

6 October 2003

Dear Councillor

COUNCIL MEETING

A meeting of the Council will be held at the Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, on Tuesday 14 October 2003 at 7.45 pm, or at the conclusion of the question and answer session, whichever is the earlier.

Yours faithfully

BRIAN PERKINS

Acting Chief Executive

Commencing at 7.30 pm, there will be an opportunity of up to 15 minutes for members of the public to ask questions and make statements subject to having given two working days prior notice.

A G E N D A PART I

- 1 Presentation to Norman Mead.
- 2 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 3 To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2003 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 18 September 2003 (attached).
- 4 Business arising.
- 5 Chairman's communications.
- 6 Leader's communications.
- 7 Matters arising from Committees.
 - (i) Decriminalisation of parking enforcement (see Minute ET16 attached)
 - (ii) General Fund Policy Priorities and Budget 2004/05 (see Minute RE31 attached).
 - (iii) Homelessness Strategy (See Minute HH18 – attached)
- 8 Stansted/M11 Corridor Development Options Study

9 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

10 Notices of Motion.

(i) Procedures

To consider the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor R J Copping:-

“That this Council reviews urgently its procedures for the conduct of Council meetings so as to enable members to raise issues arising from business conducted by the Council’s committees between Council meetings.”

(ii) Council Tax

To consider the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor K Clarke Council

- “notes with great concern the major and unfair impact that successive council tax increases have on many citizens and recognises that this is substantially due to the Government’s management of grants to local authorities, as well as flaws in the system;
- regrets that the present system of local taxation takes no account of ability to pay;
- recognises that council tax therefore places a disproportionately high burden on residents with low incomes, such as pensioners, of whom the poorest 20% of pensioners pay nearly 6 times more than the richest 20% of non-pensioners, as a proportion of their income;
- notes that since the Labour government came into office in 1997, the average Band D council tax bill nationally has risen by £455, a rise of 70%, and that the rise in Essex has been 80% over this period;
- notes that the cost of administering council tax in 2002/03 was £569 million and that it costs almost 4 times as much to collect £1 in council tax, as it costs to collect £1 in income tax;
- recognises that the huge increase in the level of direct and ring-fenced grants, combined with rising costs and additional duties imposed by Government on local councils has left authorities with the stark choice of huge cuts in services or massive increases in council tax, or a combination of both;
- regrets that the present system of local government finance is so confusing and lacking in transparency that accountability for the tax levied is blurred, with very few citizens able to penetrate the Government’s use of smoke and mirrors to paint every settlement as generous, regardless of the facts.

...Council calls on the Deputy Prime Minister:

- to propose future funding settlements which provide mainstream grant for local authorities sufficient to ensure the provision of high quality, locally accountable public services;
- to replace the council tax with a local tax based on income, reinstating the principle of progressive taxation, that the more one earns, the more one pays.”

Councillors Chris Bayley
Rodney Copping
Alan Dean
Mark Gayler
Stephen Jones
David Morson
Martin Savage
Alan Thawley

- 11 To consider questions (if any) under Council Procedure Rule 8.2.
- 12 Any other items which the Chairman considers to be urgent.

To: All Members of the Council

Lead Officer: Brian Perkins
Committee Officer: Mick Purkiss