

**COUNCIL MEETING held at 7.30 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD  
SAFFRON WALDEN on 19 FEBRUARY 2009**

Present:- Councillor R M Lemon – Chairman.  
Councillors E C Abrahams, S Anjum, K R Artus, S Barker,  
C A Cant, R H Chamberlain, R P Chambers, J F Cheetham,  
R Clover, J E N Davey, A Dean, C M Dean, C D Down, K L Eden,  
E J Godwin, E W Hicks, S J Howell, J E Hudson, D M Jones,  
A J Ketteridge, T P Knight, J I Loughlin, J E Menell, M Miller,  
D J Morson, D G Perry, J A Redfern, H S Rolfe, D J Sadler,  
J Salmon, G Sell, R D Sherer, C C Smith, A D Walters,  
A M Wattebot, L A Wells, P A Wilcock, and A C Yarwood.

Officers in attendance:- J Mitchell (Chief Executive), J Burton (Communications  
Officer), D Caton (Accountant), S Chapman (Accountant), T Cowper  
(Principal Accountant), G Goater (Accountant), S Joyce (Chief  
Finance Officer), A Knight (Principal Accountant), M Perry (Assistant  
Chief Executive), C Rockall (Interim Change Manager), P Snow  
(Committee and Electoral Services Manager), H Swain (Accountant),  
C Thomas (Accountant), and A Webb (Director of Central Services).

C70

**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Stephen Bennett, David Barron and David Murtagh as members of the Independent Remuneration Panel and invited Mr Bennett to present the Panel's report of their review of Member allowances for 2009/10.

Mr Bennett emphasised the independent nature of the Panel and its role in seeking to provide independent advice which the Council was at liberty to either accept or reject. He reminded the meeting that it remained possible for any individual Member to choose not to take the allowance made available.

In referring back to the induction training he had received originally, he said there were two objectives for the Panel to follow. The first was to establish a fair basis for the remuneration of Members, reflecting their contribution to the life of the community and the financial sacrifices that might involve. The second was to ensure the availability of a structure of compensation that would encourage all members of the community to stand for election and not just those who were retired or had substantial means at their disposal.

The Panel operated to a basic methodology which involved an assessment of the time required to perform the role of a councillor. This time commitment was translated into a monetary value by reference to the LGA's daily rate and then deducting a public service discount at an agreed rate of 35%.

He reminded Members that the Panel's recommendation had been rejected last year. He recognised that 2007/08 had been a particularly difficult time for the

Council. Evidence suggested that the gap between the allowances payable at Uttlesford and those elsewhere was significant and was continuing to widen. As a result of these unusual circumstances, the Panel had chosen to present two options for the Council's consideration. The Panel's clear preference was for the Council to consolidate last year's frozen increase into the scale by adding 2.45% to last year's proposed rate (option 2). In this way, it would be possible to avoid the gap with the daily rate from widening still further.

The Panel's second preference was for a 2.45% increase on the present rate (option 1). The difference in financial terms between options 1 and 2 was in the order of £6,500. Whatever was decided the Panel intended to conduct a fundamental review of the allowance scheme in the coming year.

They had also considered a request to make a payment to independent members of the Standards Committee and had agreed that a rate benchmarked against the payment to IRP members would be appropriate. They considered, in equity, that a similar payment should be made to town and parish council representatives of the Standards Committee and had recommended accordingly.

Mr Bennett said that this was the final report that he personally would submit to the Council after eight years' membership of the Panel. It had been both a pleasure and a privilege to have been associated with the IRP and with the Council over that time and he thanked Members for that opportunity. He also wished to thank David Murtagh and David Barron for their support over the last year and he thanked Peter Snow for providing excellent advice and timely reports.

On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked all three panel members for their hard work and Stephen Bennett in particular for his dedication over a period of eight years.

The Leader echoed the Chairman's comments and thanked the Panel members for producing a clear report which plainly acknowledged the Council's difficulties of last year. He proposed the adoption of option 1 in the report. He considered this was the appropriate response at this particular time bearing in mind the coming review. He acknowledged that Members would need to look carefully at future recommendations to avoid the Council's allowances becoming out of line with those in operation elsewhere.

On behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Wilcock endorsed the motion to adopt option 1. He agreed that the Council would need to address concerns about the allowance scheme in future years.

Councillor Godwin, on behalf of the Independent Group, endorsed option 1. She said she would not wish to see a position reached where worthy people were unable to stand for office as a councillor but that option 1 was appropriate at the present time.

Councillor Barker asked that future reports be brought before Council at an earlier stage before the final budget cycle.

Councillor Sell agreed that option 1 was the right choice. However, the average age of councillors was now 58 and becoming a councillor was not seen as a career enhancing move. He felt there had been a change in the role of area forum chairmen. The special responsibility allowance for that position should be reviewed and should not be the same as for a policy committee chairman.

RESOLVED that the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel be accepted and that:

1. all existing allowances be increased by 2.45% on the rates currently in operation;
2. the three independent members of the Standards Committee and the three town and parish council representatives should each receive a payment benchmarked against the payment made to members of the Independent Remuneration Panel (currently £500 per annum);
3. a full review of the allowances scheme be carried out in 2009 for consideration by the Council before the budget and Council Tax setting meeting; and
4. the following allowances be paid in 2009/10:

Basic allowance	£5,020 (notionally 65 days at £77.23 per day)
Chairman of the Council	£5,020 + £3,765 + civic expenses (basic allowance + $\frac{3}{4}$ basic allowance)
Vice Chairman of the Council	£5,020 + £2,510 (basic allowance + $\frac{1}{2}$ basic allowance)
Leader of the Council	£5,020 + £7,530 (basic allowance + $1\frac{1}{2}$ basic allowance)
Deputy Leader of the Council	£5,020 + £3,765 (basic allowance + $\frac{3}{4}$ basic allowance)
Committee Chairmen & Chairmen of Area Forums (excluding Staff Appeals)	£5,020 + £3,765 (basic allowance + $\frac{3}{4}$ basic allowance)
Chairman of Standards Committee	£3,765 ( $\frac{3}{4}$ basic allowance)
Group Leaders	One basic allowance + either £1,055 p.a. or £114 x group membership as at 1 April (subject to a minimum group size of 2) whichever is the greater.
Members of the Development Control Committee	£5,020 + £502 (basic allowance + $6\frac{1}{2}$ days at £77.23 per day)
Carer's allowance	£10 per hour

Travel rates	Cars and vans – 40p (up to 10,000 miles p.a.) Each passenger making the same business trip – 5p Motorcycles – 24p Pedal cycles – 20p
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Before the Independent Remuneration Panel members left the meeting, Councillor Chambers said he wished to record his personal thanks to Stephen Bennett for the help and support he had provided during his association with the Council.

**C71 APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bellingham-Smith, Foley, Gower and Schneider.

*Councillor Barker declared her interest as a member of the County Council and of the Essex Fire Authority.*

*Councillor Chambers declared his interest as a member of the County Council and as Chairman of the Essex Police Authority.*

Councillor Sherer asked for guidance about the need to declare a prejudicial interest in any discussion about investment policy as a holder of shares in one or more of the companies concerned. The Assistant Chief Executive said that an interest need be declared only if the investment was worth more than £25,000 nominal value or was at least one hundredth the share value of the company.

**C72 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2008, having been received, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**C73 CORPORATE PLAN 2009-2012**

The Leader moved adoption of the recommendation in the report to approve the corporate plan and the determination of the corporate indicators for approval and monitoring by Performance Select Committee.

He said that the plan had been the subject of many months work since last August, eventually involving all Members at a workshop. Considerable efforts had been made to involve the public, as well as local businesses and town and parish councils, in the consultation process. This had been arranged via publicity in the local press, the website and Uttlesford Life.

The report summarised the priorities expressed in the consultation. These priorities had been taken into account in formulating the new corporate plan,

building upon the previous plan adopted last year. The four main priorities of finance, partnerships, people and environment had remained in place.

It was important to note that this was the first corporate plan to be directly linked to the budget setting process and the intermediate financial strategy. It would help to ensure that the Council's limited financial resources would be placed in the most appropriate areas.

The Leader acknowledged the support received from the Voluntary Improvement Board. The Council had been through a difficult time financially and was now beginning to move forward. In common with other local authorities, the Council would have to face the economic downturn and this would not be helpful to the short term recovery plan.

In conclusion, he said that the corporate plan was a forward looking document which he invited the Council to endorse.

Councillor Godwin seconded the motion. She said the plan was linked to reality and was the most realistic plan the Council had ever produced.

Councillor A Dean asked a number of questions. The plan referred to sustaining the quality of life in Uttlesford for those who live, work and visit the area. How did this fit with the lack of a tourism service outside Saffron Walden? The Chief Executive responded that the partnership with Saffron Walden Town Council ensured that the tourism service remained exactly as it was before. The function of a tourist office was to serve the wider area and this remained unchanged. He understood there was now a move underway to provide a tourist information office in Great Dunmow.

In noting that reviewing the food waste collection service was listed as the lowest public priority, Councillor Dean asked whether the current trial would be dropped? The Chief Executive responded that the matter was under review.

He next asked whether the outsourcing of services was part of a wider strategy or was seen as a money saving venture? The Chief Executive said everything would continue to be examined in an attempt to save money but that nothing would happen unless services were either maintained at the present level or improved and this led to a reduction in costs.

Councillor A Dean then asked whether Uttlesford Futures had been consulted. The Chief Executive said that a number of items had been carried forward from the existing plan.

He next referred to the proposed review of street cleaning and asked whether there was a specific target in mind? On waste collection, he asked whether there was a specific target for improving performance? The Chief Executive said that, in both cases, any targets to be set were a matter for the policy committees.

Councillor C Dean drew attention to the proposed review of the committee structure from 31 March and said the Constitution Working Group had been invited

to report back to Council by May 2009. Was this therefore a realistic aspiration? The Chief Executive responded that the timetable for this process was open for determination and any decision would be a matter for Members.

In referring to partnership working, Councillor Wilcock said that this was intended to improve the quality and delivery of services but that some had deteriorated in the past. If adopted, partnerships should be fully embedded into the Council's structure so that service delivery was seamless.

Councillor Chambers commented that this was the first time that the corporate plan had been linked with the budget. Partnerships now formed a core part of the Council's business and this was true also of other bodies such as the fire and police authorities. Long lasting partnerships would benefit Uttlesford taxpayers and all possibilities would continue to be explored.

Councillor Yarwood said he was pleased that the plan had been linked to finance but remained concerned about the capacity of the organisation to carry out effective monitoring. Councillor Chambers replied that due scrutiny was a vital part of the monitoring process.

Councillor Sell said it was not clear to him how services could be maintained in the current financial climate and referred to the re-launch of Uttlesford Life. The Leader said that a questionnaire would be included in that publication after a year so that feedback could be obtained.

Councillor A Dean drew attention to an error on page 21 which referred to a review of the scrutiny function by 31 March 2009 when this should be 2010. The Chief Executive agreed and said that this was part of the general development of the scrutiny function.

RESOLVED that:

1. the corporate plan 2009-2012 be approved subject to minor editorial changes; and
2. responsible committees determine the measurement and targets of the corporate indicators for approval by Performance Select Committee, with monitoring starting in April 2009.

C74

## **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

The Chairman welcomed members of the finance team and congratulated them for their hard work in producing the budget papers.

Councillor Chambers agreed that the finance officers deserved a pat on the back. It was now necessary to sustain and build upon firm financial foundations. The Medium Term Financial Strategy had been produced to identify the financial challenges that lay ahead and to ensure that financial planning was aligned to priorities in the revised corporate plan. He proposed that it be approved.

Councillor Wilcock referred to uncertainty over the cost of pensions and asked for information about the total cost of the pension scheme. He asked that the matter be referred to the Finance and Administration Committee for further discussion.

The Chief Finance Officer said that the total cost of the pension scheme in 2008/09 was £1.8m and this included £0.5m for payments due over the next four years. Of this sum, £1.1m would be treated as capital expenditure leaving £0.7m to be funded from the revenue budget. The total cost of the pension scheme in 2009/10 would be £1.3m. As from 2011/12, it was expected that the cost of the pension scheme would increase as the next actuarial valuation was due.

Councillor A Dean referred to the payment of £60k to Saffron Walden Town Council to maintain the tourist information service. He said that the website was restricted to information about Saffron Walden town. Concerns had been raised from other parts of the district such as Great Dunmow and he had concerns about value for money. He asked whether the written agreement for transfer of the tourism facility spelt out the service obligations for the whole of the district.

The Leader declared a personal interest as a member of Saffron Walden Town Council. He said the TIC was acutely aware of the website and that new software was now being developed for all parishes. Contributions had been sought from parish councils but none had been forthcoming. He reiterated what the Chief Executive had already said that the service being provided was exactly the same as before.

Councillor C Dean disputed that the service provided was the same. Thaxted Parish Council had called a meeting to explore possibilities for improvement. The website presentation offered to parishes was considered expensive. The Saffron Walden Town Clerk had said that his Council could only spend money to benefit Saffron Walden residents. It was also the case that no brochure had been produced this year.

The Leader disagreed with this analysis. Leaflets on all parts of the district were available from the TIC and the staff would help with general information. The Council had made a tapering grant thus reducing the cost to the Council each year.

Councillor Knight made the point that many parishes now had their own website but could still benefit from the use of auto links.

Councillor Cant asked whether a copy of the agreement for transfer of the service could be seen by Members. The Chief Executive said he was not sure that a written agreement existed but would check.

RESOLVED that the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved.

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2009/10**

Councillor Chambers proposed approval of the Housing Revenue Account and all associated recommendations. He said it was important to the Council's tenants to ensure that reserves were increased to a satisfactory level and the Lifeline service continued to be maintained.

The Chief Finance Officer clarified that the reference in the fourth part of the recommendation in the report to an increase of 5% in sewerage charges should be changed to read 'no more than 5%'.

Councillor Chamberlain spoke about the injustice caused to Council tenants by the system of negative housing subsidy. He stressed that the Council had little input into the proposed rent increase of 6% as the Government's formula had to be followed. Negative subsidy meant that the Council was forced to pay over a sum of £5.5m to the Government for re-distribution elsewhere, amounting to nearly half of total rental income. This was a staggering sum and was non-negotiable.

The system of housing finance was wrong and fundamentally flawed. It was a scandal that the Council was being punished for being prudent and providing value for money. Negative subsidy was a blatant stealth tax preventing the Council from taking action to improve its own housing stock and being able to regulate rent levels according to circumstances. The Council was given the opportunity to put its case to the Minister in person last year and must continue to press hard for changes to be made. He hoped this matter would be discussed at the next Community and Housing Committee meeting.

Councillor Morson endorsed everything that Councillor Chamberlain had said and congratulated him for obtaining direct access to the Minister. Officers had very little room for manoeuvre in setting housing rents and this was in large part due to the late provision of figures from the Government. The Council should complain to the Government about this process.

Councillor Wilcock agreed and wished to support any decision to lobby the Government about this matter. The Conservative Party had published a document making no mention of negative subsidy and all avenues for change must be pursued.

RESOLVED that the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2009/10 be approved, including the following elements:

- an average increase in dwelling rents of 6.07%;
- an increase in garage rents of 6.07%;
- an increase in heating charges of 5.5% and sewerage charges to increase by no more than 5%; and
- confirmation that charges for warden services would be set from April 2009 in accordance with the contracts with the Commissioning Body, and that protection be continued for tenants at 31 March 2009 in line with the contract with the Commissioning Body.



C76

### **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/09 – 2011/12**

Members received the Capital Programme for approval as agreed by the Finance and Administration Committee on 10 February.

Councillor C Dean asked about the delay in the purchase of eight vehicles and sought clarification about whether these were refuse or street cleaning vehicles and what was the intended timescale.

Councillor Chambers replied that it had been decided not to purchase one refuse vehicle and that it would be prudent to put off the replacement of other vehicles for the coming year.

RESOLVED that the Capital Programme be approved, as set out in Appendix A of the report.

C77

### **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2009/10 – 2011/12**

Councillor Chambers proposed adoption of the treasury management strategy and Prudential Indicators as recommended by the Finance and Administration Committee. He expressed concerns about what would happen in the event that banks in the United Kingdom were not considered safe for investment. The Council's investment strategy was based upon safety and on investing for short-term periods. Members must be aware that such a strategy would result in some loss of potential returns.

RESOLVED that the treasury management strategy and Prudential Indicators, as set out in the report, be approved.

C78

### **ROBUSTNESS OF ESTIMATES AND ADEQUACY OF RESERVES**

The Council received a report from the Chief Finance Officer on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves. Councillor Chambers proposed adoption of the report and said that the Council's financial position was now more positive. Only those objectives that could realistically be achieved had been proposed. Anything else would be viewed as a bonus.

Councillor Wilcock spoke about the risks associated with the level of reserves and asked that a report be submitted to each committee highlighting any risks and how they could be managed.

Councillor Chambers gave an assurance that he would examine all risks and not just those that were deemed to be high risk.

RESOLVED that the following be approved:

- 1 the minimum safe contingency level of £1,084,543 for 2009/10;

- 2 the risk assessment relating to the robustness of estimates as detailed in the report; and
- 3 the advice in the report be taken into account in determining the 2009/10 General Fund and Council Tax.

C79

## **GENERAL FUND AND COUNCIL TAX 2009/10**

Members received the report of the Chief Finance Officer setting out the General Fund budget requirement and District Council Tax precept for 2009/10.

In presenting the report and the associated recommendations, Councillor Chambers said it had been a very challenging year for the Council. The economic downturn had contributed to these difficulties and it seemed likely that the recession would continue for much of 2009. In the circumstances, it was pleasing that the Council had achieved a break even budget for the coming year in spite of the increase in Government grant of only 0.5%.

The Council would continue to do all it could to look after the residents of Uttlesford, especially those who needed particular help during the recession. This approach was reflected in ensuring that local citizens' advice bureaux were properly funded, that benefit claimants received the help to which they were entitled, and that invoices continued to be paid promptly.

He congratulated the Chief Finance Officer, as well as the Chief Executive and Director of Central Services, in ensuring the capitalisation of pension payments and future efforts would now be concentrated on building up reserves. To ensure sound finances it would be necessary to save a considerable sum over the next few years.

Uttlesford had the lowest Council Tax in Essex and, in the circumstances, a 4.875% increase amounting to an average 13p extra a week would be acceptable to local residents. He proposed the recommendations in the report accordingly.

Councillor Godwin seconded the motion.

Councillor Wilcock then proposed the following amendment, as already circulated to Members:

'Additional recommendation 6(d):

- i. To exercise wellbeing powers (Section 2 Local Government Act 2000) and apply a one-off rebate of £6.50 to all chargeable dwellings within Bands A – E, at a total cost of £135,000, plus software amendment costs of £5,000, giving a total cost of £140,000
- ii. To fund the costs of £140,000 in the following order of preference (1) from any unbudgeted surplus arising in 2008/09 (2) from the Budget Equalization Reserve.'

Councillor Wilcock said the amendment took into account Councillor Chambers' remarks about the effect of the recession, the resultant loss of jobs and the

inability of people to pay the proposed increase. He congratulated those concerned for achieving a break even budget but this had been achieved by withdrawing from reserves. It was necessary for the Council to do more to help people and this could be achieved by adopting his amendment.

The savings mentioned in part ii of the amendment had not been identified at present but this did not prevent the Council from providing help in a more positive way by sharing the benefits of any savings made. His amendment would still allow the Council Tax base to rise so that future increases could be applied on a higher base following the one-off rebate.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Sell.

Councillor Godwin said she was amazed by this proposal which she likened to the recent reduction in VAT. She questioned the effect that a refund of £6.50 would have and said this would add to the Council's difficulties in finding further savings.

The Leader spoke at length against the amendment. He said the promoters of the amendment had overlooked that the budget not only catered for the coming year's service requirements but also formed part of the strategy for the next five years, as included in the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

It was necessary to plan for the next five years to maintain the same level of services as now. The MTFS said that the Council had a balanced budget and reserves were at a minimum safe level, but there was little room for manoeuvre.

He said that all Members were aware of the effect of the economic downturn on local communities. For that reason, the Council was promoting ways to directly help those in hardship by providing support to the Uttlesford Citizens Advice Bureau as well as the CAB in Bishop's Stortford. The next edition of Uttlesford Life would include information about benefits and discounts available in respect of housing and council tax benefit.

The Council was suffering from reduced income in many areas, and this added to the small increase in Government support, placed increasing strain on existing levels of service.

The overall council tax increase of 2.56% was less than the current rate of inflation and the Council's element of that bill was still the lowest of any district in Essex. The Council's budget for next year was £918,000 less than the last budget set by the Liberal Democrat administration.

He was perplexed by the amendment as Liberal Democrat Members had been quoted, at different times, of supporting an increase of only 2.5%, and of supporting the increase being proposed this evening. Reports in the local press had said that the Liberal Democrat group had asked officers to investigate an increase of 2.5% but had accepted this would not be enough to cover costs. The Leader of the group had then proposed a rebate to council tax payers in lower banded properties, leading to tonight's amendment.

The proposed rebate would cause difficulties in terms of changes to software, and the unquantifiable cost of staff time to implement the change. There was also the question of inequality. It was presumptuous to suggest that someone living in a band F property was necessarily better off than someone in a band E property. Given that those properties in bands A to E made up more than half of Uttlesford properties, it would have been more understandable and equitable to propose no increase at all.

The effect of the amendment would be to make the task of managing the Council's resources much harder.

In 2003, the Liberal Democrats had circulated a leaflet alleging the then administration was overcharging band D households by £144. The newly elected Council in 2003 offered no refund to council tax payers and instead imposed increases of 7.5%, 4.5% and 4.5% successively, culminating in the ruinously inaccurate budget of 2006/07 when the planned increase of 4.5% was reduced to 2%.

The Leader said that this inconsistent approach demonstrated the lack of financial understanding of the Liberal Democrats of the Council's finances. He opposed the amendment.

Councillor Sell thanked the finance team for their hard work. The proposed increase was close to the capping level during what had been described recently by a key advisor to the Government as the worst economic downturn since the 1930s. Some councils such as Brentwood had reduced their council tax.

He welcomed the support given to the citizens' advice bureaux but this had remained at the same level as the previous year. He acknowledged that the proposed rebate was not a major element of council tax and was therefore unlikely to get people dancing in the street. It was more of symbolic value at a time of economic hardship, and was intended to be a one-off payment only.

Councillor Chambers said that the Council would not be in the position it was had the previous administration been more prudent. Unbudgeted surpluses were estimated to be £2,000. The MTFS had been designed to overcome the shortfall over a five year period and represented prudent financial management. He urged Members to vote against the amendment.

Councillor A Dean said that Councillor Chambers had been quoted in the local press as saving for a rainy day. A year ago it was stated that the Council was in deficit to the tune of £1.5m but this had now reduced to zero. Further savings had been sought in June last year but there was now a £60k surplus and this had been assisted by the windfall of £100k for the concessionary bus fares scheme.

He said he was willing to bet that there would be an unbudgeted surplus of more than £2,000 this year. The approach followed by the amendment was sensible as it maintained the council tax base and would send a signal to the public at the same time.

Councillor Ketteridge said he had not wished to return to this argument but said that Councillor Dean's case was absurd. A total of £1m had been removed from staff costs and everyone involved was well aware of the reality of the Council's position. It would be irresponsible to spend reserves as this would return us to the previous position.

Councillor Rolfe said that he supported the spirit behind the amendment but could not vote for it. He congratulated Councillor Ketteridge for his timely interventions in this debate. The Administration had inherited a weak fiscal position and this prevented a lower increase. The Council now had a good financial team with skilled operators and had worked its way back to break even point. It may still be necessary to dip into reserves next year and £140k might make a great deal of difference.

In summing up his case, Councillor Wilcock congratulated Councillor Rolfe on his understanding of the reasoning that lay behind the amendment. He wanted to provide reasonable help to the people of Uttlesford and to be compassionate.

The Assistant Chief Executive said he had been asked for advice about whether the wellbeing powers in the 2000 Act were wide enough to use in this case. He had advised that the powers would be applicable but this was on the basis that the Council had had regard to the sustainable communities' strategy and to Government guidance. As neither of these matters had been taken into account during the debate, he advised Members that it was not possible to vote in favour of the amendment at this stage as any resultant resolution would be ultra vires.

The amendment was put to the vote and was declared lost by 23 votes to 9.

The substantive motion was then agreed.

The Chairman thanked all staff for their efforts during the year and Members for the way in which the debate had been conducted.

RESOLVED that:

1. the General Fund budget requirement of £8,769,838 be approved, as detailed in full in the report;
2. the District Council Tax precept of £4,638,403 be approved, representing an increase of 4.875% on Council Tax; and
3. the 2009/10 Council Tax Resolution be approved, as set out in Appendix H of the report, and as detailed below.
  1. It be noted that the Council has calculated the following amounts for the year 2009/10 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1982:
    - a) 32,373.0 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2003, as its council tax base for the year
    - b) Part of the Council's area

	2009/10 Taxbase		2009/10 Taxbase
Parish	Band D equiv	Parish	Band D equiv
Arkesden	193.5	Leaden Roding	276.6
Ashdon	362.0	Lindsell	113.6
Aythorpe Roding	107.4	Little Bardfield	130.2
Barnston	382.8	Little Canfield	307.5
Berden	222.9	Little Chesterford	101.8
Birchanger	422.3	Little Dunmow	127.4
Broxted	225.4	Little Easton	218.4
Chickney	22.3	Little Hallingbury	718.6
Chrishall	245.6	Littlebury	395.6
Clavering	583.9	Manuden	292.4
Debden	375.6	Margaret Roding	77.9
Elmdon & Wendens Lofts	296.4	Newport	934.3
Elsenham	949.2	Quendon & Rickling	276.1
Farnham	191.6	Radwinter	255.7
Felsted	1,258.9	Saffron Walden	5,930.6
Flitch Green	803.4	Sampfords, The	376.9
Great Canfield	204.5	Sewards End	203.8
Great Chesterford	603.9	Stansted	2,392.0
Great Dunmow	3,465.7	Stebbing	637.9
Great Easton & Tilty	439.3	Strethall	14.9
Great Hallingbury	341.5	Takeley	1,215.6
Hadstock	158.9	Thaxted	1,186.9
Hatfield Broad Oak	562.6	Ugley	203.6
Hatfield Heath	843.2	Wendens Ambo	199.2
Hempstead	211.0	White Roding	171.6
Henham	558.8	Wicken Bonhunt	109.8
High Easter	334.7	Widdington	244.3
High Roding	200.3	Wimbish	520.4
Langley	171.8		
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>32,373.0</b>

Being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

2. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2009/10 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

a)	£45,468,344	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act
b)	£34,878,930	Being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act
c)	£10,589,414	Being the amount by which the aggregate at 2 a) above exceeds the aggregate at 2 b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year
d)	£4,131,435	Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its general fund in respect of redistributed non-domestic rates and revenue support grant, reduced by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its general fund, in respect of Council Tax deficit, to its collection fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred from its collection fund to its general fund, in respect of council tax and community charge surplus pursuant to the Collection Fund (Community Charges) (England) Directions 1994.
e)	£199.49	Being the amount at 2 c) above less the amount at 2 d) above, all divided by the amount at 1 a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year
f)	£1,819,576	Being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act
g)	£143.28	Being the amount at 2 e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 2 f) above by the amount at 1 a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates

h) Part of the Council's area:

(overleaf)

Parish	£	Parish	£
Arkesden	182.56	Langley	172.38
Ashdon	183.45	Leaden Roding	163.16
Aythorpe Roding	163.76	Little Bardfield	162.48
Barnston	191.61	Little Canfield	154.66
Berden	174.68	Little Chesterford	161.21
Birchanger	176.78	Little Dunmow	221.77
Broxted	183.21	Little Easton	184.49
Chrishall	194.58	Little Hallingbury	175.29
Clavering	161.26	Littlebury	197.74
Debden	179.22	Manuden	160.38
Elmdon & Wendens Lofts	174.22	Margaret Roding	172.16
Elsenham	189.63	Newport	202.15
Farnham	176.16	Quendon & Rickling	188.55
Felsted	186.97	Radwinter	174.96
Flitch Green	180.62	Saffron Walden	237.15
Great Canfield	166.88	Sampfords, The	169.81
Great Chesterford	192.13	Sewards End	186.70
Great Dunmow	229.92	Stansted	200.14
Great Easton & Tilty	186.53	Stebbing	190.39
Great Hallingbury	175.49	Takeley	200.86
Hadstock	187.33	Thaxted	204.36
Hatfield Broad Oak	187.72	Ugley	173.73
Hatfield Heath	168.49	Wendens Ambo	193.23
Hempstead	177.88	White Roding	181.19
Henham	199.20	Widdington	170.31
High Easter	167.18	Wimbish	172.10
High Roding	183.22		

Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 2 g) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1 b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items related.

- That it be noted that for the year 2009/10 the major precepting authorities have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:



a) Essex County Council		
	Valuation Bands	Amount
		£
	A	711.00
	B	829.50
	C	948.00
	D	1,066.50
	E	1,303.50
	F	1,540.50
	G	1,777.50
	H	2,133.00
b) Essex Police Authority		
	Valuation Bands	Amount
		£
	A	85.50
	B	99.75
	C	114.00
	D	128.25
	E	156.75
	F	185.25
	G	213.75
	H	256.50
c) Essex Fire Authority		
	Valuation Bands	Amount
		£
	A	43.08
	B	50.26
	C	57.44
	D	64.62
	E	78.98
	F	93.34
	G	107.70
	H	129.24

4. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2009/10 for each of the categories of dwellings shown overleaf.

<b>Council Tax 2009/10</b>	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Ratio to Band D:	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Arkesden	961.29	1121.50	1281.72	1441.93	1762.36	2082.79	2403.22	2883.86
Ashdon	961.88	1122.19	1282.51	1442.82	1763.45	2084.07	2404.70	2885.64
Aythorpe Roding	948.75	1106.88	1265.00	1423.13	1739.38	2055.63	2371.88	2846.26
Barnston	967.32	1128.54	1289.76	1450.98	1773.42	2095.86	2418.30	2901.96
Berden	956.03	1115.37	1274.71	1434.05	1752.73	2071.41	2390.08	2868.10
Birchanger	957.43	1117.01	1276.58	1436.15	1755.29	2074.44	2393.58	2872.30
Broxted	961.72	1122.01	1282.29	1442.58	1763.15	2083.73	2404.30	2885.16
Chickney	935.10	1090.95	1246.80	1402.65	1714.35	2026.05	2337.75	2805.30
Chrishall	969.30	1130.85	1292.40	1453.95	1777.05	2100.15	2423.25	2907.90
Clavering	947.09	1104.93	1262.78	1420.63	1736.33	2052.02	2367.72	2841.26
Debden	959.06	1118.90	1278.75	1438.59	1758.28	2077.96	2397.65	2877.18
Elmdon & Wendens Lofts	955.73	1115.01	1274.30	1433.59	1752.17	2070.74	2389.32	2867.18
Elsenham	966.00	1127.00	1288.00	1449.00	1771.00	2093.00	2415.00	2898.00
Farnham	957.02	1116.52	1276.03	1435.53	1754.54	2073.54	2392.55	2871.06
Felsted	964.23	1124.93	1285.64	1446.34	1767.75	2089.16	2410.57	2892.68
Flitch Green	959.99	1119.99	1279.99	1439.99	1759.99	2079.99	2399.98	2879.98
Great Canfield	950.83	1109.31	1267.78	1426.25	1743.19	2060.14	2377.08	2852.50
Great Chesterford	967.67	1128.94	1290.22	1451.50	1774.06	2096.61	2419.17	2903.00
Great Dunmow	992.86	1158.34	1323.81	1489.29	1820.24	2151.20	2482.15	2978.58
Great Easton & Tilty	963.93	1124.59	1285.24	1445.90	1767.21	2088.52	2409.83	2891.80
Great Hallingbury	956.57	1116.00	1275.43	1434.86	1753.72	2072.58	2391.43	2869.72
Hadstock	964.47	1125.21	1285.96	1446.70	1768.19	2089.68	2411.17	2893.40
Hatfield Broad Oak	964.73	1125.51	1286.30	1447.09	1768.67	2090.24	2411.82	2894.18
Hatfield Heath	951.91	1110.56	1269.21	1427.86	1745.16	2062.46	2379.77	2855.72

<b>Council Tax 2009/10</b>	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Ratio to Band D:	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Hempstead	958.17	1117.86	1277.56	1437.25	1756.64	2076.03	2395.42	2874.50
Henham	972.38	1134.44	1296.51	1458.57	1782.70	2106.82	2430.95	2917.14
High Easter	951.03	1109.54	1268.04	1426.55	1743.56	2060.57	2377.58	2853.10
High Roding	961.73	1122.01	1282.30	1442.59	1763.17	2083.74	2404.32	2885.18
Langley	954.50	1113.58	1272.67	1431.75	1749.92	2068.08	2386.25	2863.50
Leaden Roding	948.35	1106.41	1264.47	1422.53	1738.65	2054.77	2370.88	2845.06
Lindsell	935.10	1090.95	1246.80	1402.65	1714.35	2026.05	2337.75	2805.30
Little Bardfield	947.90	1105.88	1263.87	1421.85	1737.82	2053.78	2369.75	2843.70
Little Canfield	942.69	1099.80	1256.92	1414.03	1728.26	2042.49	2356.72	2828.06
Little Chesterford	947.05	1104.90	1262.74	1420.58	1736.26	2051.95	2367.63	2841.16
Little Dunmow	987.43	1152.00	1316.57	1481.14	1810.28	2139.42	2468.57	2962.28
Little Easton	962.57	1123.00	1283.43	1443.86	1764.72	2085.58	2406.43	2887.72
Little Hallingbury	956.44	1115.85	1275.25	1434.66	1753.47	2072.29	2391.10	2869.32
Littlebury	971.41	1133.31	1295.21	1457.11	1780.91	2104.71	2428.52	2914.22
Manuden	946.50	1104.25	1262.00	1419.75	1735.25	2050.75	2366.25	2839.50
Margaret Roding	954.35	1113.41	1272.47	1431.53	1749.65	2067.77	2385.88	2863.06
Newport	974.35	1136.74	1299.13	1461.52	1786.30	2111.08	2435.87	2923.04
Quendon & Rickling	965.28	1126.16	1287.04	1447.92	1769.68	2091.44	2413.20	2895.84
Radwinter	956.22	1115.59	1274.96	1434.33	1753.07	2071.81	2390.55	2868.66
Saffron Walden	997.68	1163.96	1330.24	1496.52	1829.08	2161.64	2494.20	2993.04
Sampfords, The	952.79	1111.58	1270.38	1429.18	1746.78	2064.37	2381.97	2858.36
Sewards End	964.05	1124.72	1285.40	1446.07	1767.42	2088.77	2410.12	2892.14
Stansted	973.01	1135.17	1297.34	1459.51	1783.85	2108.18	2432.52	2919.02
Stebbing	966.51	1127.59	1288.68	1449.76	1771.93	2094.10	2416.27	2899.52

<b>Council Tax 2009/10</b>	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Ratio to Band D:	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Strethall	935.10	1090.95	1246.80	1402.65	1714.35	2026.05	2337.75	2805.30
Takeley	973.49	1135.73	1297.98	1460.23	1784.73	2109.22	2433.72	2920.46
Thaxted	975.82	1138.46	1301.09	1463.73	1789.00	2114.28	2439.55	2927.46
Ugley	955.40	1114.63	1273.87	1433.10	1751.57	2070.03	2388.50	2866.20
Wendens Ambo	968.40	1129.80	1291.20	1452.60	1775.40	2098.20	2421.00	2905.20
White Roding	960.37	1120.44	1280.50	1440.56	1760.68	2080.81	2400.93	2881.12
Wicken Bonhunt	935.10	1090.95	1246.80	1402.65	1714.35	2026.05	2337.75	2805.30
Widdington	953.12	1111.97	1270.83	1429.68	1747.39	2065.09	2382.80	2859.36
Wimbish	954.31	1113.37	1272.42	1431.47	1749.57	2067.68	2385.78	2862.94

The meeting ended at 9.20pm.