

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRA ORDINARY FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT COUNCIL CHAMBERS,
“BANSONS”, BANSONS WAY, ONGAR,
ON THURSDAY 18th JANUARY 2018 AT 8PM**

Present: D. Birch (Chairman) J. Battersby S. Cole B. Freeman L. Mendoza
J. Browning J. Reynolds J. Bicknell P. Keska J. Devonald

Officers: A. Middlehurst (Town Clerk)

Other: Six members of public present

Press: One member of the press

Statement from the Chairman

The council is meeting this evening to consider several items including the 2018/19 budget and precept.

In previous years, the Council has used a process whereby Committees consider and recommended their required budget to both the Finance Committee and then on to Full Council.

Unfortunately, as many of you are aware, due to the sad unforeseen circumstances involving our Town Clerk, this process has not been possible for this year.

Due to the time constraints and the precept request required by EFCD by 31st January, the Council is asked to note that on this occasion the Financial Regulations adopted by the Council have been unable to be followed.

Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs and our Town Clerk, have been involved in creating the draft budget placed before you this evening.

All Councillors are aware of the contents of the draft budget, which was emailed to them several days ago to allow for their input, comments and feedback.

Due to the unforeseen circumstances, forced upon us, above all else common sense must prevail to ensure we meet the EFDC required timescale.

As Chairman, I am confident that I will deliver the requirements of the Council for the next financial year.

84/17 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Feetham, Vaz and Bolden.

85/17 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs), Other Pecuniary Interest and Non-Pecuniary Interests under the Council’s adopted Code of Conduct with regard to agenda items

Cllr Reynolds declared a Pecuniary Interest in item 92/17 and a Non-Pecuniary Interest in item 96/17.

Cllr Cole declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in items 92/17 and 96/17.

86/17 Public participation session with respect to items on the agenda previously notified to the Clerk

One member of the public requested clarification on why it cost the council £580 to hire out facilities. Secondly, with regard to the Local Plan and reference to the wording “prospect of

St. Margaret's hospital closing" where was this information obtained.

87/17 Clerks Report

PEPROS Committee

Cllr Keska has advised that as Vice Chairman of Plans East at EFDC it would not be appropriate for him to attend these Committee meetings.

Public Meeting – 12th February

A representative from the office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex will be attending the meeting hosted by OTC. Meeting will commence at 6pm.

88/17 Reports from District and County Councillors

Cllr Maggie McEwen (ECC) gave a report on the budget and precept being proposed by ECC.

Cllr Keska in his capacity as EFDC Cllr stated the precept hadn't been agreed yet with District.

89/17 To agree the Full Council Meeting Minutes of 17th October 2017

Cllr Battersby proposed and Cllr Browning seconded that the paragraph on page 2 'Cllrs Reynolds, Vaz and Cole returned to the meeting at 8:46pm' was a typographical error and should state '8.56pm'.

VOTE: 8 in favour
1 abstention

90/17 Finance Reporting

To receive a list of all payments from 1st June 2017 to 31st December 2018
Noted.

91/17 Recommendations from the Jubilee Park Steering Committee

a) That the funds agreed for building maintenance be ring fenced.
Cllr Reynolds proposed and Cllr Bicknell seconded that the £1,550 be ring fenced.
VOTE: Unanimous

b) That the finance agreed for ground maintenance be ring fenced.
Cllr Reynolds proposed and Cllr Cole seconded that the £850 be ring fenced.
VOTE: Unanimous

c) To agree in principle to provide initial funding to OCST.
Cllr Browning explained that the Trust will need further funding. Cllr Browning proposed and Cllr Reynolds seconded.
VOTE: Unanimous

92/17 Community Grants

Cllrs Cole and Reynolds left the meeting at 8:15pm

- To note the adopted Community Grant Policy
The Town Clerk advised that the Policy stated grants could not be applied for retrospectively therefore, unfortunately, the Ongar Town Forum and Ongar Residents Association applications have to be withdrawn
Noted

- To consider and agree that a reserve amount be held over for emergency grants.
Cllr Browning proposed and Cllr Battersby seconded emergency funding be kept at 25%.
VOTE: 4 in favour

4 against
Not carried

Cllr Freeman proposed and Cllr Bicknell seconded to take the 76% to spend and 24% to be held back for emergency funds.

VOTE: Unanimous

- To consider the Community Grant applications and agree the distribution of available funds.

Cllr Battersby suggested that the funds could be distributed as follows:

£ 200.00	Ongar Singers
£ 200.00	St. Clare Hospice
£ 150.00	EFDC
£ 100.00	CAB
£ 250.00	1 st Ongar Brownies
£ 300.00	Ongar in Bloom
<u>£ 500.00</u>	3 rd Ongar Scouts
<u>£1,700.00</u>	

The Clerk advised that 76% of the funds were to be spent following the previous motion therefore, the amount available was now £1,778.40. Leaving £561.60 remaining for the emergency fund.

Cllr Birch proposed and Cllr Browning seconded that the money be distributed as follows:

£ 250.00	Ongar Singers
£ 200.00	St. Clare Hospice
£ 250.00	1 st Ongar Brownies
£ 300.00	Ongar in Bloom
<u>£ 778.40</u>	3 rd Ongar Scouts
<u>£1,778.40</u>	

VOTE: Unanimous

Cllrs Cole and Reynolds returned to the meeting at 8.31pm

93/17 Basons Letting Fees

Cllr Birch reiterated that Basons does not have a caretaker facility, therefore, any lettings must be self-sufficient. Cllr Cole thanked the staff and support of the councillors in the running of this facility.

Cllr Bicknell proposed and Cllr Freeman seconded that the fees are not increased.

VOTE: Unanimous

94/17 2017/18 Budget

- To note the implications of the reduction in the LCTS grant
Noted

- To agree that any unspent funds from the Council Buildings and Property budget along with building rental income be earmarked and carried forward for ongoing buildings maintenance.

Cllr Birch proposed and Cllr Reynolds seconded that the residual money for this year and going forward be used for building maintenance rather than be put in the reserves.

VOTE: Unanimous

- To agree that any unspent funds from the Van budget be earmarked and carried forward for a replacement vehicle

Cllr Birch proposed and Cllr Bicknell seconded that residual amount be kept for maintenance.

VOTE: Unanimous

- To agree that any highlighted items within the budget be earmarked and carried forward to 2018/19.

Cllr Birch proposed and Cllr Battersby seconded that the items will stay within the accounting system and be earmarked for specific reasons.

VOTE: Unanimous

- To consider and approve the revenue budget
Cllr Birch reiterated that due to the unforeseen circumstances that this budget has been put together by himself, Vice Chairman and the Town Clerk and is based on known income and expenditure.
Only change is an allowance of £300 for the Chairman to be used for donations on behalf of the Council, any additional expenses on behalf of the Council.

Cllr Freeman stated how impressed he was with all the work that has gone into the budget.

Cllr Reynolds proposed to approve the revenue budget and Cllr Bicknell seconded

VOTE: Unanimous

- To agree the precept figure for 2018/19
Cllr Battersby proposed £306,269 be agreed as the precept figure. Cllr Freeman seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous

95/17 Completion of the Limited Assurance Review for the year ended 31st March 2017

- To note the completion of the review of the Annual Return by PKF Littlejohn LLP
Noted
- To note that the 'Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been published along with Annual Return Sections 1, 2 and 3 plus the attached report and certificate where possible including on the Town Council's website
Noted
- To agree the action to be taken to address the areas of weakness raised by the Internal Auditor
Cllr Birch confirmed that the Council is addressing those areas via the Jubilee Park Steering Committee under delegated power.

Cllrs Cole and Reynolds left the meeting at 9:05pm

96/17 Recommendation from Planning, Environment, PR and Open Spaces Committee

- To agree to adopt the Allotment Rules and Regulations.
Cllr Browning proposed and Cllr Mendoza seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous

Cllrs Cole and Reynolds returned to the meeting at 9:07pm

97/17 Epping Forest District Council – Local Plan Response

- To agree to submit representations to the Submission Version of the Local Plan

The document was reviewed by Councillors.

Cllr Mendoza stated the document should be reviewed by a third party consultant. Cllr Birch pointed out that the item is to agree to submit this to EFDC there is no item on the agenda to submit this to a third party consultant.

Cllr Battersby thanked members for their work but raised concern that the response was

not adequate and did not follow the guidelines. Cllr Keska agreed and also stated that the Plan needed to fulfil certain requirements i.e. is it legally compliant, sound or whether it has fulfilled the duty to cooperate. Cllr Keska also stated that there is an opportunity for representation to attend the hearings with the Inspector by the Town Council.

Cllr Mendoza stated that the Council could not spend funds on this going forward but enquired if there were some councillors that could assist with the submission. Cllrs agreed to meet to complete the required form and submit the drafted version.

Cllr Browning proposed and Cllr Cole seconded that this version be submitted.

VOTE: 8 in favour

1 against

1 abstention

The meeting closed at 9.21pm

Signed:

Dated: