

**COUNCIL MEETING held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 14 APRIL 2015 at 7.30pm**

Present: Councillor K Artus – Chairman.  
Councillors G Barker, S Barker, C Cant, R Chambers, J Cheetham, J Davey, P Davies, A Dean, R Eastham, K Eden, I Evans, M Felton, E Godwin, S Harris, E Hicks, S Howell, D Jones, A Ketteridge, J Ketteridge, T Knight, R Lemon, J Loughlin, K Mackman, J Menell, J Parry, D Perry, V Ranger, J Redfern, J Rich, H Rolfe, J Rose, D Sadler, J Salmon and A Walters.

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

**C77 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Asker, M Foley, J Freeman, D Morson, E Oliver, E Parr, L Smith, D Watson and L Wells.

**C78 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2015 were received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**C79 MATTERS ARISING**

**Minute C75 – Budget 2015/16**

Councillor Dean said he was disappointed that the council had not supported the Liberal Democrats' budget proposals. However he was delighted that the proposal for the PV panels on council properties was being taken forward.

**C80 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reported on the various visits and civic dinners he had attended recently. He mentioned particularly the opening of the affordable housing in Stansted and the recreational facilities at Manuden.

**C81 REPORTS FROM THE LEADER AND MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

The Leader updated the council on devolution issues. The Essex authorities had informed the Secretary of State that in principle they wished to proceed with a

devolution proposal. The detail of the proposals would need to be discussed after the election.

He reported progress with the Uttlesford Planning Policy Working Group (UPPWG). Recent meetings had discussed the proposed Gypsy and Traveller site at Arkesden/Wicken Bonhunt and on this subject he reported the studies from the owner's consultants and the Environment Agency had now been received. The call for sites consultation was running from April to June. The next stage would be to determine the housing numbers and then to determine the allocations strategy.

This was the last council meeting of this council term. He reported that there were a number of members who would not be standing for re-election, between them they had 133 years of experience and this would be a significant loss to the council. He thanked the following members for their work and dedication during their time at the council

**4 years**

Councillor Andrew Ketteridge  
Councillor David Watson  
Councillor Joe Rich  
Councillor Laurence Smith

**8 years**

Councillor Keith Eden – Vice -Chairman of the Planning Committee

**15 years**

Councillor Elizabeth Godwin – former Chairman of the Council and more recently Chairman of Scrutiny Committee

**18 years**

Councillor Christina Cant – former Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Development Control Committee.

**20 years**

Councillor David Morton – former Chairman of the Community and Leisure Committee, Leader of his group and more recently vice-chairman of the Scrutiny Committee.

**24 years**

Councillor Jackie Cheetham – Chairman of STAAP, Chairman of Planning, Deputy Leader.

**32 years**

Councillor Jim Ketteridge  
Chairman of the Council from 2002. Leader of the Council from 2007 - 2014

As an expression of appreciation of his service, the Leader suggested that Councillor Jim Ketteridge be proposed as an honorary alderman at the Annual Council meeting

Councillor Ranger had circulated a report on recent activities under his portfolio. He paid credit to Cllr Rolfe, who had carried out the role before him.

Councillor Walters updated members on the Audley End cycle path, which was now likely to be constructed in the summer months. He commended the recently published cycle strategy, which he hoped would be taken forward by the Highways Panel, although he was aware that funding was a major issue.

Councillor Redfern said this might be the last chance she had to address the council and therefore wanted to list what had been achieved under the housing portfolio over the past 4 years.

In relation to empty homes, a new officer had been recruited and significantly more homes had now been brought back into use. This gave increase revenue to the council and had a positive effect on the New Homes Bonus grant

The council was participating in the Essex Landlords accreditation scheme, It was looking at Energy efficiency improvements to council properties and considering the installation of solar panels.

The council continued to manage 3000 homes. A new fixed term tenancy policy had been introduced which encouraged movement within the housing stock. Tenant participation work was continuing and the telecare service was available For all Uttlesford residents.

There had been an increase in the number of people presenting as homeless. Work was continuing to prevent the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation by providing more temporary accommodation. There was still more to do in this area but work was continuing with partners.

She reminded members that in April 2012, the council had brought out of the housing subsidy and had been able to fund a housing building programme. New homes had been provided at Mead Court and the redevelopment of sheltered schemes at Hatherley Court and Reynolds Court. The council continued to look at the development potential of UDC owned sites. The council had given planning permission for 557 affordable homes as well as rural exception housing and extra care schemes. There had been a large investment programme to improve existing stock. She said she was amazed at what has been achieved in such a short time.

Finally she said she was disappointed that the ward boundaries had changed and that she would be standing against fellow councillors but she wished them well in the forthcoming election.

Councillor Cheetham reported on airport issues which fell under her portfolio. One matter of concern had been the suggestion to increase the local residents' charge for set down/pick up at the airport from 50p to £1. This was too big an increase for local families who used the bus and rail as their local station and

dropped off family members for work and school. She had taken this matter back to the subgroup with a suggestion that there should be an inner and outer radius with the residents who lived closest to the airport only paying 50p.

The airport's sustainable development plan had been published and a link would be sent to all members. She asked the council to monitor the expansion of the airport up to 40mppa and ensure that the impacts did not outweigh the benefits.

This was her last report and she thanked officers, both past and present for their help over the years. She asked Members to remain vigilant in the face of expansion, the possibility of new runways and the outcome of the Davies report on airport capacity in June.

She hoped the new council would work within a spirit of cooperation. She wished new councillors good luck and to those that were standing down a peaceful retirement.

## **C82 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

Councillor Howell reported that the footway through the village of Hempstead was now in construction and would be completed by the summer. This had been the key objective of Hempstead PC for many years and the progress had much to do with the chairmanship of Councillor Walters but also showed how effective a partnership could be between UDC, ECC and the parish council.

Councillor Cant said that last summer she had given Lindsell parish meeting £500 to purchase a village sign. This had led to long saga of correspondence between UDC and ECC about the legalities and responsibility of granting permission. She said this had become a farcical situation, which had still not been resolved. She asked that Members continue to press for a resolution on her behalf if this had still not been resolved.

Councillor Mackman asked Councillor Redfern 3 questions

I understand that the Reynolds Court tender process has been put out on a 'cost plus' basis. I have three questions.

- 1/ Why did UDC choose this procurement route?
- 2/ Are the council aware of the risks to which the council may be exposed?
- 3/ Does the council have the in-house resources to manage the route?

Councillor Redfern replied that the council was not undertaking a cost plus procurement but instead a two stage design and build programme at a fixed price, which could only be varied by the client.

Councillor Rose asked Councillor Ranger whether the recent fire at the local business of Carr and Bircher in Newport warranted support from the District

Council. Councillor Ranger replied that he would ask the Economic Development Officer to contact the company to ascertain the full facts.

Councillor Dean understood that a recent meeting of the NEPP suggested a revision to residents parking at the Lower Street car park Stansted, which needed to be approved by Cabinet. Councillor Barker said this concerned the dual use bays and whether residents who returned between the 10am - 4pm should be allowed to use the car park free of charge. She felt that this could be dealt with under the Leader's authority as the April cabinet meeting had been cancelled.

Councillor Dean said there was concern that there would not be sufficient parking for the staff of the proposed NHS dentist. Councillor Barker replied that the dentist was no different to any other business. The health centre had leased spaces from the council and if it wished the dentist could do the same.

Councillor Knight said there appeared to be a problem with the organisation of the ECC Highways department which was causing frustration when trying to deal with local issues. She suggested that the new council should be proactive and aim to set up a working group in partnership with ECC to look at what improvements could be made.

Councillor Perry thanked Councillor Redfern for her support to him as the Chairman of the housing Board. He said the housing department was an exemplar for others to follow and the positive initiatives should be more widely publicised.

**C83 PAY POLICY 2015/16**

Members received the annual review of the Council's pay policy. This had been previously considered by Cabinet. There were two changes from the previous year, the council was now a living wage employer and there had been national changes to pension arrangements.

RESOLVED to approve the Pay Policy 2015/16.

**C84 MINUTES OF THE INDEPENDENT PERSONS APPOINTMENT PANEL**

The council received the minutes of the final meeting of the Independent Persons Appointment Panel

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the panel held on 18 February 2015 be approved.

**C85 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

The council was asked to approve two amendments to the Constitution

The first was an amendment to the Employment Procedure Rules in line with recent legislation which made changes to the procedure for the dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the S151 Officer.

The second related to changes that were required to reflect the reduction in the council membership 44 to 39 councillors,

RESOLVED that

- 1 Members adopt the revised Officer Employment Procedural rules with effect from 11 May 2015.
- 2 The proposed changes to the constitution stand adjourned to the next meeting of the Council.

#### **C86 APPOINTMENT OF SECTION 151 OFFICER**

At the meeting on 15 July 2014, Mr Adrian Webb, Director of Finance and Corporate Service had been appointed as the S151 officer on an interim basis. The Council was asked to confirm this as a permanent appointment. Members commented that Mr Webb had done an outstanding job since taking on this position and they had every confidence in his ability to carry out this role.

RESOLVED that the function of s151 Officer to reside within the role of Mr Adrian Webb, Director of Finance and Corporate Services.

#### **C87 ADOPTION OF BYLAWS**

*Councillor Redfern declared a pecuniary interest in this item as she was the owner of a piecing salon*

Members were asked to agree the recommendations in the report to adopt updated bylaws for the regulation of acupuncture, tattooing, semi-permanent skin-colouring, cosmetic piercing and electrolysis by local authorities. The new bylaws would ensure that these activities would be monitored by Environmental Health Officers.

RESOLVED that the updated bylaws be adopted.

#### **C88 NOMINATIONS FOR THE POST OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE- CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

Councillor Rolfe proposed and Councillor Barker seconded that Councillor John Salmon be nominated for the position of Chairman of the Council and Councillor Stephanie Harris be nominated for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Council

Council Perry said he had been advised that he could not be nominated for the position of vice-chairman because of his chairmanship of the Licensing

Committee. He now understood that this was acceptable and he would like to put himself forward.

Councillor Jones proposed, seconded by Councillor Knight, that Councillor Perry be nominated for the position of Vice- Chairman of the Council.

The nominations would now stand adjourned for adoption at the Annual Meeting of the Council.

The meeting ended at 9.45pm.