

**ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 7.30pm on 13 MAY 2014**

Present: Councillor E Hicks– Chairman.
Councillors K Artus, C Cant, G Barker, S Barker, R Chambers,
J Cheetham, J Davey, P Davies, A Dean, R Eastham, K Eden, I
Evans, M Foley, J Freeman, E Godwin, S Howell, D Jones, A
Ketteridge, J Ketteridge, K Mackman, J Menell, D Morson, E Oliver,
J Parry, D Perry, V Ranger, J Redfern, J Rich, H Rolfe, J Rose, J
Salmon, D Watson and L Wells.

Officers in attendance: J Mitchell (Chief Executive), M Cox (Democratic Services
Officer), R Harborough (Director of Public Services), S Joyce
(Assistant Chief Executive – Finance), M Perry (Assistant Chief
Executive – Legal) and A Webb (Director of Corporate Services).

C1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Councillor Hicks informed the meeting that the proceedings would be streamed
live on the internet.

C2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

Having been nominated at the previous meeting Councillor Artus was duly
elected as Chairman of the Council.

RESOLVED that Councillor Artus be elected as Chairman of the Council
for the ensuing year.

C3 STATUTORY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Artus made his statutory declaration as Chairman of the Council for
2014/15.

He said it was a privilege to be appointed to this office and he hoped he would
be a worthy ambassador. He commended Councillor Hicks for the fantastic job
he had done as Chairman, and he had seen at first hand at the recent civic
dinner how his fellow councillors regarded him with warmth and affection.

His stated that his chosen charities for the year would be Help for Heroes and
the British Heart Foundation.

He first duty was to present a portrait and past Chairman's badge to Councillor
Hicks and he wished him all the very best for the future.

The outgoing Chairman, Councillor Hicks, read a statement to the meeting. He said he was immensely grateful for the opportunity to be Chairman. He and his wife had had a wonderful year, visiting different parts of the County and it had culminated with the recent royal visit to Felsted School where he had been privileged to meet the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh.

His recent civic dinner at Horham Hall had proved to be a fantastic venue and the evening had been a great success. He was delighted with the culmination of his year and said he would continue to serve the district in any way that he could.

Councillor Chambers said the civic dinner had been a lovely occasion. He reminded members that this was the last opportunity to make a donation to the Chairman's Charity.

C4 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Having been appointed at the previous meeting, Councillor Salmon was appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council.

RESOLVED that Councillor Salmon be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

C5 STATUTORY DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Salmon made his declaration of acceptance of office.

C6 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H Asker, M Felton, S Harris, T Knight, R Lemon, J Loughlin, E Parr, D Sadler, L Smith and A Walters.

C7 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 April 2014 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

At minute C72, Councillor Dean said that Councillor Barker's closing remarks had included a statement that no appropriate development site at Great Chesterford had been put forward, but this was not reflected in the minutes. He asked members to consider whether the minutes should be amended to include reference to this statement.

The Chief Executive replied that the minutes of the meeting were not a verbatim record, but rather captured the spirit and outcome of the meeting. He suggested that the minutes should stand. Councillor Dean said he accepted this explanation.

C8 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute C72 – Local Plan Pre-submission Consultation

Councillor Dean said it was now clear to him that land had been put forward for a possible development site in Great Chesterford and the agent had requested a meeting with officers, which had not taken place.

He felt there should have been a further call for sites, rather than something selected off the shelf, when the council was looking for sites to accommodate the additional housing requirement. This approach was not even-handed and had led to public concern. As a result he thought it would be in the Council's interest to conduct an independent inquiry into the Local Plan process.

The Chief Executive explained that officers had advised the landowner concerned to submit the site as a response to the consultation. This had been done, and a proposal for a site to accommodate 170 dwellings had been received. This had been included in the report of representations which was available to the public. He confirmed that the process had been handled in a proper and transparent manner.

Members were advised that the Local Plan Inquiry would be held in the Autumn and would be an independent assessment of the proposed Local Plan.

C9 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Councillor Artus reported on a recent visit to Carver Barracks. He said that during his year as Chairman he would like to strengthen the relationship between the Barracks and the District Council and develop the community covenant.

C10 REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE

The Council received the report on the allocation of seats to the Council's committees in accordance with the political balance provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

RESOLVED that the political balance of the Council and the allocation of seats set out in the report be agreed.

C11 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES 2014/15

The Leader proposed the appointment of committees, and their chairmen and vice-chairmen where indicated, working groups, and the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the area forums as set out below:

COMMITTEES

PLANNING

Chairman: J Cheetham
Vice-Chairman: K Eden

C Cant	K Mackman
J Davey	J Menell
R Eastham	D Perry
E Godwin	V Ranger
E Hicks	J Salmon
J Loughlin	L Wells

LICENSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Chairman: D Perry
Vice-Chairman: J Salmon

H Asker	M Lemon
J Davey	D Morson
J Freeman	V Ranger
E Hicks	A Walters
J Loughlin	

PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT

Chairman: S Howell
Vice-Chairman: E Oliver

K Artus	A Ketteridge
K Eden	E Parr
M Felton	J Parry
D Jones	D Sadler

SCRUTINY

Chairman: E Godwin
Vice-Chairman: I Evans

G Barker	D Morson
P Davies	E Oliver
S Harris	J Rich
S Howell	D Watson

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

M Lemon (Chairman)
C Cant
K Eden
E Godwin
J Loughlin
J Menell

Independent Members
(non voting)
Allen Brobyn
Vic Lelliott
Georgina Tindall

STAFF APPEALS

K Artus
G Barker
C Cant
K Eden
E Hicks
D Jones
V Ranger
L Wells

WORKING GROUPS

CONSTITUTION WORKING GROUP

J Davey	J Menell
I Evans	J Rich
A Ketteridge	D Watson
D Morson	L Wells

LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE

R Chambers
J Ketteridge
J Loughlin

ELECTORAL WORKING GROUP

R Chambers
J Davey
A Dean
J Freeman
E Hicks
J Ketteridge
M Lemon
J Rose

AREA FORUMS

NORTH FORUM

Chairman: J Menell
Vice Chairman: D Perry

H Asker	T Knight
R Chambers	E Oliver
B Eastham	J Parry
K Eden	J Redfern
M Foley	H Rolfe
J Freeman	J Rose
S Howell	D Sadler
A Ketteridge	D Watson
J Ketteridge	A Walters

SOUTH FORUM

Chairman : L Wells
Vice Chairman: J Davey

K Artus	E Hicks
G Barker	D Jones
S Barker	R Lemon
C Cant	J Loughlin
J Cheetham	K Mackman
P Davies	D J Morson
A Dean	E Parr
I Evans	J Salmon
M Felton	L Smith
S Harris	V Ranger
E J Godwin	J Rich

C12 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE TO SERVE ON THE ESSEX POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

The Leader proposed Councillor Chambers to serve as the Council's member representative on the Essex Police and Crime Panel.

RESOLVED accordingly.

C13 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chief Executive reported that Stephen Joyce, the Assistant Chief Executive – Finance would be leaving the Council to take up another position on the 30th June. Mr Joyce had joined the Council in 2008 at a difficult time and had paid a major part in the Council's financial improvements, and over the period had restored and maintained trust in the Council's finances. The Chief Executive registered his appreciation for everything that he had done for the Council. The Leader on behalf of all members endorsed these comments.

C14 REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

i) Leader of the Council

The Leader of the Council read a statement, which he said would correct an amount of misinformation that had recently been put in the public domain.

He said that Uttlesford that had been recognised as having the best quality of life of any rural district in the country, but one factor in achieving good health and wellbeing was to have an adequate supply of housing that was suitable for

resident's needs. There needed to be a good stream of housing going forward to meet the needs of the waiting list and for future generations.

There had been a recent claim that social housing was being allocated to people from outside the district rather than from the council's waiting list. He explained that there were currently 1813 people on the housing waiting list. Demand was outstripping supply with an average of 52 people joining the register each month. From 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014, 303 social housing properties had been allocated through the choice based letting system, 97% to people within the district and on the housing waiting list.

The Council had been proactive in putting forward small schemes, exceptions sites and building its own housing but these were small in number. To make any real inroads it relied on S106 agreements from housing development where the council had a policy to require 40% affordable housing. He said the DCLG was currently consulting on whether such agreements should be imposed in the future. He read to the meeting the strongly worded response to the consultation which stressed that the council should be able to set its own affordable housing policy.

The next point concerned comments made by We Are Residents (WAR), which implied that Uttlesford did not extract money for sports facilities from housing developers. The Leader said this was blatantly untrue and referred to recent examples of such provision in the district, at the Peaslands Road development and at Little Walden Road as well as significant financial contribution from other schemes. He also questioned why the WAR residents had objected to the recent Kier application which would have provided a significant addition to the towns stock of playing fields.

He informed members that a report was being prepared for the June Cabinet, which would make grant funding available to town and parish councils for cleaning and restoring their war memorials. This would be on a matched funding basis and part of the centenary of the first world war. The council would also erect a commemorative plinth in Elder Street to recognise the part that Carver Barracks had played in WW2 and in the life of the district.

Finally he stated that when elected in 2011 he had decided that this would be his last term as an Uttlesford member. Therefore, in order to effect this handover he was considering the most appropriate time between now and May to hand over the roles of Leader of the Conservative Group and Leader of the Council. He confirmed that he would advise all members once he had made this decision.

(ii) Councillor Rolfe – Executive Member for Communities and Partnerships

Councillor Rolfe gave details of the Tour de France which would be passing through the district on 7 July. In Saffron Walden there would be two free car parks at Audley End and Debden with minibus transport to the town. The following evening there would be a meeting with the business community to discuss what could be done to help alleviate possible problems with the road closures for the event. He had also written to Essex County Councillor Bass about the road surface through Saffron Walden.

He said the event would attract a huge number of people and it would be a great opportunity for the district. He hoped it would create a lasting legacy and looking to the future he was considering an annual commemorative cycle ride and would be pressing for an increase in cycle path facilities.

He then mentioned the Area Forums to be held on 5 and 10 June where the subject would be economic development. There would be contributions from Stansted Airport, the Welcome Trust and ECC. He said the forums were a key part of the community engagement strategy and future topics would include Education and Health and Wellbeing.

C15

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE

Councillor Cheetham asked for information about the arrangements for the Tour de France in the south of district. Councillor Rolfe said that main focus was in Felsted where the Parish council had been proactive in organising the event. The Council was assisting in providing toilet facilities but on the whole the community was making its own preparations. He said that he would provide member with details of this event.

In answer to a question from Councillor Menell he confirmed that discussions had already taken place with the NHS about the implications for local health services on the day of the event.

Councillor Menell asked the County Members if they could double their efforts concerning the problem of potholes and push for allowing local parish councils to deal with the potholes in their areas.

She said there also appeared to be a lack of communication between the various ECC departments as signage had been put up for road works which were not actually taking place. Councillor Dean gave a further example of inappropriate signage and said it was important for the various areas of Essex Highways to work together.

Councillor Barker replied that Councillor Bass, the portfolio holder for Highways had made it clear at a recent Full Council meeting that the repair of potholes would not be delegation to local authorities. There were extra resources being deployed and the situation would be monitored to see whether improvements were being made. She stressed it was important that residents continued to report any problems to Essex Highways.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm