the previous area. Twenty more panels have been on hire since then at a cost of £200 per month, cost to end of February for these is £400.”

By way of a supplementary question, Mrs E A Parsons asked if the conservation report for the Column was available to all Members and how it could be accessed.

In reply, Mr Tindall undertook to make the conservation report for the Column available to all Members.

(h) Received from Mr J Tandy:

“What has the Council put in place to help people who have lost their jobs -

What support they will get?

What phone number they should ring?

What plans have Shropshire Council got to bring high quality jobs to Shropshire?”

Mr M Owen replied:

“What has the Council put in place to help people who have lost their jobs

The Council through the Business and Enterprise Service run the Rapid Response Redundancy and Recruitment Support Team. This team is made up of colleagues from across the Council who provide support with skills training, benefit advice, housing advice, mortgage and council tax benefit advice, debt advice, business start-up advice and grant advice. We work in a joint team with Job Centre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau and ACAS.

Shrewsbury Prison is one of 7 prisons to close across England. It will formally close on 31/3/13.

Shropshire Council already have their Rapid Redundancy and Recruitment Support Team working with those whose jobs are at risk within the prison service to help staff to find work. Many of staff will move to nearby prisons.

In addition, Shropshire Council’s Business & Enterprise Service is working jointly with the Ministry of Justice ensuring re-use of the site to regenerate that whole area of Shrewsbury. Uses being explored include hotel, residential, small business units, cafes and education use.

What support they will get?

The support they get is provided by the team highlighted above. Each element provides tailored support for the individuals facing redundancy.

What phone number they should ring?

The number to ring is 01743 252259 and contact is Peter Wilson

What plans have Shropshire Council got to bring high quality jobs to Shropshire?

Our plans for bringing high quality jobs to Shropshire are driven by the New Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy published December 2012. This was approved by cabinet at end of 2012. It has been put together by the Shropshire Business Board. The vision is to make “Shropshire’s economy sustainable and businesses competitive and resilient. It has four priorities. These are 1) Accelerating business growth, 2) Infrastructure for growth 3) Stimulating our Growth Sectors 4) Our skilled and loyal workforce. As regards high quality jobs priority 3 is all about boosting business growth in our opportunity sectors:- that is land based industries such as food and drink manufacturing, the green economy and land owners and farmers then in our quality of life sectors which are the visitor economy, creative and cultural industries and the care industry. All of which is boosting knowledge based employment and increasing productivity, innovation and gross added value (GVA) from these sectors.”

By way of a supplementary question, Mr J Tandy stated that the Council had lost over 530 jobs with many highly skilled people and asked what the portfolio holder was doing to help those people find new employment.

In reply, Mr Owen updated the meeting on the position with prison service staff to indicate that compulsory redundancies had been avoided with 1/3 of the staff redeployed to jobs at other prisons and ½ of the staff taking voluntary redundancy.

Mr Owen continued to indicate that the Council, through the development of its high quality economic growth strategy, with the involvement of the private sector, and working with the Business Board was doing all it could, in investing within Shropshire, to assist in the growth of top quality jobs.

- (i) Received from Mr J M Williams:

“Laybourne Grange in West Malling, Kent is a similar development to Sutton Grange in Shrewsbury and featured prominently in the Taylor Wimpey Public Consultation exercise at the Lord Hill Hotel Shrewsbury earlier this year.



Will Shropshire Council ensure that Taylor Wimpey apply the same standards to their development at Sutton Grange as they have to their development at Leybourne Grange?

Taylor Wimpey (TW) according to their plans for Leybourne Grange (source TW) clearly indicate:

- \* The establishment of a Community Development Trust (CDT).
- \* All new homes to be built to “ECO-HOMES EXCELLENT” standard.
- \* All affordable homes to conform to Code 3 (or Building Regs.equivalent)
- \* The site will provide for 10% of energy from renewable sources, with a number of homes having solar panels. [Please note well that TW tell us Solar Panels are not popular with buyers. The implication is that we are stupid in Shropshire when compared with Kent]
- \* TW claim they are committed to homes using no more than 32 cubic metres of water per year. Homes will be fitted with the necessary technology to achieve this.
- \* A ‘significant’ number of homes will have grey water recycling facilities.
- \* TW state a commitment to the use of building materials having “low embodied energy and toxicity”.
- \* 30% of materials by value will be from reclaimed/recycled sources.
- \* 40% by weight will be sourced locally within a thirty mile radius of the development.
- \* Homes will be to ‘Lifetime Homes’ standards i.e. designed to allow future flexibility and adaptability to serve changing family needs.
- \* Private and affordable homes to be indistinguishable and fully integrated throughout the development
- \* Recognised standards – ‘Secured by Design’, ‘Lifetime Homes’, ‘Inclusive Design’, ‘Building for Life’ will be used throughout the development.

The above features are included in the Laybourne Grange Development in Kent. However very few are being incorporated into the Sutton Grange Plans: Are we therefore to conclude that in relation to Sutton Grange the development is being destined to reach ‘bog standard’ mediocrity?”

Mr M Price replied:

“The Shrewsbury South Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) is one of two sustainable urban extensions identified to meet the town’s future housing and employment needs in Shropshire Council’s Core Strategy Development Plan Document

The Shrewsbury South SUE Masterplan has been drawn up in response to this, and includes proposals to create approximately 900 new homes together with employment land, a neighbourhood centre, community facilities and public open space.

In October 2012, following a period of public consultation, the Shrewsbury South SUE Masterplan was approved by Shropshire Council. The masterplan is now being used to inform all future planning applications for the Shrewsbury South SUE area – including Sutton Grange. Details of the masterplan and the Sutton Grange consultation proposals are available to view on the Council’s Website.

Sustainable development is not simply a matter of energy reduction. Councillor Williams has referred to a number of attributes of a scheme promoted by Taylor Wimpey in Kent including provision of solar panels, grey water recycling and low energy design. Although these factors are important, sustainable development is also achieved by promoting alternatives to car use, maximising connectivity to local facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, enhancing green networks and open space for communities and providing sustainable drainage systems to mitigate the potential for surface water flooding all of which are being integrated to the Sutton Grange proposals. Officers will, in addition to this, work with the developers to facilitate a development that meets the aspirations of the adopted masterplan.

Councillor Williams also refers to community benefits arising from the scheme in Kent where a community development trust is being established, supported by a financial contribution from the developer. In Shropshire, housing schemes are of course subject to the Community Infrastructure Levy which could make contributions toward to pay for local facilities identified by local communities such as public transport, roads, leisure, education and health.”

By way of a supplementary question, Mr J M Williams expressed the view that the answer provided was too generalised and non-specific and asked if the portfolio holder could, as a matter of urgency, reopen discussions with Taylor Wimpy on house building standards for the Sutton Grange development.

In reply, Mr Price undertook to circulate the full response provided by Taylor Wimpey to the question and indicated that dialogue with Taylor Wimpy on the issue had not closed.

(j) Received from Mr J M Williams:

“How can we get more resources into building genuine low-cost homes on a substantial scale?

All schemes in which a few "affordable" houses are tacked on to a large private development, (and others where the developer somehow ducks out of it altogether) will never make a real shift to meet the ever-growing need.”

Mr M Price replied:

“This question about how we can get more resources into low-cost housing on a substantial scale is of course one that has exercised many Government bodies and housing associations for some time, and if there was an easy solution it would have become apparent by now.

Locally the solution is a combination of:

- Obtaining contributions to affordable housing from developers through planning policy mechanisms, and keeping contributions as high as possible within the bounds of viability and the NPPF, as we are already doing;
- Working with local registered providers through the Marches Housing & Planning Partnership and the Shropshire Social Housing Forum;
- Working with Registered Providers who are considering branching into the low-cost end of market housing (the appetite for this varies between different RPs);
- Influencing the type and mix of market housing that developers build, encouraging a greater proportion of low-cost market where that is supported by evidence and doesn't render development unviable, through the Type and Affordability of Housing SPD in combination with local housing assessments that will in future be included the Place Plans;
- Improving the viability of development in Shropshire by ensuring a plentiful supply of housing land through the SAMDev Plan. Lower land values as a result of competition in land will improve the viability of development, which in turn enables the local planning authority to ask for more contributions to affordable housing and a greater proportion of low-cost housing.

In other words, we lever in resources directly and indirectly from developers and landowners through the planning system, and are supportive of Registered Providers' attempts to deliver more through new models of delivery, working closely with them to achieve our

common aim of increasing the supply of both affordable and low-cost housing.”

By way of a supplementary question, Mr J M Williams asked if the portfolio holder would support the promotion of an initiative for local authorities to build low cost homes themselves.

In reply, Mr Price stated that he always wished to see houses built and indicated that Nick Boles MP, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Planning, would be visiting the Council in March 2013 and he would be happy to take up the suggestion with him then.

## **98. REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL – MEMBERS ALLOWANCES**

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr K R Barrow, and seconded by Mrs E A Hartley that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein, be received and agreed.

The Speaker welcomed Mr Ciaran Martin, the Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel, to the meeting. Mr Martin indicated that he would be pleased to answer any questions from Members on the report.

Mr R Evans expressed concern that the level of allowances paid to Cabinet and associated Cabinet Members had increased considerably since 2009 and asked if the Panel would look at this to assess its value for money and whether the amounts should be reduced or changes made in the way it was distributed.

In reply, Mr Martin indicated that the Panel wished to look in depth at the whole allowances structure to ensure the right balance was being maintained.

Mr Wood requested that consideration be given to the payment of an allowance to Members of this Council appointed to serve on the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel, in recognition of the onerous work required to be undertaken, particularly in their scrutiny role.

In reply, Mr Martin indicated that the Panel would be seeking information on this, to understand what needed to be addressed.

Mr Kenny asked if the travelling allowances could be looked at with a view to encouraging more car sharing.

In reply, Mr Martin indicated that the Panel would be pleased to look at any aspects of travelling allowances.

Mr Taylor-Smith referred to the valuable contributions made by the Deputy Portfolio Holders and asked that this be taken into account when special responsibility allowances were reviewed.

Mr Martin confirmed that the current special responsibility allowance for Deputy Portfolio Holders had been set whilst the impact of the role was monitored.

Mrs Barnes indicated that she regarded the child and dependent carers' allowance to be a very positive initiative that provided an opportunity for greater diversity amongst Members and encouraged younger people to come forward to serve on the authority.

In response, Mr Martin indicated that the Panel was pleased to do all it could to remove any obstacles and encourage the broadest spectrum of society possible to represent their communities.

Mr D Roberts expressed the view that meetings of the Council and its Committees should be held in the evenings to encourage more working people to stand for election.

Mr Mosley expressed the view that there had been a shift away from undertaking vigorous scrutiny at the Council, with the administration no longer being held to task to the degree that it should, and he considered that this should be taken into account when the Members' Allowance Scheme was reviewed.

In response, Mr Martin indicated that the Panel would be pleased to take all matters into account in the review.

Mr Bennett referred to the consultations on the rights of Members to join the local government pension scheme and enquired of Mr Martin's thoughts on that and recompense for Members from loss of earnings for time spent on council duties.

In response, Mr Martin indicated that he would be looking at the matters and would welcome suggestions from Members for addressing the issue.

In conclusion, Mr Barrow thanked Mr Martin for his attendance at the meeting and for the hard work that the Panel undertook on behalf of the Council

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the current Members' Allowance Scheme, attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.
- (b) That a full review of the Council's Members' Allowance Scheme be conducted following the Local Government Elections in May 2013.

## 99. FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2013/14 TO 2022/23

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr K R Barrow, and seconded by Mrs E A Hartley that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein as amended following the Cabinet meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2013, be received and agreed.

The Leader, Mr K R Barrow, referred to the achievement of the Council in reducing its budget by £85m with a minimal effect on the provision of front line services. He emphasised the uncertain future for the Council, with the likelihood of further budget savings being required in the coming years, in addition to those already achieved. He stressed how the Council was preparing itself to meet further budget challenges by working with communities and partner organisations in redesigning the way in which services were delivered in local areas and a pilot scheme for this would commence shortly in Church Stretton which could be rolled out throughout the remainder of the County. Mr Barrow then indicated that time was being taken to ensure that the i,p&e group, the trading company set up and owned by the Council for profits to be invested in improving public services, had every chance of succeeding. He considered that the size of the challenge was enormous and all Members needed to work together in unity to deal with the big issues the Council faced.

In speaking to the proposition, Mr Mosley stated that he would not co-operate in the demise of local government and the welfare state. He considered that the Government's budget reductions had been made too high and too fast and this Council had vigorously followed those policies to the detriment of local services. He expressed the view that the lack of investment in the economy and the decline in living standards was due to the mismanagement of the economy both nationally and locally. He referred to the concept of commerciality introduced into the budget with the privatisation of public services through the I,p&e group, which had not yet produced a proper business plan and had been set up after very little market research, in addition to awarding services to be run by external providers. In conclusion, he lamented that the administration would be remembered for overseeing the decline of public services and their handing over to private organisations and the end of local government.

Mr N J Hartin indicated that he would not be supporting the proposition and proposed the following amendment which was duly seconded by Mr R Evans:

"It is recommended that additional resources of £4.185m are allocated in 2013/14 on a one off basis and that this is funded by surplus resources of £2.185m identified in the 2013/14 budget and a reduction of £2m in the contribution to the general reserve in 2013/14.

The following additional budget allocations are proposed for 2013/14 as one off allocations:

Service area	£'000
Road Maintenance	2,000
Bring Forward Speed Reduction Capital Spends	
Rural Speed Management	75
Safety Intervention	60
Village Speed Limits	120
School Travel	50
Vehicle Activated signs	45
Urban speed Limits	35
Sub Total	<b>2,385</b>
Funding to trail rural transport pilots to meet rural access needs	255
Funding to stimulate the local economy & apprenticeships	500
Reinstate concessions on park and ride after 9.30am	250
Reinstate savings in Targeted Youth Support	285
Provide additional 21 cardboard bring banks and vehicle lease costs- net cost after additional income from cardboard	200
Reinstate savings to post 16 travel- reduce fare to September 2011 levels for 2013/14	210
Additional support for Disabled Facilities Budgets	100
Sub Total	<b>1,800</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,185</b>

It is proposed that the additional allocations of £4.185m are funded as shown in Table below:

	£'000
Surplus one off Resources in 2013/14 identified in the Financial Strategy	1,547
One off transitional grant for sparsely populated authorities	638
Reduced contribution to general reserve (resulted in a reduction in general reserve balance from 1.67% to 1.37% of gross 2013/14 budget)	2,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,185</b>

It is recommended that the financial strategy recommendations are revised as follows:

It is recommended that Council:

- Approve savings of £8.995m for 2013/14, £5.847m to replace previously agreed savings and £3.148m to cover new service pressures as detailed in Appendix 6.
- *Agree additional budget allocations in 2013/14 of £4.185m funded from one off resources of £2.185m and a reduction in the contribution to reserves in 2013/14 of £2m.*

- Agree the 2013/14 Budget as set out within this report incorporating the savings *and additional budget allocations* identified above. Agree to accept Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2013/14 and 2014/15 totalling £1.3m, on the basis that Council Tax will be equalised down (or frozen) for 2013/14.
- Agree Housing rents for 2013/14 increase in line with the Government recommended formula rent which will result in an average increase of 2.84%.
- Agree Affordable rents based on 80% of the local market rent are introduced to appropriate re-let properties and all new homes built for rent.
- Agree the Statement of Chief Financial Officer on the Robustness of the Estimates and Adequacy of Provisions and Reserves 2012-15 as set out in Appendix 7, noting the Council's projected general fund balances over this period.
- Agree the Pay and Reward Policy for all Council staff for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix 8."

Mr Hartin stated that the amendment sought to maximise the use of resources for the people of Shropshire, through transferring money out of reserves and giving a timely injection of funding to services that was achievable in delivery to assist in the regeneration of the Shropshire economy.

Mrs P Dee indicated that she did not support the amendment and would support the proposition to achieve the best the Council could, in the current financial climate, for the people of Shropshire.

Mr Barker and Mr B Williams expressed the view that the proposals in the amendment were unsustainable and imprudent as they sought to make immediate use of money earmarked for future years and would harm the reserves which the Council was working so diligently to increase in line with CIPFA advice.

Mr Kenny considered that the Council needed to undertake many works now as they would be more expensive to undertake in future. In addition, doing the works as proposed in the amendment at this time would provide much needed encouragement to the local employment opportunities and the local economy.

Mr Mosley stated that he would abstain from voting on the amendment as he considered the proposals to be unsustainable and misleading. He did not wish to see large balances of funds created but considered they would be required in future years to cover the present under-provision in services and would rather prioritise additional funding for care services than those suggested in the amendment.



Mr Price stated that he did not wish to see the funding of the ALMO, providing housing services for the Council, restricted in its formative years through reduced rent increases as the funds committed to spend in its first two years were limited. In respect of Disabled Facilities Grants, he did not consider that topping up that budget as proposed by the amendment could continue and an overall review was required.

Mr R Evans stated that, with the proposal for 2013/14, the administration would have increased housing rents over the last three years by 20% and considered that tenants required assistance in meeting the current economic demands. He contended that the proposed amendment sought to achieve this and show the Council cared for its tenants. In addition, he emphasised that the proposed amendment would bolster reserves by £2.89m.

Mr Bennett stated that the proposals in the amendment was heavily weighted in one-off schemes and considered that a more consistent approach to the budget than the one advocated by the amendment was required. Mrs Motley considered that the one-off schemes in the amendment did not address the main concerns of communities.

The Leader, Mr K R Barrow, expressed the view that the proposals in the Liberal Democrat amendment did not make economic sense and stressed the importance of continuing to build up reserves to prepare for unforeseen demands.

**On being put to the vote the amendment was lost, with 10 Members voting in favour, a large majority of Members voting against and 6 abstentions.**

In speaking to the proposition, Mr R Evans considered that the administration was overlooking an opportunity to raise additional income by charging more in respect of long term empty properties. He expressed the view that consultation and scrutiny on the budget proposals had failed as, when it was discussed by Members, the public had not been invited to attend and have their say. He indicated that the proposals in the Liberal Democratic amendment had been formulated after listening to the wishes of the public. He accepted the need to be prudent but contended that the Council was being unnecessarily careful and too keen to put money in the bank, instead of putting it to good use for the benefit of the people of Shropshire.

The Leader, Mr K R Barrow, indicated that the Labour Group had not put forward any alternative budget proposals and in the life of this Council had yet to contribute a single idea to assist in meeting the financial demands and budget challenges that had arisen. He encouraged the Liberal Democrat Group to work together with the administration to assist the Council in achieving its plan for delivering the quality services required in communities. In conclusion, he accepted that the administration was being careful with the Council's money but would rather be careful than reckless.

**On being put to the vote, the proposition was carried by a large majority of Members, with 6 abstentions.**

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That savings of £8.995m for 2013/14, £5.847m to replace previously agreed savings and £3.148m to cover new service pressures, as detailed in Appendix 6 to the report, be approved
- (b) That additional budget allocations in 2013/14 of £0.190m, to fund half price fares on the Shrewsbury Park and Ride service for all bus pass holders from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and eight "Super Sundays" of all-day parking in Shrewsbury car parks for the price of an hour from Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July to Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2013 inclusive, funded from one off transitional grant for sparsely populated areas be approved.
- (c) That additional budget allocations of 0.085m in 2013/14, to fund the reinstatement of Sunday Bus Services in Shrewsbury from June 2013 with the aim of extending this countywide, funded from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund be approved.
- (d) That the 2013/14 Budget as set out within the report, incorporating the savings and additional budget allocations identified above, be approved.
- (f) That Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2013/14 and 2014/15 totalling £1.3m be accepted, on the basis that Council Tax will be equalised down (or frozen) for 2013/14.
- (g) That housing rents for 2013/14 be increased in line with the Government recommended formula rent which will result in an average increase of 4.88%.
- (h) That affordable rents based on 80% of the local market rent be introduced to appropriate re-let properties and all new homes built for rent.
- (i) That the Statement of the Chief Financial Officer on the Robustness of the Estimates and Adequacy of Provisions and Reserves 2012-15 as set out in Appendix 7 to the report, noting the Council's projected general fund balances over this period, be approved.
- (j) That the Pay and Reward Policy for all Council staff for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix 8 to the report be approved.

**100. CAPITAL STRATEGY 2013/14 TO 2016/17**

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr K R Barrow, and seconded by Mrs E A Hartley that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the revised capital programme of £68.4m in 2013/14, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.
- (b) That the revised provisional capital programmes of £40.3m for 2014/15 and £12.4m for 2015/16, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.
- (c) That, in accordance with the regulations, a Capital Allowance of £1 million for 2013/14, to enable the Council to retain in full, capital receipts received from the disposal of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) assets, excluding Right to Buy sales, with the capital receipts from such sales being reserved for expenditure on the Council's housing stock, be approved.

**101. TREASURY STRATEGY 2013/14**

It was proposed by Mr B Williams, and seconded by Mr M Whiteman that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

In presenting the report, Mr B Williams paid tribute to the excellent performance of the Council's treasury management team in the returns on investments being achieved and confirmed that this had been assisted by the amounts being held in reserves for investment.

In response to a query from Mr R Evans, Mr B Williams confirmed that the payment of interest required under the PFI contract with Veolia was being met by supporting the investment return from earmarked reserves with returns from other investments.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Treasury Strategy for 2013/14 be approved.
- (b) That the Prudential Indicators, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, be approved.
- (c) That the Investment Strategy, set out in Appendix 2 to the report, in accordance with the CLG Guidance on Local Government Investments, be approved.
- (d) That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement, set out in Appendix 3 to the report, be approved.
- (e) That the Section 151 Officer be authorised to exercise the borrowing powers contained in Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and to manage the Council's debt portfolio in accordance with the Treasury Strategy.

- (f) That the Section 151 Officer be authorised to use Foreign Banks which meet Sector's creditworthiness policy and Money Market Funds again if required as money markets continue to stabilise.
- (g) That the Council note the proposed Prudential Indicators would enable the Authority to use the equivalent of up to 3% of Council Tax in 2013/14 or future years, to fund borrowing under the Prudential Code should the Council decide to do so.

## 102. COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2013/14

It was proposed by the Leader, Mr K R Barrow, and seconded by Mrs E A Hartley that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

In presenting the report, the Leader, Mr K R Barrow, expressed great pleasure that his ambition of reducing Council Tax had been achieved.

Mr R Evans thanked the administration, on behalf of all parish councils, for the assistance and guidance provided to them in meeting the requirements for the new local council tax support scheme.

### RESOLVED:

- (a) That a 0% Council Tax rise be approved resulting in a basic amount of council tax for a Band D property in the following former District Council areas:

	2013/14 Band D £	2013/14 Annual Increase %
Former Bridgnorth DC	1,164.72	0.00
Former North Shropshire DC	1,164.72	0.00
Former Shrewsbury & Atcham BC	1,164.72	0.00

- (b) That a reduction in Council Tax be approved for the following former District and Borough Authorities in order to complete the equalisation of Council Tax levels across the County as follows:

	2012/13 Band D £	2013/14 Band D £	2013/14 Annual Decrease %
Former Oswestry BC	1,216.58	1,164.72	-4.46
Former South Shropshire DC	1,216.62	1,164.72	-4.46

Calculated in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (section 44) and the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Further Financial Provisions and Amendment) Regulation 2008.

- (c) That in accordance with the provisions of Section 40 (2) of the 1992 Act, the amount of Council Tax calculated for each category of dwelling in the billing authority's area be as follows:

Property Band	2013/14 Charge £
A	776.48
B	905.89
C	1,035.31
D	1,164.72
E	1,423.55
F	1,682.37
G	1,941.20
H	2,329.44

- (d) That a total precept of £115,632,994 be levied.
- (e) That the formal council tax resolution, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, to determine the levels of Council Tax for Shropshire Council for 2013/14 be approved.

### **103. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT RENT LEVEL 2013/14**

The Speaker indicated that the proposals in the report had been dealt with earlier as part of the Financial Strategy in Minute 99 above.

### **104. TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF TOWN/PARISH COUNCILS**

It was proposed by the Speaker and seconded by the Chairman, that the report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, and the recommendations contained therein be received and agreed.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the Corporate Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make appointments to Town/Parish Councils in accordance with the procedure set out in the appendix to the report and to report any such appointments to the next available meeting of the Council.

## **105. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES**

### **RESOLVED:**

That Mr L Chapman be appointed as a substitute member of the South Planning Committee.

## **106. MOTIONS**

The following motion was proposed by Mr A Walpole and duly seconded by Mr D Roberts:

"This Motion seeks the support of the members of Shropshire Council in expressing their deep concerns as to the potential detrimental impact in Shropshire of the cumulative effect of the proposed wind farms in mid-Wales. In particular:-

- The impact on our communities and environment of a high voltage 400kv overhead line crossing Shropshire
- The impact of construction traffic on communities along the prospective route

The Council's agreed position will be communicated to all stakeholders and other interested parties including National Grid and Central Government.

This Motion endorses the need for the Council's Officers and Members to continue to engage in the due planning processes for both the high voltage connection and for the mid-Wales Wind Farms so as to ensure that the interests of our communities are fully and effectively represented via the active participation of Officers and Members in such processes.

The Council writes to Liberal Democrat Minister Ed Davey asking him to stop subsidies on inland wind farms."

Speaking to the motion, Mr Walpole expressed concern at the detrimental affect the scheme would have on communities in the north of the County and the harm to the visual amenity and character and setting of the area and the surrounding scenic views. In addition, he emphasised how the planned traffic routes for construction vehicles were a horrendous prospect for local communities, particularly those of Pant and Llanymynech.

In seconding the motion, Mr D Roberts commented on the lack of wind in the proposed location of the wind farm which would render it inefficient and ineffective. He expressed the view that the provision of wind farms were completely dependent on the government subsidies available and bemoaned how they despoiled beautiful countryside.

Mr M Kenny proposed by way of amendment, which was duly seconded by Mrs H Fraser, that the following words be added at the beginning of the motion:

“Whilst this Council endorses the underlying principles behind increased use of renewable energy, ”

In debating the amendment, Members, including Mr J M Williams, Mr R Tindall, Mr N Hartin, Mrs M Shingleton and Mr M Wood, exchanged views on the merits of harnessing wind power and the detrimental impact of wind farms on local communities and the visual amenity and character of rural areas.

**On being put to the vote, the amendment was lost with 14 members voting for and a substantial majority voting against.**

**The motion was then put to the vote and carried with a substantial majority voting in favour and 1 member voting against.**

**RESOLVED ACCORDINGLY**

**107. REPORT OF THE SHROPSHIRE AND WREKIN FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

It was proposed by Mr S J West and seconded by Mr J Hurst-Knight that the report of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes, be received and noted.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report of the Shropshire and Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority be noted.

Speaker

.....

Date

.....

The meeting closed at 1.15 p.m.