

8 December 2003

Dear Councillor

COUNCIL MEETING

A meeting of the Council will be held at the Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, on Tuesday 16 December 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 Report of Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances (to follow).
- 2 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest.
- 3 To receive the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2003 (attached)
- 4 Business arising.
- 5 Chairman's communications.
- 6 Leader's communications.
- 7 Matters arising from Committees.
 - (i) Extraordinary Health and Housing Committee – 4 December 2003 Housing Strategy Statement and Housing Business Plan (HH38) (report attached – documents circulated separately).
 - (ii) Resources Committee – 20 November 2003 General Fund Policy Priorities and Budgets 2004/05 (RE48).

- (iii) Resources Committee – 20 November 2003
Council Tax – Changes for Second Homes and Long Term Empty Homes (RE60)
- 8 Draft Quality of Life Corporate Plan (report attached and see separate documents – Quality of Life Corporate Plan 2003/7 and Management Competency Framework).
- 9 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Core Papers (to be circulated separately).
- 10 Report of Constitution Task Group (attached).
- 11 Council Tax Base (to follow).
- 12 Initial Response to the Government’s Aviation White Paper (if announcement made before the meeting)
- 13 Notices of Motion

(i) Playing Fields

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

“This Council sends its warmest congratulations to the Members and Staff of Great Dunmow Town Council upon winning the Essex Playing Fields Association award for the best kept playing field in Essex for 2003.”

(ii) Green Travel

To consider the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor S Flack.

“Proposals put forward in the Quality of Life Document proposed Green Travel plans for all Staff and members.

In light of this the undersigned propose

- 1 That the maximum car mileage rate for members is capped at 40 pence a mile and thereafter at a rate no greater than the Inland Revenue approved rate. Members would no longer be entitled to the restricted rate, but claims for travel by public transport (second class) would continue to be paid in full. This change to be introduced on 1 January 2004.
- 2 That the Chairman of Resources investigates the introduction of a similar scheme for officers who currently receive the restricted rate.
- 3 That the Chairman of Resources investigates the introduction of on-line submission of Expense and Subsistence forms as being introduced by other Councils.

We believe that these proposals would encourage the use of smaller engined cars and car sharing as well as saving in paperwork associated with the production and processing of Taxation forms connected with 'Benefits in Kind' ”.

(iii) Tuition and Top Up Fees

To consider the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor P A Wilcock and seconded by Councillor J P Murphy.

“This Council deploras moves by Her Majesty's Government to extend its plans for tuition fees and top up fees that would mean that many of the brightest local students would no longer be able to afford a university education.

It calls on the Government to abandon this policy, which amounts to a “poll tax” on learning, which will burden future generations with up to £33,000 of debt, which many students will still be paying back when they retire. This makes a mockery of the Government's claim to be widening opportunities.

This Council calls upon the Leader to write to our local MP and the Secretary of State calling on them to oppose the Government's proposals at every opportunity and to support the belief that to invest in our country's future we must invest in our young people.

This motion supports the principle of maintaining the Quality of Life for the young people who will be discouraged from higher education if the proposals for higher fees are passed.”

14 To consider questions (if any) under Council Procedure Rule 8.2

15 Any other items which the Chairman considers to be urgent.

**PART II
(Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act)**

16 Moving Uttlesford District Council Forward:

Proposed New Management Structure (attached).

To: All Members of the Council

Lead Officer: Brian Perkins
Committee Officer: Mick Purkiss

EXTRACT FROM RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 20 NOVEMBER 2003

RE48 GENERAL FUND POLICY PRIORITIES AND BUDGETS 2004/05

The Director of Resources introduced a detailed report bringing together developments from this cycle of Committees in preparing the Council's General Fund Budget for 2004/05. The Committee considered base budgets, proposals for budget growth and reductions and other key factors in setting the budget. The report proposed a three year indicative strategy to ensure that acceptable Council Tax levels were balanced with the Council's aspirations for service improvements. An overall budget summary covering a three year period as attached as Appendix 1 to the report was discussed.

RECOMMENDED to Council

- 1 that Committees be instructed to amend their budget to meet the revised 2004/05 Committee totals as below:

	2004/5 Budget from Appendix 1	Budget Review Items Agreed	Additional Target	Revised Committee Total
Resources	£4,459,870	(£51,550)	(£80,000)	£4,328,320
Environment & Transport	£1,842,410	(£166,000)	(£50,000)	£1,626,410
Dev't Control & Licensing	£374,600	£0	£0	£374,600
Health & Housing	£766,100	(£3,000)	(£10,000)	£753,100
Community & Leisure	£1,292,750	£85,800	(£20,000)	£1,368,550

- 2 Best Value reviews be funded from within the services to which they relate;
- 3 a maximum indicative Council Tax of 7.5% be confirmed for 2004/05;
4. Officers to advise on best practice for the construction & ownership of budgets & fees for semi- judicial committees;
5. that CAB & other relevant Groups be reviewed thoroughly by Community & Leisure Committee during 2004 with the intention of starting new 3 years agreements from 2005/06;
6. that budget consultations be carried out using existing focus groups.

EXTRACT FROM RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 20 NOVEMBER 2003

RE60 **COUNCIL TAX – CHANGES FOR SECOND HOMES AND LONG TERM EMPTY HOMES**

The Committee received a further report which advised the Members of the changes contained in the Local Government Act, which came into effect on 18 November 2003. The Government proposed to allow local authorities discretion to reduce or end the discount for second homes, discounts for long term empty properties and locally defined discounts. It also allowed Local Authorities to create their discounts and exemptions in response to local factors.

After further discussion, the proposal having been seconded was put to the vote and carried.

RECOMMENDED to Council that subject to the agreement by the Director of Resources (in consultation with the Chairman of this Committee) with the County Council that at least 50% of the County Council's share of the additional income should be returned to Uttlesford District Council through increased contributions to Local Service Agreements:-

- 1 the existing discount for second homes be reduced from 50% to the minimum 10%;
- 2 the existing discount for unfurnished long term empty homes be removed;
- 3 no locally defined discounts be approved at this time;
- 4 a letter to be sent to the Minister for Local Government requesting that the additional income received under (2) above should be allowed to be kept locally.