



Public Document Pack

Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

SUPPLEMENTARY PACK

Council

Date: Tuesday, 6th December, 2022
Time: 7.00 pm
Venue: Council Chamber - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Chair: Councillor H Asker

Members: Councillors A Armstrong, G Bagnall, S Barker, M Caton, A Coote, C Criscione, A Dean, G Driscoll (Vice-Chair), D Eke, J Emanuel, J Evans, P Fairhurst, M Foley, R Freeman, N Gregory, N Hargreaves, V Isham, R Jones, A Khan, P Lavelle, G LeCount, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light, J Lodge, J Loughlin, S Luck, S Merifield, E Oliver, R Pavitt, L Pepper, N Reeve, G Sell, G Smith, M Sutton, M Taylor and J De Vries

ITEMS WITH SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION PART 1

Open to Public and Press

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To receive matters of report from the Leader and members of the Executive.

- Portfolio Holder for the Economy, Investment and Corporate Strategy
- Portfolio Holder for Budget and Finance
- Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Green Issues; Equalities

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To consider the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023-24.

- Amendment to the recommendations as submitted by Councillor Light

14 Member Motion: Council Tax Freeze 12

To consider the Member Motion regarding a Council Tax Freeze.

- Amendment to the motion as submitted by Councillor Hargreaves

15 Member Motion: Anglian Water and Thames Water 13

To consider the Member Motion regarding Anglian Water and Thames Water and the discharging of sewage in the district.

- Amendment to the motion as submitted by Councillor Isham, Fairhurst and Light

For information about this meeting please contact Democratic Services

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Councillor Neil Reeve

Portfolio Holder for the Economy, Investment and Corporate Strategy

Report to Council: 6 December 2022

Economic Development

- The 2022/2023 year of the three year 'Economic Development Recovery Plan' is being carried out.
- The previously two person Economic Development Team has recently been increased by two staff. They start in January.
- Following the principle stated in our Corporate Plan of applying for all relevant grants, an application to the £1 million UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF endorsed by Cabinet and our MP) was submitted on 1 August 2022. It is currently still awaiting approval by Government.
- An application for the £813,000 Rural England Community Fund is due to be submitted to Government on 30 November 2022. This is further to the UKSPF and reflects the particular rural nature of Uttlesford.

Investment

- An All-Member Briefing was held on Tuesday 22 November 2022. This included current details of the Investment Portfolio.
- A meeting of the Investment Board will be scheduled during December 2022.

Corporate Strategy

- Nothing to report for this meeting

Councillor Neil Hargreaves

Portfolio Holder for Budgets and Finance

Report to Council: 6 December 2022

On 23rd November I attended a meeting of finance heads from all Essex councils, coordinated by Cllr Chris Whitbread, who is the ECC lead.

Of particular concern was the confirmation that Essex are ending the Highways Rangers service across the county, see below.

As expected, budget pressures were the subject of the whole meeting. The other councils' positions were generally that they could just about balance 23/24 with use of reserves, but beyond that was difficult, not least because of absence of clarity from the government. The usual frustration was expressed about the government not issuing annual figures until Christmas Eve, too late for the budget process, and leaving councils to guess and work on whispers and opinions.

Here are a couple of the slides. Note this is a county view of the world and so social care is a big factor, but a participant noted that New Homes Bonus was not listed. However, no-one had any information as to its future. For business rates the word was that Michael Gove would not do the re-set (which as noted at our member finance presentation takes away the extra % councils get from growth in business rates) would not be done until after the general election.

Council Tax Flexibility – 3% basic precept and additional 2% social care precept

New Social Care Grant – £1bn for 2023/24, rising to £1.7m for 2024/25. Awaiting distribution methodology and terms and conditions

Social Care Charging reforms – delayed to October 2025

NLW Increase – Confirmed 9.7% increase to £10.42 per hour (higher than expected)

Business Rates – freeze in the multiplier, revaluation to go ahead, 75% discount for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses in 2023/24, transitional relief for higher bills due to revaluation

Levelling Up Funds – commitment that Round 2 will at least match £1.7bn of round 1

Social Rent – annual increase capped at 7%

Household Support Fund – continued for 2023/24 at same level as 2022/23

I asked why ECC were not taking the full tax rise allowed by the government, and how this squared for example, with their officers telling members that they had less than half the funds to keep the roads to current standards, never mind improve them. No answer was provided, and there was disbelief and shaking of heads around the screen about not taking even the full 3% for the non-social care functions. It was noted that government in its funding allocation would assume the full amount of

council tax was taken, and I pointed out that it is district councillors who are often on the receiving end of pothole complaints

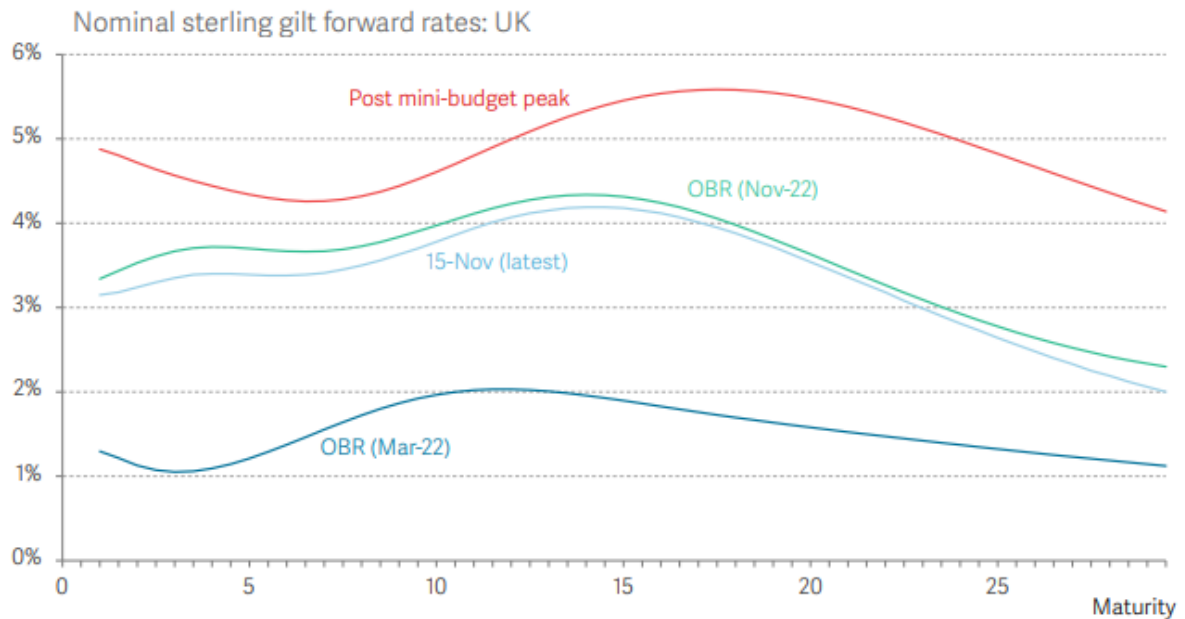
The finance lead for Chelmsford asked, with Essex ending the Highways Rangers, how the service would be delivered. The Essex Finance lead had no answer, but said it was down to the Highways cabinet member, who was of course not in the meeting. However, I was in a meeting with Cllr Lee Scott the same week, on ward matters, and so asked him. Again the question was not answered, the response being 'it's budgetary', but he did say that many district councils had decided to pay for it themselves. I therefore emailed all of the finance heads and so far no-one has said they will do this and typical responses can be summarised as 'formal decision not yet taken but it will be No'

This links with an Uttlesford Conservative Party leaflet, which claims that the poor state of our roads and pavements is the fault of R4U. This no doubt is just a mistake, as we all know that this is an Essex responsibility, but nevertheless it is being distributed by Conservative members of this council.

As I'm sure they will not want residents to be misinformed, perhaps they will use follow up questions on this report as an opportunity to publicly correct the facts, and also the assertion in their leaflet that R4U are responsible for 'cuts in rural bus services', which are also an Essex responsibility. Should leaflet writers, members and residents need help on the hierarchy of councils and which council to go to for all sorts of matters, they may find this link helpful [Get Help: Directory - Residents for Uttlesford \[R4U\] \(residents4u.org\)](#)

Several charts were supplied, including showing the impact of austerity on different categories of people, and if anyone would like the full package I can forward. This one shows interest rates by years to maturity. The red line was the impact of the Truss chaos. The green line is the key one as at November it shows long term finance at reasonable rates. This is of importance for the HRA in particular, where viability of building new social housing depends on the ratio of rent income to borrowing costs plus running costs. As we saw in the members presentation, the large HRA loan list is made up of small tranches with phased maturity dates, so allowing flexibility of re-financing to build or buy, provided the financial model is sound.

FIGURE 9: Although interest rate expectations have fallen over recent weeks, they are up by around 2 percentage points since March 2022



SOURCE: RF analysis of Bank of England, Yield curves.

Devolution was discussed, around sourcing finance from the government. My comment was not to go into serious work without good guarantees from the government, and that in current circumstances further cash from the Treasury was unlikely. It is still referred to as 'Greater Essex' but when I pointed out that the previous proposed three way unitary split, with the same name, had no financial plan, and was clearly not financially viable, the assurance was that the devolution is not about local government reorganisation

Cllr Neil Hargreaves



Councillor Louise Pepper – Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues; Equalities

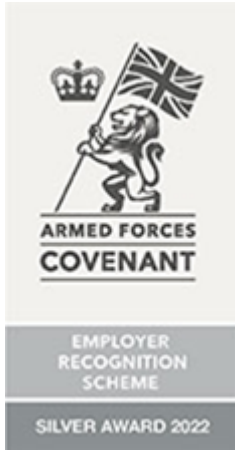
Report to Full Council: 6 December 2022

Equalities Update

- Uttlesford District Council Menopause Policy was adopted October 2022
<https://intranet.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/8095/Menopause-Policy>
- 15 members of staff have signed up to Menopause Mentors Accreditation, an on-line ambassador programme delivered by Over the Bloody Moon, on completion officers will be awarded with a CPD Accreditation. The introduction of a staff network to support people transitioning through the menopause will be launched once officers have completed their training.
- Community Listening Events – A meeting was held on 9th November 2022 with local secondary schools LGBTQ+ Inclusion leads and students to establish any mileage in holding an event to raise awareness around LGBTQ+ Inclusion. The students' groups and leads have been asked to consider the following questions.
 - Your involvement: Would you like to be part of an event (as a speaker or presenter) which brought students from across Uttlesford together to discuss LGBTQ+ Inclusion and what it means for you here in Uttlesford.
 - Your ideas: Do you feel it would be better to have this event in person or virtually, or even just a recorded conversation? Do you think adults (such as parents/guardians, plus school staff or youth organisation staff) should be part of the conversation?
 - Your perspective: Do you have things you want to see changed in Uttlesford? Are there any things you wish people in the community were more aware of?
- We are looking to host a listening event for new parents in Uttlesford to build awareness and understanding of the issues affecting those who are pregnant or recently gave birth. We are aware there has not been anything like this done before in Uttlesford, so will be looking to partners who would be up for supporting us through either taking part in the event (format tbc) as a speaker and listener, providing us with any relevant data that can help inform the event, and connect us with our audience for this event.
- EqHIA – Equality Health Impact Assessment workshops are to be delivered to senior officers in the New Year, this will enable them to become critical friends to colleagues completing the EqHIA alongside any new or changes to UDC activity, a policy, strategy, procedure, project, new or change in service, initiative or other.
Session aims:
 - To have an understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
 - To understand better which groups are protected from discrimination and what types of behaviour are unlawful
 - To develop an awareness of Equality Analysis as a tool for promoting equality, tackling discrimination and fostering good relations
 - To have a better understanding of the different issues and stages of the Equality Analysis process
 - To develop some practical skills in how to use Equality Analysis within the organisation

The following has been shared with Cllr Rod Jones UDC Armed Forces Champion, but you may also want to include it within your update as equalities portfolio lead.

- UDC successfully achieved ERS Silver Award in July 2022 – follow link for more information via our website <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/7786/Defence-employer-recognition-scheme> The CEO along with District Council Armed Forces Champion will attend a Ministry of Defence Silver Awards Presentation this month at Madingley Hall, Cambridge



- The new Armed Forces Covenant Duty will come into force on 22 November 2022. From this date, the public bodies affected will be legally obliged to have due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant when exercising specific functions. More information about this Duty is provided in the [Statutory Guidance](#)

**Thank you
Cllr Pepper**



One planet one race

Amendment Submitted by Councillor Light

Agenda Item 8: Member Allowance Scheme Review 2023-24

To insert and remove wording as follows (*bold italics denotes additional wording – wording to be removed has been struck through*):

Amended Recommendation:

That the Council:

- I. ~~Adopts the recommended scheme of allowances for the year 2023/24 as set out in Appendix A to the report, effectively increasing the current level of basic allowance and all existing special responsibility allowances (SRAs) by 3.00%.~~
- I. ***In recognition of the cost of living crisis which many residents across the district are currently experiencing, will retain the current level of Members' allowances for 2023/24 and not accept the proposed increases.***
- II. Continues with the current individual SRAs for Portfolio Holders in 2023/24.
- III. Notes the importance of the Carers Allowance Scheme to encourage those with caring responsibilities to become Councillors.

PROPOSED MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME 2023/24

All councillors receive the basic allowance unless they request otherwise. Special responsibility allowances, such as that of the Chair of the Council, are paid to those who hold responsibility for these positions.

Allowance	Amount
Basic Allowance	£5346.49
Chair of the Council	£4277.19 + civic expenses
Vice Chair of the Council	£2138.60
Leader of the Council	£13098.91
Deputy Leader of the Council	£6950.44
Portfolio Holders	£6415.80
Overview/Scrutiny and Ordinary Committee Chairs	£3742.55
Chair of Licensing and Environmental Health Committee	£4009.88
Members of Licensing and Environmental Health Committee	£246.76 (to be paid in a municipal year when at least ten meetings of the Committee take place in a purely regulatory capacity; a payment will be made to members attending at least 50% of those meetings).
Chair of Planning Committee	£4009.88
Members of Planning Committee	£493.52
Substitute members of the Planning Committee	£123.38 (to be paid in a municipal year when a substitute member of the Planning Committee has attended at least 25% of meetings of that committee).
Chair of Standards Committee	£2138.60
Main opposition group leader	£3742.55
Other opposition group leader	£2138.60

Amendment to Agenda Item 8: Members' Allowance Scheme 2023-24
 Appendix A – Alternative Proposal for the Scheme of Allowances

Independent representatives on the Standards Committee or the Statutory Officer Discipline and Dismissal Panel	£534.64
Panel members of Independent Remuneration Panel	£534.64

Explanatory notes about how the Special Responsibility Allowances are calculated:

Chair of the Council - 80% of the basic allowance

Vice-Chair of the Council - 40% of the basic allowance

Leader of the Council - 245% of the basic allowance

Deputy Leader of the Council - 130% of the basic allowance

Members of the Executive - 120% of the basic allowance

Chairs of overview, scrutiny and ordinary committees - 70% of the basic allowance

Chair of Licensing and Environmental Health Committee - 75% of the basic allowance

Members of the Licensing and Environmental Health Committee - 3, 8-hour days at the daily rate (calculated by dividing the basic allowance by 65, 8 hour days, equivalent to 520 hours per annum)

Chair of Planning Committee - 75% of basic allowance

Members of the Planning Committee - 6, 8-hour days at the daily rate (calculated by dividing the basic allowance by 65, 8 hour days, equivalent to 520 hours per annum)

Substitute Members of the Planning Committee – 25% of the SRA for members of the Planning Committee

Chair of the Standards Committee - 40% of the basic allowance

Leader of the largest opposition group - 70% of the basic allowance

Leader of all other opposition groups - 40% of the basic allowance

Independent members of the Standards Committee - benchmarked to 10% of the basic allowance

Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel - benchmarked to 10% of the basic allowance (although this allowance is not reviewed by the Panel and is agreed independently by the Council)

Agenda Item 14

Amendment Submitted by Councillor Hargreaves

Member Motion: Council Tax-Freeze, as proposed by Councillor Caton - Full Council, 6 December 2022

To insert and remove wording as follows (bold italics denotes additional wording – wording to be removed has been struck through):

Amended Motion (with ‘tracked changes’):

In light of the Office for Budget Responsibility forecast that real household disposable income will fall by 7.1% between 2021/22 and 2023/24, worsening the existing Cost of Living Crisis and further squeezing the vulnerable and low to middle income families, this Council resolves to:

- ~~1. In principle, freeze its share of the Council tax for the 23/24 financial year at the current (2022/23) level following discussions with the S151 Officer regarding how to target the rebate towards lower and middle income families.~~
- ~~2. Ask other preceptors to take similar action;~~

Hold a budget council tax workshop for all council members with the relevant officers, to ensure that members are clearly informed regarding tax proposals and options to ensure a full understanding is reached prior to decisions being made.

Council also notes

~~A) The Lib Dem and Green **the** budget amendment passed unanimously last year that gave a £100 grant to 863 households cost £86,300 and was funded from the MTFs Reserve. The cost of a freeze on UDC’s share of the Council tax in 2023/24 benefiting households in the district is estimated to be £180,000 and similarly would be funded from reserves.~~

Amended Motion (no ‘tracked changes’):

In light of the Office for Budget Responsibility forecast that real household disposable income will fall by 7.1% between 2021/22 and 2023/24, worsening the existing Cost of Living Crisis and further squeezing the vulnerable and low to middle income families, this Council resolves to:

Hold a budget council tax workshop for all council members with the relevant officers, to ensure that members are clearly informed regarding tax proposals and options to ensure a full understanding is reached prior to decisions being made.

Council also notes the budget amendment passed unanimously last year that gave a £100 grant to 863 households cost £86,300 and was funded from the MTFs Reserve. The cost of a freeze on UDC’s share of the Council tax in 2023/24 benefiting households in the district is estimated to be £180,000.

Amendment Submitted by Councillors Isham, Light and Fairhurst

Member Motion: Anglian Water and Thames Water, as proposed by Councillor Isham - Full Council, 6 December 2022

To insert and remove wording as follows (bold italics denotes additional wording – wording to be removed has been struck through):

Amended Motion (with ‘tracked changes’):

~~To request that this Council calls on~~ ***This Council requests Scrutiny Committee to call on*** Anglian Water and Thames Water to attend a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee ***as soon as practicable*** and answer questions about the discharging of raw sewage into the rivers in our region and inform members of their plans to deal with sewage ~~as soon as practicable~~.

Amended Motion (no ‘tracked changes’):

This Council requests Scrutiny Committee to call on Anglian Water and Thames Water to attend a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee as soon as practicable and answer questions about the discharging of raw sewage into the rivers in our region and inform members of their plans to deal with sewage.