

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET,
HELD ON FRIDAY, 16TH DECEMBER, 2016 AT 10.30 AM
ESSEX HALL, TOWN HALL, CLACTON-ON-SEA, CO15 1SE**

Present: Councillors Stock (Chairman), C Guglielmi, Ferguson, Honeywood, Hughes, McWilliams, Talbot, Turner and Watling

Group Leaders Present by Invitation:

Councillor Joy Broderick, Councillor John Chittock, Councillor Ivan Henderson and Councillor Mark Stephenson

Also Present: Councillor Parsons

In Attendance: Ian Davidson (Chief Executive), Martyn Knappett (Corporate Director (Corporate Services)), Paul Price (Corporate Director (Operational Services)), Richard Barrett (Head of Finance, Revenues and Benefits Services), Mark Westall (Head of Customer and Commercial Services), Andy White (Head of Property Services), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager), Nigel Brown (Communications Manager) and Elizabeth Ridout (Deputy Management and Members' Support Manager)

122. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence. The Leader of the Council welcomed Councillor Hughes back to the Cabinet following his recent illness.

123. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR T A HOWARD

The Chief Executive read out the contents of a letter of resignation that he had received from Councillor Tom Howard as follows:

"It is with deep regret that I submit my resignation hereby giving notice that I resign as Tendring District Councillor for the ward of Great and Little Oakley with immediate effect.

I am not a career politician, nor did I ever seek to be one. Instead, I became a councillor to represent the people of my ward, who often felt that they were being poorly represented. I have done this to the best of my ability for nearly 6 years and believe that I have made at least a small difference in my time as a councillor.

However, it is increasingly difficult to afford sufficient time to being a councillor when holding down a full time job. I feel there is little more that I can achieve as a councillor and now is the time to recognise the importance of my work life balance and as such to retire from the political arena.

I wish my replacement in the subsequent by-election all the best and hope that a good successor is chosen."

The Leader of the Council placed on record his thanks to Tom Howard for his contributions to the work of the Cabinet and the Council and wished him good luck for the future.

The Leader of the Council stated that he had requested Councillor G V Guglielmi to act, for the time being, as the interim Finance, Revenues and Benefits Portfolio Holder.

Cabinet noted the foregoing.

124. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the last meeting of the Cabinet, held on Friday 25 November 2016, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

125. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In respect of Agenda Item 9 (Report A.3) Councillor G V Guglielmi declared a non-pecuniary interest insofar as he was a fellow Director, along with the owner of Rose Builders, on the Board of a Housing Trust.

In respect of Agenda Item 13 (Report A.7) Councillor Broderick declared a non-pecuniary interest insofar as she was a member of the Citizens Advice Bureau.

126. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The Leader of the Council reported that he, together with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, had had a recent meeting with the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (DCLG), Andrew Percy MP, and his officials with regard to the ongoing regeneration of Jaywick Sands. Mr Percy had been very complimentary to the Council's efforts in Jaywick Sands and he looked forward to visiting Essex early in the New Year.

127. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY CABINET MEMBERS

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Health and Well-being made the following statement with regard to the positive steps being taken following a recent case of Legionella at Walton Leisure Centre:

"I would like to update Cabinet on the works currently underway at Walton on the Naze Lifestyles following the site's closure due to a discovery of Legionella.

As Cabinet will be aware following a reported suspected case of legionella at the new facility at Walton, urgent action was taken to both close the facility and to address the matter. I am pleased to say that the customer who was affected has been discharged from hospital but is still recovering. He has been back into the centre to see staff and I am sure that all of Cabinet would join with me in wishing him a speedy and full recovery.

Carter Environmental Ltd was brought in last week to carry out a comprehensive survey of the water system at the centre and this water treatment specialist firm reported back to a team of senior officers last Friday and now a programme of alterations has begun.

Carter Environmental Ltd has been engaged to project manage the works and to supervise all necessary actions to ensure that we have a zero tolerance of legionella at

this site before any consideration is given to reopen. The main issue was found to be with the cold water pipe and potentially the new showers serving the new gym. One of these showers has been taken away for further examination. The pool has been found to be unaffected by the bacteria.

A full chlorination of the entire water system will take place once all the work has been completed and independent systematic testing will then be undertaken before the showers and the complex is opened for use.

We are working closely with both Public Health England and with the Health & Safety Executive, both of whom have been supportive of the actions we are taking, and we will continue to take their advice whilst works are progressed.

The replacement of all the showers is the major part of the job but it is also likely that changes to the internal cold water supply pipes will need to be made to ensure that they are not affected by heating and hot water systems. It is anticipated that the site will reopen as early as possible in January but no date has yet been set as all systems will be independently tested to ensure that they meet the highest possible standards or cleanliness and safety.

I would like to thank customers who have been very understanding and supportive of the actions we are taking and I can assure them that their health and safety is our only consideration at this time and we will not reopen until we are 100% certain that we can guarantee this.

We are taking this opportunity to retrain staff and ensure that rigorous management systems are in place and whilst there is no suggestion of any issue at any of the Council's other sites an independent and comprehensive check is going to be put in place to confirm that the highest possible standards are being achieved across all our leisure centres and I understand across all of the Council's facilities.

Until a full review of the exact cause of the problem is identified I am not in a position to provide further information or to speculate on further resultant actions, as I am sure that Cabinet will appreciate my primary focus is currently on resolving the issues at Walton."

128. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET BY THE COUNCIL

There were no matters referred to the Cabinet by the Council on this occasion.

129. REFERENCE FROM CORPORATE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - A.1 - FINANCIAL STRATEGY BUDGET REDUCTIONS - OUTCOMES FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDER WORKING PARTIES

Cabinet was informed that, at its meeting held on 28 November 2016, the Corporate Management Committee had discussed the outcomes of the Portfolio Holder working parties, which had been formed to develop the budget in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

The Committee Members of the Corporate Management Committee had discussed various items and had given a number of suggestions that could be taken up for the necessary savings. Those had included:

- involving Town and Parish Councils in taking over the running of facilities in their areas;

- residents' parking scheme;
- whether bringing contracts back in-house would make savings;
- charging to use public conveniences and prioritising the closure of some public conveniences where there is significant vandalism;
- the reduction of the Council's maintenance budget; and
- the cost of re-charging the new beaches over the next ten years.

The Corporate Management Committee had also agreed to make recommendations to Cabinet as follows:

- (a) *the Council should consider introducing charging for the use of public conveniences where it can be achieved; and*
- (b) *the Council should work with Town and Parish Councils to see whether Town and Parish Councils could take over some assets within their parishes.*

Having considered the recommendations of the Corporate Management Committee:-

It was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi, seconded by Councillor Turner and:

RESOLVED that Cabinet endorses the recommendations of the Corporate Management Committee.

130. REFERENCE FROM COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE - A.2 - POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

Cabinet was informed that, at its meeting held on 14 November 2016, the Community Leadership and Partnerships Committee had welcomed the new Police and Crime Commissioner (Roger Hirst).

Mr Hirst had informed the Committee that he had been elected on 12 May 2016 and he explained what the three primary purposes of his role were, namely:

- to hold the Chief Constable to account;
- to be responsible for the setting of Police budgets and Council Tax; and
- to set the police strategy for Essex.

Mr Hirst had explained that Essex Police were funded by two-thirds from Council Tax with the final third coming from Central Government. He believed this was not appropriate for Essex, which had below average funding which was due to a crime rate lower than average figure.

Mr Hirst had then given details on the seven priorities of his Police and Crime Plan which were:

- More local, visible and accessible policing;
- Crack down on anti-social behaviour;
- Be tough on domestic abuse;
- Reverse the trend in serious violence;
- Tackle gangs and organised crime;
- Protect vulnerable children and vulnerable people from harm; and

- Improve Safety on the County's roads.

Questions and comments from Members of the Committee had included road safety in Jaywick, increased crime in Harwich, lack of resources for the Police, anti-social behaviour with cash points and bookies being raided, Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's), domestic violence rates, children's clubs being too costly to use, the telephone support service of 101 being slow to respond to calls and a lack of visible policing.

The Community Safety Manager (Leanne Thornton) had then delivered a presentation, which had provided Members with an overview of the work of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and how it engaged with its statutory partners, Essex Community Rehabilitation Company (Probation); Essex County Council; Essex Police; Tendring District Council; Essex County Fire and Rescue; Community Voluntary Services Tendring; North East Essex NHS and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex.

That presentation had also addressed the following Community Safety Priorities within the Community Safety Hub:

- Tackling Anti-social behaviour;
- Protecting Vulnerable People (Crime and Fear of Crime);
- Reducing drug and alcohol misuse within communities; and
- Reducing re-offending

Leanne Thornton had also provided information on a wide and varied number of projects which had been undertaken by the Hub during the past year including a Day of Action with a number of agencies working together, the Reducing the Strength of Alcohol campaign, Safer Seafronts, engaging with Safer Lives who worked with domestic abuse victims, Crucial Crew and the Stay Safe Programme for older people with learning disabilities.

Julia Finch (Local Police and Partnership Inspector) had reported on Anti-Social Behaviour which was for identifying and supporting repeat and vulnerable victims, improving perceptions and facilitating local problem solving to address various issues. Examples of where new anti social behaviour powers had been used were also provided.

Richard Eastwood (the Council's Community Safety Support Worker) explained his work with vulnerable people, which was a multi-role working with partners in collaboration.

Further information had been given concerning the work by Les Nicoll (Essex County Fire & Rescue Service) and Kirsty Gibbons (Essex County Fire & Rescue Service) on the Fire Services' Firebreak programme and work to reduce re-offending.

The Community Leadership and Partnerships Committee had also agreed to make recommendations to Cabinet as follows:

- (a) that the Leader writes to the Home Office to express dissatisfaction with the current government financial support for the Essex Police and to call for a fairer funding settlement for Essex Police; and*

(b) that Cabinet endorses the good and varied work being undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership and that Cabinet promotes and resources this as much as possible.

The Enforcement and Community Safety Portfolio Holder had considered the Community Leadership and Partnerships Committee's recommendations and had responded as follows:-

"It is recommended that:-

Cabinet notes and supports the comments of the Committee and agrees that a letter be sent to the Home Office as suggested and that all other Essex District and Borough Councils also be encouraged to provide their active support to address the current funding situation."

Having considered the recommendations of the Community Leadership and Partnerships Committee and the Portfolio Holder's response thereto:-

It was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi, seconded by Councillor Watling and:

RESOLVED that the Enforcement and Community Safety Portfolio Holder's response be endorsed.

131. REPORT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - A.3 - APPROVAL FOR RIGHTS OF ACCESS OVER A PATHWAY AT COX'S POND, HARWICH

Councillor G V Guglielmi had earlier declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item insofar as he was a fellow Director, along with the owner of Rose Builders, on the Board of a Housing Trust.

There was submitted a report by the Leader of the Council (Report A.3) which sought Cabinet's approval to grant a right of access over a pathway at Cox's Pond, Harwich.

Cabinet was informed that the Bernard Uniforms site in Harwich had previously been occupied by a factory but when this closed the land was sold for the development of social housing. The developer, Rose Builders, would build, on behalf of Colne Housing Association, 27 units all of which would be for social housing and those would be a mix of houses and flats with associated car parking and landscaping.

It was reported that Cox's Pond was a small landscaped pond adjacent to the Bernard Uniforms site. The pathway adjacent to the pond would provide a pedestrian access to the new properties and the Council would receive a small sum of money and some improvement works as a result of approving this right of way. The right of way would not affect the pond or the area surrounding it. The pathway would be upgraded and the railings replaced as a result of this proposal. The developer had submitted an acceptable offer in terms of monetary compensation.

Having considered the proposal it was moved by Councillor Stock, seconded by Councillor Watling and:

RESOLVED that Cabinet authorises, in principle, the right of way, subject to the terms set out in item B.1 of the Report of the Leader of the Council.

132. REPORT OF THE ENFORCEMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.4 - ADOPTION OF CUSTOMER SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGY

There was submitted a report by the Portfolio Holder for Enforcement and Community Safety (Report A.4), which sought the adoption of the Tendring District Council Customer Service Delivery Strategy.

Cabinet was aware that, in financially demanding times, the challenge was how to improve the level of customer service the Council delivered to its residents, yet reduce the cost of that delivery. The opportunity existed to adopt a Customer Service Delivery Strategy that would make Council services more accessible in terms of both location and times available, and yet would also free up Officers to deal with the more complex cases taking into account the demographics of Tendring and the desire to work more closely with partners. It could also offer the opportunity to bid for external contracts and create revenue streams.

Cabinet was informed that the proposed Customer Service Delivery Strategy was an important element within the wider project to 'transform the way we work' and was consistent with the Office Transformation Strategy report that was also on the agenda in that there would be the creation of a first class hub in Clacton where residents would access Council services. A centralised telephony hub would also be created to deal with general enquiries and high volume transactions, possibly freeing up officers within back-offices.

It was reported that outside of Clacton, the Customer Service Delivery Strategy would work alongside the IT strategy. Although the Council had already closed offices in Frinton and Harwich, the opportunity now existed to work with strategic partners to create shared service locations in the towns with the larger populations. This had already proven to work well in Harwich where Council staff delivered services (new claims by appointment, and change of circumstances by drop-in) two days a week from the JobCentre Plus offices in the High Street. They were on average seeing 20 people per day. TDC officers would be able to offer services in other locations using mobile working technology and support residents to use self-serve kiosks.

Members were made aware that the strategy document would be aligned with that of Channel Shift as the two topics were inextricably linked and covered the different contact methods and access points that could be used and also how the Council would maintain a quality service.

Having considered the proposed Strategy:-

It was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi, seconded by Councillor Watling and:-

RESOLVED that the Tendring District Council Customer Service Delivery Strategy be adopted.

133. REPORT OF ENFORCEMENT AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.5 - CORPORATE ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

There was submitted a report by the Portfolio Holder for Enforcement and Community Safety (Report A.5), which provided Cabinet with the draft Corporate Enforcement Strategy for its endorsement for further consultation..

Cabinet was informed that the purpose of this Corporate Enforcement Strategy was to set out the overarching “umbrella” principles to apply to all service departments and its officers within the Council which undertook enforcement functions. The Council’s enforcement responsibilities and powers covered a wide range of legislation with a variety of formal and informal sanctions, which aimed to protect the interests and rights of people in relation to the environment that they used. The enforcement of regulatory legislation enabled the Council to achieve its priorities contained within the Corporate Plan and fitted with national policy, codes and guidance.

Members were advised that it was important that those enforcement functions were carried out in an equitable, practical and consistent manner, and that both those subject to regulation and those on whose behalf enforcement was carried out could understand the approach taken. The Strategy would explain clearly and publicly summarise Tendring District Council's intended approach towards enforcement and dealing with non-compliance.

It was reported that all authorised officers, when making enforcement decisions, would abide by this Strategy, and the supporting documented procedures. This Strategy and a corporate Harm Risk Assessment Checklist/Template would be further developed through external consultation with our partners in the Community Safety Hub and internally with elected Members sitting on the following Committees:

- Licensing and Registration
- Planning
- Community Leadership and Partnership

It was important to note that the Licensing and Registration and Planning Committees retained the legal responsibility and power with regards to enforcement decisions including the proposed adoption of a corporate Harm Risk Assessment Checklist and Template. However, it was intended that some general principles could be agreed across the Council to form a corporate approach and the consultation would be a useful exercise in this regard. The outcome of the consultation would be reported back to Cabinet in early 2017 for consideration in the adoption of the final document.

Cabinet was informed that the draft Strategy accorded with the Government’s ‘Better Regulation Agenda’. Specifically, it implemented good practice recommended by the Cabinet Office Enforcement Concordat, the Regulators’ Code; and the regulatory principles required under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006 including the duty to have regard to economic growth. The provisions of Section 6 of the aforementioned 2006 Act included an expectation that local authorities would publish a clear set of service standards, setting out what those they regulated should expect from them.

Having considered the suggested approach, it was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi, seconded by Councillor Turner and:

RESOLVED that

- a) Cabinet approves the draft Corporate Enforcement Strategy, as attached at Appendix A to item A.5 of the Report of the Portfolio Holder for Enforcement and Community Safety, for further consultation; and

- b) during the consultation, Service Standards be produced, following the example in the Annexe to Appendix A, for consideration and adoption across the Council.

134. REPORT OF ENFORCEMENT AND COMMUNITY SAFETY PORTFOLIO HOLDER - A.6 - OFFICE TRANSFORMATION

There was submitted a comprehensive report by the Portfolio Holder for Enforcement and Community Safety (Report A.6), which requested Cabinet to select an option for office transformation to be developed into a full business case.

Cabinet was aware that the Portfolio Holder for Enforcement and Community Safety had established a working party for Transformation and Assets which had considered an initial appraisal of options for office transformation prepared by Officers. The Portfolio Holder had subsequently recommended that the option most likely to address the various issues was a rationalisation of existing buildings and concentration of main office facilities in Clacton-on-Sea.

The full appraisal considered by the Portfolio Holder and his Working Party was attached as Appendix A to item A.6 of the Report of the Portfolio Holder for Enforcement and Community Safety.

Cabinet was informed that the Corporate Management Committee had considered the outline of the proposals at its meeting held on 28 November 2016 and had recommended (in summary) that Cabinet:

- *Selects Option 3, basic rationalisation, as its preferred option;*
- *Seeks to ensure all maintenance backlog is resolved within the project or promptly thereafter; and*
- *Requests that Officers reconsider the disposal of Westleigh House as part of the project.*

Members were aware that the essence of the options were::

- 1: *Do nothing – This can't really be an option but it is useful as a baseline to measure the other options against.*
- 2: *Current actions – Effectively sticking at the point we have currently reached.*
- 3: *Basic rationalisation – Condensing into existing Clacton sites and selling others.*
- 4: *Refocus at Weeley – Selling the bulk of Clacton sites and constructing a new building at Weeley.*
- 5a: *Officer/Member split – Staff moving to Clacton sites and retaining Weeley Main Building as a democratic centre.*
- 5b: *Officer/Member split - Staff moving to Clacton sites and building a new democratic centre at Weeley.*
- 6a: *Clacton Civic Quarter – a new building on Carnarvon Road and retaining the Town Hall*
- 6b: *Clacton Civic Quarter – a larger new building on Carnarvon Road and Releasing the Town Hall*
- 7: *Colchester Borders – A new building to be constructed near to Colchester with potential for cross authority sharing.*

Having considered the information provided and the views of the Corporate Management Committee, it was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi, seconded by Councillor Turner and:

RESOLVED that

- a) having regard to the views of the Corporate Management Committee, as set out in the report, Cabinet selects Option 3 - Basic Rationalisation, as its preferred option for office transformation;
- b) subject to a) above and approval of the 2017/18 budget by full Council in February 2017, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Enforcement and Community Safety, be delegated to enact the development of a business case and all aspects of the implementation of Cabinet's preferred option if the business case delivers annual on-going revenue savings of at least £0.100m and can be delivered within the specific capital budgets included within the 2017/18 estimates and forecast for 2018/19;
- c) Cabinet requests that the office transformation works should deal with the maintenance backlog and that any remaining maintenance backlog be dealt with as a matter of priority; and
- d) Cabinet further requests that Officers review the potential for the disposal of the freehold of the Westleigh House site as part of the project.

**135. REPORT OF FINANCE, REVENUES & BENEFITS PORTFOLIO HOLDER A.7 -
UPDATED FINANCIAL STRATEGY / BASELINE AND INITIAL BUDGET
PROPOSALS 2017/18**

Councillor Broderick had earlier declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item insofar as she was a member of the Citizens Advice Bureau.

There was submitted a report by the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Revenues and Benefits, which sought to enable Cabinet to:

- Consider the updated Financial Baseline for 2017/18; and
- Consider for approval the detailed Budget proposals for a revised budget 2016/17 and original budget for 2017/18, including special expenses.

Cabinet was informed that the updated financial baseline set out how the financial and budget position of the Council for 2017/18 had progressed since Cabinet had considered the Initial Financial Baseline for 2017/18 at its meeting held on 5 August 2016.

Members were reminded that, during the year the Council had accepted the Government's minimum Revenue Support Grant (RSG) offer which meant that unless the Government made any further changes, the minimum level of funding receivable over the next three years was as follows:

2017/18 - £1.650m (reduction over prior year = 36%)
2018/19 - £1.070m (reduction over prior year = 36%)
2019/20 - £0.422m (deduction over prior year = 60%)

Members were aware that since 2011/12 the Council had found savings totalling £12.000m. However, given the significant reductions in RSG set out above, further

savings of potentially £5.000m were required over the next three years, with £1.565m required in 2017/18 alone.

It was reported that a number of actions had been taken with the aim of delivering a balanced budget for 2017/18. To date, a budget 'gap' of £0.603m remained. Work remained on-going to minimise that 'gap' before final recommendations were made to full Council in February 2017.

A summary of the budget adjustments made along with other changes that had emerged during the budget setting process was set out in the report. Although additional costs and other adjustments had emerged, net savings /budget reductions totalling £0.962m had been identified to date.

Cabinet was asked to note that the savings identified to date represented only the initial steps to close the forecasted funding gap in the longer term. Further uncertainties also remained against this overall backdrop which might not yet have been reflected in the forecasted budget 'gaps' in future years that might require additional savings to be identified in order to deliver a balanced and sustainable budget in the future.

Cabinet was made aware that the medium term forecast covering the period 2018/19 and 2019/20 was in the process of being updated with the outcome planned to be presented to Cabinet in January 2017 when the final budget position would be presented. It was difficult to forecast any further ahead at this stage given the huge level of uncertainty that the 100% retention of business rate model would introduce from 2020. The longer term forecast would remain a 'live' activity and updates would be provided to Members as the forecast evolved over 2017/18.

The Interim Finance, Revenues & Benefits Portfolio Holder made the following statement on the Budget:

"The budget presented in the report brings together the savings strands emerging from the Portfolio Working Parties that were considered at our last Cabinet meeting along with other items emerging via the budget process such as cost pressures and responses to items identified as part of the corporate budget monitoring process.

*The budget 'gap' presented as part of the Initial Financial Strategy in August this year was **£1.565m**. This has now been reduced to **£603k** after taking into account the various budget reductions and adjustments identified.*

*As mentioned at the last Cabinet meeting, savings options are becoming increasingly difficult to identify whilst trying to protect service provision, and the current position set out within the report clearly demonstrates the challenge we are facing, a challenge that will not go away any time soon - including the **£603k** budget 'gap' for 2017/18, we need to find further savings of **£3.8m** by 2019/20.*

Although repetitive, when the various budget reports are presented during the year, we need to make sure that our residents understand why we have to make significant savings. This is not because the Council has been inefficient or could have managed its finances better; it is because the Government continue to make significant and unprecedented cuts to our grant funding. By 2019/20 the Council will not be receiving any Revenue Support Grant from the Government at all.

We are therefore in the transition phase of moving to a self-sufficiency approach. It would have been nice if the Government had recognised that trying to 'grow' our own income takes time and therefore cut the grant at broadly the same pace as we are growing our own locally raised income. Disappointingly there have been no such measures taken by the Government.

In terms of highlighting areas of the report, it is worth mentioning the following:

- *The budget is based on a Council Tax increase of 1.99% which takes the band D tax to **£155.68** per year. Our residents get a huge range of services for what is a relatively low annual amount.*
- *As part of the Government's Finance Settlement announcement yesterday, it was confirmed that this Council falls within the category of authorities that has the option to increase its Council Tax by £5 as was the case last year. This option will now be considered as part of the final budget recommendations that Cabinet will consider at its 20 January meeting.*
- *The complex area of business rates is still being worked on with the outcome expected in January. There has been a national revaluation of business premises in 2016 which could have an impact on both the income we collect and the amount we pay on our own properties. The finance settlement announcement yesterday also included further guidance on this issue which is currently being reviewed to feed into the final calculations that will be undertaken early in the New Year.*
- *We continue to seek to strike a balance between investing whilst having to find savings. A number of budgets are included which support priorities such as tourism, health, leisure and regeneration.*
- *A number of cost pressures have been included following an annual review, with the budget reflecting items where there is very little choice in terms of whether to fund or not.*
- *The Capital Programme includes money to deliver the Office Transformation Project and reduction in public conveniences that formed part of the outcomes from the Portfolio Working Parties. £350k has also been included in the capital programme to support the delivery of savings via various channel shift projects which will be crucial to help balance the budget in future years.*
- *The Council can also secure additional savings from paying the full 3 year pension deficit payment upfront. Although this will require a significant draw down from reserves in 2017/18, this will be repaid over the following two years so will still be available to meet any commitments the Council may wish to make against its reserves position.*

A number of further adjustments are set out within the report, including those impacting on the revised budget for 2016/17. Cabinet members continue to work with Officers with the aim of reducing the budget 'gap' further and any emerging adjustments will be included in the report to Cabinet on 20 January before final budget recommendations are made to Full Council."

Having considered the Budget proposals and in order to allow the Corporate Management Committee to be consulted in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution:

It was moved by Councillor G V Guglielmi, seconded by Councillor Stock and **RESOLVED** that

- (a) Cabinet agrees the updated Financial Baseline 2017/18 and the detailed budget proposals (including fees and charges and special expenses), as set out in the Appendices to item A.7 of the Report of the Finance, Revenues and Benefits Portfolio Holder;
- (b) Cabinet requests the Corporate Management Committee's comments on the Updated Financial Baseline 2017/18 and detailed budget proposals (including special expenses); and
- (c) all future expenditure in 2016/17 be in line with the proposed revised budget 2016/17 set out in the aforementioned Appendices, subject to final approval by Council at its meeting to be held on 7 February 2017, and that the corporate financial system be amended accordingly to reflect those changes along with any amendments arising from revisions to the code of practice relating to the presentation of the Council's annual Statement of Accounts.

136. MANAGEMENT TEAM ITEMS

There were none on this occasion.

137. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor Stock, seconded by Councillor G V Guglielmi and:

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 16 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, as amended, of the Act.

138. REPORT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL - B.1 - TERMS FOR THE RIGHT OF WAY FOR ACCESS AT COX'S POND, HARWICH

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- (a) approves the terms for a right of way; and
- (b) authorises the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) to enter into a contract to document the right of way on the terms set out and subject to such other terms that he considers necessary.

The Meeting was declared closed at 11.53 am

Chairman

