



**MINUTES of
COUNCIL (ORDINARY)
16 FEBRUARY 2017**

PRESENT

Chairman	Councillor P G L Elliott
Vice-Chairman	Councillor H M Bass
Councillors	Mrs B F Acevedo, J P F Archer, E L Bamford, B S Beale MBE, R G Boyce MBE, A T Cain, Mrs P A Channer, CC, R P F Dewick, M F L Durham, CC, A S Fluker, M S Heard, Miss M R Lewis, M R Pearlman, R Pratt, CC, S J Savage, Mrs N G F Shaughnessy, Rev. A E J Shrimpton, D M Sismey, A K M St. Joseph, Mrs M E Thompson and Miss S White
Ex-Officio Non- Voting Member	

984. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES

The Chairman referred to the notices shown on the agenda.

985. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I E Dobson, Mrs H E Elliott, Mrs B D Harker, B E Harker, M W Helm and N R Pudney.

986. MINUTES - 7 DECEMBER 2016

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Minutes of the extraordinary Council meeting held on 7 December 2016.

Minute 791 – Land at Broad Street Green Road, Maypole Road and Langford Road, Great Totham / Heybridge

In response to a question, the Chief Executive clarified that the Monitoring Officer was able to appoint a number of Deputy Monitoring Officers. Currently the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officers were Ms W Morse and Ms S Jarlett.

In response to a question regarding the inclusion of a community building in the conditions to the application, the Interim Head of Planning Services advised that the Heads of Terms provided detail of this but in terms of its specific delivery he would look into this matter and report back to the Council.

Councillor R G Boyce raised a point of order that the Chairman was correct in respect of the Council Minutes being for accuracy only, but with the extraordinary Council meeting these Minutes contained a resolve and under the constitution Members were allowed to ask questions on resolves. He suggested that a different approach may need to be considered when receiving Minutes of extraordinary meetings of the Council.

The Chief Executive advised that as a point of clarity to condition 17 she had been asked to raise the following amendment by the Senior Principal Planner – Major Applications (Strategic Sites):

- 17 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings *unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority pursuant to condition 18 of this planning permission*:

This was agreed.

RESOLVED

- (ii) that subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the extraordinary Council meeting held on 7 December 2016 be approved.

987. MINUTES - 15 DECEMBER 2016

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 15 December 2016 be received.

Minute 823 – Venue of Meetings of the South Eastern Area Planning Committee

It was commented that the date in the resolution needed revising, as a report had not been considered by the South Eastern Area Planning Committee at its February meeting.

Minute 830 – Questions to the Leader of the Council in accordance with Procedure Rule 1 (3) (M)

It was noted that the last sentence of the third paragraph should read “...that there would *not be any further* debate...”.

RESOLVED

- (ii) that subject to the above amendments the Minutes of the Council held on 15 December 2016, be confirmed.

988. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D M Sismey declared a pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item 8 - Recommendations of Committees for Decision by the Council (Minute 939) as he was an employee of Goldman Sachs and would step out of the meeting for this matter. He also declared a pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Items 14 - Local Development

Plan Site Allocations Development Plan Documents, 15 – Local Development Scheme 2017 and 18 – Inspectors Post Examination Modifications to the Maldon District Local Development Plan as he owned property and land near to areas affected by the Local Development Plan (LDP) and would step out of the meeting for these items of business.

Councillor R P F Dewick advised that as per his previous declarations on the Local Development Plan he declared an interest in relation to Items 14 - Local Development Plan Site Allocations Development Plan Documents, 15 – Local Development Scheme 2017 and 18 – Inspectors Post Examination Modifications to the Maldon District Local Development Plan and informed that he would leave the meeting after agenda item 13 and not return.

Councillor Miss S White advised that she would leave the chamber when Items 14 - Local Development Plan Site Allocations Development Plan Documents, 15 – Local Development Scheme 2017 and 18 – Inspectors Post Examination Modifications to the Maldon District Local Development Plan were discussed and would not return.

Councillor Mrs P A Channer declared a non-pecuniary interest as an Essex County Councillor, specifically in relation to Agenda Item 9 2017 / 18 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, specifically reference to pensions and pooling arrangements. She also declared an interest in relation to Agenda Item 12 Support for the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme as the County Council were involved with this.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Councillor Miss White clarified that her interest was non-pecuniary regarding land she did not own and pecuniary in relation to a site that was submitted as part of the rural allocation.

Councillor R G Boyce declared a non-pecuniary interest as an Essex County Councillor, specifically in relation to Agenda Items 9 2017 / 18 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy and 12 Support for the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme.

The Chairman made reference to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 – Section 106 and the reminder set out on the agenda, and sought any declarations in relation to this. There were none.

989. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1(3)(e) and the Council's Public Question Time and Participation at Council and Committee Meetings Scheme, the Leader of the Council referred to six questions from Mr Tom Kelly and one question from Ms Rosalind Murphy of which prior notification had been given. A copy of the questions and prepared responses from the Leader of the Council were circulated to all Members and those in attendance at the meeting.

Mr Kelly read out his questions.

Question 1

“Given recent statistics, should Govt be asked to 'review' the Planning Appeals System- in particular the relationship of Planning Inspectorate to Developers?”

Response:

Yes, we recognise this concern and are currently seeking to instigate a review on this subject and in particular look to scrutinise some of the recent decisions.

Question 2

“Should Overview and Scrutiny investigate all the background to the Maldon Police Station move, in particular the P&CC statement "no decision has yet been made" but prior to which MDC had already taken steps to accommodate?”

Response:

No, the Council recognised the need to retain a police station in the town and was proactive in working with the police to look at options to relocate the service rather than lose it. The solution, which was agreed by the Finance and Corporate Services Committee presents a “win win”, retention of accessible local police services within a local community hub and effective utilisation of the Council’s assets.

The Leader of the Council added how the Council had sought to improve its assets of which the Council Offices were one, whilst keeping a Police presence within the Town of Maldon.

Question Three

“Why did MDC request payment from Healthcare Funds to permit patients use of St. Cedds site new parking spaces, as it was Public Money which had funded that Project?”

Response:

Maldon District Council as a guardian of public funds must seek to ensure that best value is achieved in all of its activities, including generating a return on the use of its assets. Services provided from the Blackwater Medical Practice are provided by a commercial provider, it is not therefore felt to be unreasonable to request a contribution from them to contribute for their customers’ use of car parking space financed from public funds.

Question Four

“Should MDC not ,in view of historical basic underfunding of the local NHS, make representations to Govt?”

Response:

The Council has already expressed its concerns at national level about the historical underfunding per capita paid into the Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group. In doing so we have demonstrated that we are sympathetic to their challenge and continue to work together closely with them in the interest of providing good quality accessible services to our residents.

Question Five

“Would this Council consider being part of a 'Question Time' public on its handling of Local issues?”

Response:

Yes the Council will consider this, subject to consideration of more detailed proposals.

Question Six

“Would members and staff participate in the Community Speedwatch activities?”

Response:

Yes, we believe this Community Speedwatch is a valuable community lead approach to reducing the risks on our roads and we will willingly promote this opportunity to our staff. The Leader of the Council added that Council staff made their own decisions upon which organisation and activities they chose to support.

Ms Murphy then read out her question.

Question seven

“Bearing in mind the Police and Crime Commissioners’ assertion in the local press ‘M&B Feb 9th 2017’, that the ‘People of Essex’ & also listed in the priorities for Essex in his website, - ‘want a local, visible & accessible Police Force’ –

Is the inaccessible District Council offices, with the narrow & congested exit routes the best positioning for the centre of Policing in this historic & sociable town? Over 700 people have signed a petition to ‘Save Our Police Station’, because it is so well placed & accessible.

There are fears for the Town, the District & beyond the District.

Thank you for considering this far reaching question from a Town & District feeling extremely vulnerable. Normally sign a petition.

There are also fears for our Historic High Street.

There is a very strong feeling that we need this visible Police presence.”

Response:

The Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) will be attending the Council Offices on the evening of Monday 27 February to provide his response to the community’s concerns re the relocation of the police station. The Leader of the Council added how the Council had responded positively and supported residents to keep a Police presence in the District.

Councillor M R Pearlman declared a pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest in relation to the Police Station as he owned property opposite.

990. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded Members of the award he instigated in 2015 for Demonstrating Pride in Your Work, something he was passionate about as it was important to recognise when an individual was particularly diligent and effective in what they did.

The Chairman commented that the nominations received for this year’s winner highlighted their dedication, professionalism and commitment to their work, in particular the repairs to the Hythe Quay. As part of their day to day role they ensured the river stayed safe for all users. The Chairman announced that the winner was Mr Nigel Harmer, River Baliff and he asked Members to join him in congratulating him. A small presentation was also made by the Chairman at this time to Mr Harmer who responded, thanking the Chairman and Members for the award.

991. RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES FOR DECISION BY THE COUNCIL

(a) REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

The Council considered the report of the Director of Resources presenting recommendations of Committees to the Council.

In light of his earlier declaration and having confirmed that there were no questions regarding the other items of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee Minutes, Councillor D M Sismey left the meeting.

Joint Standards Committee (13 January 2017)

Minute 806 – Review of Constitution affecting the Joint Standards Committee

RESOLVED

- (i) that the constitution of the Joint Standards Committee be revised to enable all its members to be party to the election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and that this takes place on the same day as the statutory annual meeting of the Council.

Minute 865 – Allegation of Misconduct

RESOLVED

- (i) that the proposal that all Members receive training on the Member / Officer Relations Protocol and the Councillor Code of Conduct and for any outcomes from the training be communicated to Parish and Town Councils be agreed.

Planning and Licensing Committee (19 January 2017)

Minute 893 – Proposal to Establish a Strategic Housing Board

RESOLVED

- (i) that a Strategic Housing Board be created with Councillors E L Bamford and R G Boyce from this Committee along with two Members appointed from each of the other programme Committees with the intention that the Board would meet quarterly;
- (ii) that the Terms of Reference for the Board be agreed once established by its Members which will also include senior officers of the Council;
- (iii) that the fundamental purpose of the Strategic Housing Board would be to consider and advise relevant committees on the Council's strategic priorities and actions for meeting the need for affordable housing and the housing need of other groups in the District.

Community Services Committee (24 January 2017)

Minute 912 – Proposal to Establish a Strategic Housing Board

RESOLVED

- (i) that a Strategic Housing Board be created with two Members appointed from each of the programme Committees with the intention that the Board will meet quarterly, that this Committee nominates Councillors Mrs B D Harker and B S Beale;
- (ii) that the Terms of Reference for the Board be agreed once established by its Members which will also include senior officers of the Council;
- (iii) that the fundamental purpose of the Strategic Housing Board would be to consider and advise relevant committees on the Council's strategic priorities and actions for meeting the need for affordable housing and the housing need of other groups in the District.

Finance and Corporate Services Committee (31 January 2017)

Minute 938 – Proposal to Establish a Strategic Housing Board

RESOLVED

- (i) that a Strategic Housing Board be created with two Members appointed from each of the programme Committees with the intention that the Board will meet quarterly, that this Committee nominates Councillors A S Fluker and Rev. A E J Shrimpton;
- (ii) that the Terms of Reference for the Board be agreed once established by its Members which will also include senior officers of the Council;
- (iii) that the fundamental purpose of the Strategic Housing Board will be to consider and advise relevant committees on the Council's strategic priorities and actions for meeting the need for affordable housing and the housing need of other groups in the District.

Minute 939 – Draft Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy

RESOLVED

- (iv) that the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy together with the embedded Prudential Indicators for 2017 / 18, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

Minute 940 – Revised 2016 / 17 and Original 2017 / 18 Budget Estimates and Council Tax 2017 / 18

Members were advised that this matter was the subject of a separate report to the Council.

Minute 943 – Disposal of Property

RESOLVED

- (v) that a budget of £40,000 for refurbishment of the premises at 99 Wood Road, Heybridge be included within the 2017 / 18 capital programme.

(b) MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

The Council noted the list of Committees that had met before and since the last meeting of the Council, up until Wednesday 8 February 2017.

Joint Standards Committee – 13 January 2017 (Minute 867 – Resumption of Meeting)

In response to a question regarding the resolution detailed on page 756 of these Minutes, Councillor Mrs M E Thompson, Chairman of the Joint Standards Committee, advised that on consideration she agreed that the last part of the resolution (from "...but it be noted...") had not formed part of the original proposal and this would be dealt with at the next meeting of the Committee.

Community Services Committee – 24 January 2017 (Minute 913 – Food Caddy Liner Supply)

In response to a question from Councillor A S Fluker as to why this matter had not been brought back to the Council for decision, Councillor R Pratt, Chairman of the Community Services Committee supported the resolution of his Committee and advised that this scheme was virtually self-funding and it was hoped that providing more caddy liners would lead to a greater volume of food recycled. Councillor M F L Durham, Chairman of the Waste Task and Finish Working Group informed Members that the funding for caddy liners was more than covered by the existing credit from Essex County Council.

Councillor Fluker referred to the Council facing a huge deficit and how the monies saved by not buying more food caddy bags could have gone into the Medium Term Financial Strategy. He requested a written response to his earlier question and the Chairman of the Council asked the Chairman of the Committee to respond to all Members.

Planning and Licensing Committee – 19 January 2017 (Minute 893 – Proposal to Establish a Strategic Housing Board)

The Leader of the Council informed Members that the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council were also included as Members of this Board. This was duly noted.

In light of comments and concerns raised by Members regarding the new 'paperless' system for receiving and considering Minutes the Chairman advised that he would request a reappraisal of the system.

Councillor Sismey returned to the chamber at this point.

992. 2017 / 18 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Council considered the reports of the Interim Director of Resources on the recommendations of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee at its meeting on 31 January 2017 relating to the revenue budget and the proposed level of Council Tax for 2017 / 18.

The Leader of the Council made a Budget speech (attached at **APPENDIX 1** to these Minutes).

Councillor D M Sismey, Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee referred to the need for Central Government to reduce its costs and how the Council had made significant reductions to the back office whilst maintaining front office services. He commented on the Council's prudent financial management and the hard work of Officers. Councillor Sismey then commended the budget to the Council.

In response to the Budget Speech, the Leader of the Opposition, Councillor B S Beale, thanked the Leader of the Council for providing him with a copy of her speech in advance. He referred to a number of areas including:

- Budget – He commented on the need for more from less, the importance of concentrating on those matters which the Council could influence and the reduction in Government support.
- Promoting businesses – Councillor Beale referred to the importance of promoting businesses into the District and how Members should assist Officers with this.
- Referring specifically to contracts and their implications he advised that better control was required along with better understanding.
- He felt that the current paperless arrangements for meetings needed to be reconsidered, particularly for meetings of the Council.
- Councillor Beale asked the Leader of the Council what protection the Council had against cyber-attack and if she felt that waste service operatives were doing a good job, making particular reference to damage to waste containers and the image this portrayed of the Council.

Councillor Beale concluded by referring to the Council's staff and their importance to the work of the Council.

In response, the Leader of the Council advised that she did feel waste service operatives were doing a good job and referred to the changes brought in by the new contract and how she had not received any complaints regarding it, nor any reports of poor service.

The Interim Director of Resources advised Members that the Budget for 2017 / 18 included figures put out by Government as the provisional finance settlement for 2017 / 18 stage. The Council was waiting for finalisation of these figures which was expected to be received around 20 February. The Director explained it was expected that any change would be marginal as the Council was tied into a four year finance settlement by the Government. On that basis, the impact of any change would be seen in the Council's reserves and would not affect the bottom line of the budget. Members were advised that the final settlement amount would be reported to the next meeting of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee.

In response to the Leaders' speech some Members offered further comment on the budget proposals to which the Leader of the Council responded, these included the following:

- The need to strengthen the Councils business rate growth, due to the forthcoming replacement of the rates support grant by business rates retention. Concern was expressed that whilst pilot business rate retention schemes were underway there was no pilot for any two tier authorities.
- Whether the Government's intention regarding business rates from renewable energy was known.
- It was commented that without strong businesses the District would not have good jobs and the need to support such businesses was reiterated. The Leader of the Council agreed that the Council had to ensure that the District was a place that retained current businesses, assisted them to prosper and attracted new businesses. She referred to the Council's Economic Prosperity Strategy and the need to develop this further.
- Concern regarding the length of time taken from time of enquiry to receipt of a response from certain areas of the Council.
- The damage to waste bins and the measures put in place by the waste operator to address issues from reoccurring.
- It was pointed out that the changes to paperless meetings had been agreed by the Council and had resulted in large cost savings. The Leader of the Council agreed with this comment but suggested that for Council meetings when dealing with Minutes of Committees that a solution might be to have the Minutes of those Committees available on display (via the projection screen) for the public as the Council went through them.

In response to a question to the Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee regarding Section 106 monies and whether they were protected and not used to subsidise the budget, Councillor Sismey advised that such monies would not be spent by the Council for its general funds and any such monies paid to the Council would be protected and were not part of the Council's budget.

It was pointed out that the website profile pages for the Council's independent Members were incorrectly showing an incorrect party logo. In response, Councillor M S Heard commented on his profile page and requested that reference to 'non-specific' be amended to read 'non-political'.

In response to the comments from Councillor Beale the Leader of the Council advised that the Finance and Corporate Services Committee was due to consider a comprehensive report at its next meeting on contracts and the procurement process as a whole. In respect of cyber-attacks Members were advised of a recent Audit undertaken and that the IT Manager was currently putting in place the recommendations it raised.

993. REVISED 2016 / 17 AND ORIGINAL 2017 / 18 BUDGET ESTIMATES AND COUNCIL TAX 2017 / 18

Following on from the Leaders' speech and in accordance with Procedure Rule No. 13 (5) the Chairman informed the Council that there would need to be a recorded vote on

any decision relating to the budget, including the setting of Council tax and levying a precept. The Chairman put the recommendations as set out in the report.

For the recommendation:

Councillors Mrs B F Acevedo, J P F Archer, E L Bamford, H M Bass, B S Beale, R G Boyce, A T Cain, Mrs P A Channer, R P F Dewick, M F L Durham, A S Fluker, M S Heard, Miss M R Lewis, M R Pearlman, R Pratt, S J Savage, Mrs M Shaughnessy, Rev. A E J Shrimpton, D M Sismey, A K M St. Joseph, Mrs M E Thompson and Miss S White.

Against the recommendation:

None.

Abstention:

Councillor P G L Elliott.

The recommendations were duly agreed.

RESOLVED

- (i) that Maldon District Council will continue to be a member of the Essex Business Rates Pool in 2017 / 18 on account of the financial benefit as described in section 3.5 of the report, be noted;
- (ii) that the decision to fund the Pension deficit in 2017 / 18 as described in section 3.7 of the report be noted;
- (iii) that the Summary Revised 2016 / 17 and Original 2017 / 18 General Fund Revenue Budget Estimates (Appendices 1 – 3 of the report) be approved;
- (iv) that an average Band D council tax of £187.37 (excluding parish precepts) (2.74% increase) for 2017 / 18 (Appendix 1 to the report) be approved;
- (v) that the detailed Fees and charges for 2017 / 18 as set out in Appendix 6 to the report be approved;
- (vi) that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive and Interim Director of Resources in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning and Licensing Committee and the Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee to agree the Land Charges fees and Charges for 2017 / 18;
- (vii) that the policies on the designated use of financial reserves (Appendix 7 to the report) be approved;
- (viii) that an increase in the minimum general fund working balance from £2,300,000 to £2,500,000 for 2017 / 18 be approved;
- (ix) that an injection of £200,000 from General Reserves into the Repairs and Renewals Reserve at 31 March 2017, be approved;
- (x) that the Capital Programme for 2017 / 18 to 2020 / 21 (Appendix 9 to the report) be approved;

- (xi) that the prudential indicators set out in section 3.12.2 and 3.12.3 of the report on the Capital Programme and Prudential Code Indicators be approved;
- (xii) that the Council gives due regard to the Interim Director of Resources statement on the robustness of budgets and adequacy of reserves in Appendix 10 to the report.

994. COUNCIL TAX 2017 / 18

The Council considered the report of the Interim Director of Resources setting out the total amount to be raised from Council Tax for the forthcoming year. This was known as the Council Tax precept (Council Tax Requirement) for Maldon District Council and formed part of the funding that supported the services provided by the Council.

The Interim Director of Resources explained the difference between the three reports and advised that this report took into account the precepts for the whole of the District and legislation set out the way that the resolution should occur. Members were advised of the following minor amendments to the report:

- that the figure on page 120 Section 3(b) should read £27,660,695 as the government grant should have been included and was not in the figure originally reported.
- that the figure shown in Section 3(e) should be rounded up to £1,383,356.

In response to a question regarding whether her earlier declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item 9 would cover all three reports (items 9a, 9b and 9c), the Chairman advised Councillor Mrs P A Channer that it would.

The Chairman informed the Council that in accordance with Procedure Rule 13 (5) this decision required a recorded vote. The Chairman put the recommendations as set out in the report with the minor amendments as outlined by the Interim Director of Resources to the Council and the voting was as follows:

For the recommendation:

Councillors Mrs B F Acevedo, J P F Archer, E L Bamford, H M Bass, B S Beale, R G Boyce, A T Cain, Mrs P A Channer, R P F Dewick, M F L Durham, A S Fluker, M S Heard, Miss M R Lewis, M R Pearlman, R Pratt, S J Savage, Mrs M Shaughnessy, Rev. A E J Shrimpton, D M Sismey, A K M St. Joseph, Mrs M E Thompson and Miss S White.

Against the recommendation:

None.

Abstention:

Councillor P G L Elliott.

The recommendations were therefore agreed.

RESOLVED

- (i) that Maldon District Council's Council Tax Requirement for 2017 / 18 is set at £4,472,307;
- (ii) that the Maldon District Council's Band D Council Tax (excluding Parish precepts) is set at £187.37, reflecting an increase of £5, all other bands being determined in accordance with the relevant Sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended;
- (iii) that the precept demands and level of Band D Council Tax of the Essex County Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex (OPCC), the Essex Fire Authority and the various Parish Councils within the District be determined as set out in the report, all other bands being determined in accordance with the relevant Sections of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended;
- (iv) that it be noted that at its meeting on 15 December 2016 the Council calculated its Council Tax Base for the year 2017/18:
- (a) for the whole district as 23,868.70 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act), as amended by the Localism Act 2011; and
- (b) for dwellings in those parts of its district to which a Parish precept relates as listed below:

Althorne	511.6
Asheldham	60.4
Bradwell-on-Sea	343.7
Burnham-on-Crouch	2,997.4
Cold Norton	482.0
Dengie	49.4
Goldhanger	282.9
Great Braxted	154.0
Great Totham	1,239.3
Hazeleigh	55.4
Heybridge	2,858.0
Langford	81.6
Latchingdon	415.3
Little Braxted	84.1
Little Totham	193.7
Maldon	5,088.7
Mayland	1,479.6
Mundon	142.5
North Fambridge	396.7
Purleigh	548.3
Southminster	1,512.8
St. Lawrence	590.2
Steeple	189.1
Stow Maries	83.8
Tillingham	403.4
Tollesbury	989.2
Tolleshunt D'arcy	422.7

Tolleshunt Knights	403.3
Tolleshunt Major	261.0
Ulting	66.0
Wickham Bishops	962.9
Woodham Mortimer	248.1
Woodham Walter	271.6
	23,868.7

- (v) that the Council Tax Requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2017 / 18 (excluding Parish precepts) is £4,472,307
- (vi) that the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2017 / 18 in accordance with new Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
- (a) £33,516,356 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils (**i.e. gross expenditure including Parish precepts**)
- (b) £27,660,693 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act (**i.e. gross income including government grants**)
- (c) £5,855,663 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax Requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act) (**i.e. Council Tax Requirement including Parish precepts**).
- (d) £245.33 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R) divided by the amount at 1(a) above (Item T), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (**i.e. average Band D Council Tax including Parish precepts**)
- (e) £1,383,356 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (**i.e. Parish Council precepts**)
- (f) £187.37 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (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 (**i.e. District Council Band D Council Tax excluding Parish precepts**).
- (g) Basic Amount of Council Tax by Parish 2017/18

Town/Parish	Local Precept £	Town/Parish Band D £	District + Town/Parish Band D £
Althorne	17,000.00	33.23	220.60
Asheldham	2,252.62	37.30	224.67
Bradwell-on-Sea	16,000.00	46.55	233.92
Burnham-on-Crouch	188,000.00	62.72	250.09
Cold Norton	25,000.00	51.87	239.24
Dengie	1,842.38	37.30	224.67
Goldhanger	7,800.00	27.57	214.94
Great Braxted	4,500.00	29.22	216.59
Great Totham	19,036.00	15.36	202.73
Hazeleigh	703.13	12.69	200.06
Heybridge	218,200.00	76.35	263.72
Langford	4,433.00	54.33	241.70
Latchingdon	41,750.00	100.53	287.90
Little Braxted	3,125.00	37.16	224.53
Little Totham	5,310.00	27.41	214.78
Maldon	331,467.00	65.14	252.51
Mayland	97,310.00	65.77	253.14
Mundon	4,250.00	29.82	217.19
North Fambridge	14,700.00	37.06	224.43
Purleigh	40,000.00	72.95	260.32
Southminster	121,600.00	80.38	267.75
St. Lawrence	21,870.00	37.06	224.43
Steeple	6,000.00	31.73	219.10
Stow Maries	6,455.00	77.03	264.40
Tillingham	33,900.00	84.04	271.41
Tollesbury	81,523.71	82.41	269.78
Tolleshunt D'arcy	19,129.00	45.25	232.62
Tolleshunt Knights	9,800.00	24.30	211.67
Tolleshunt Major	8,000.00	30.65	218.02
Ulting	3,067.00	46.47	233.84
Wickham Bishops	12,000.00	12.46	199.83
Woodham Mortimer	3,148.87	12.69	200.06
Woodham Walter	14,183.00	52.22	239.59

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Councils 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 relate.

- (h) Calculation of Basic Amounts of Council Tax by Parish for Different Valuation Bands

PARISH	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Althorne	147.06	171.58	196.09	220.60	269.62	318.65	367.66	441.20
Asheldham	149.78	174.74	199.71	224.67	274.60	324.53	374.45	449.34
Bradwell-on-Sea	155.94	181.94	207.93	233.92	285.90	337.89	389.86	467.84
Burnham-on-Crouch	166.72	194.51	222.30	250.09	305.67	361.25	416.81	500.18
Cold Norton	159.49	186.07	212.66	239.24	292.41	345.57	398.73	478.48
Dengie	149.78	174.74	199.71	224.67	274.60	324.53	374.45	449.34
Goldhanger	143.29	167.17	191.06	214.94	262.71	310.47	358.23	429.88
Great Braxted	144.39	168.46	192.52	216.59	264.72	312.86	360.98	433.18
Great Totham	135.15	157.68	180.20	202.73	247.78	292.84	337.88	405.46
Hazeleigh	133.37	155.60	177.83	200.06	244.52	288.98	333.43	400.12
Heybridge	175.81	205.11	234.42	263.72	322.33	380.93	439.53	527.44
Langford	161.13	187.99	214.84	241.70	295.41	349.13	402.83	483.40
Latchingdon	191.93	223.92	255.91	287.90	351.88	415.86	479.83	575.80
Little Braxted	149.68	174.63	199.58	224.53	274.43	324.33	374.21	449.06
Little Totham	143.18	167.05	190.91	214.78	262.51	310.24	357.96	429.56
Maldon	168.34	196.39	224.45	252.51	308.63	364.74	420.85	505.02
Mayland	168.76	196.88	225.01	253.14	309.40	365.65	421.90	506.28
Mundon	144.79	168.92	193.06	217.19	265.46	313.72	361.98	434.38
North Fambridge	149.62	174.55	199.49	224.43	274.31	324.18	374.05	448.86
Purleigh	173.54	202.47	231.39	260.32	318.17	376.02	433.86	520.64
Southminster	178.50	208.25	238.00	267.75	327.25	386.75	446.25	535.50
St. Lawrence	149.62	174.55	199.49	224.43	274.31	324.18	374.05	448.86
Steeple	146.06	170.41	194.75	219.10	267.79	316.48	365.16	438.20
Stow Maries	176.26	205.64	235.02	264.40	323.16	381.92	440.66	528.80
Tillingham	180.94	211.09	241.25	271.41	331.73	392.04	452.35	542.82
Tollesbury	179.85	209.83	239.80	269.78	329.73	389.69	449.63	539.56
Tolleshunt D'arcy	155.08	180.92	206.77	232.62	284.32	336.01	387.70	465.24
Tolleshunt Knights	141.11	164.63	188.15	211.67	258.71	305.75	352.78	423.34
Tolleshunt Major	145.34	169.57	193.79	218.02	266.47	314.92	363.36	436.04
Ulting	155.89	181.87	207.86	233.84	285.81	337.77	389.73	467.68
Wickham Bishops	133.22	155.42	177.63	199.83	244.24	288.65	333.05	399.66
Woodham Mortimer	133.37	155.60	177.83	200.06	244.52	288.98	333.43	400.12
Woodham Walter	159.72	186.35	212.97	239.59	292.83	346.08	399.31	479.18

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 2(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year, in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- (vii) that it be noted for the year 2017 / 18 the major precepting authorities have issued precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local

Government Finance Act 1992, for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as indicated in the table below:

Precepting Authority	Valuation Bands			
Essex County Council	A	£775.80	E	£1,422.30
	B	£905.10	F	£1,680.90
	C	£1,034.40	G	£1,939.50
	D	£1,163.70	H	£2,327.40
Office of Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex	A	£104.70	E	£191.95
	B	£122.15	F	£226.85
	C	£139.60	G	£261.75
	D	£157.05	H	£314.10
Essex Fire Authority	A	£46.02	E	£84.37
	B	£53.69	F	£99.71
	C	£61.36	G	£115.05
	D	£69.03	H	£138.06

- (viii) that, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2017/18 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwelling shown in Table A attached.
- (ix) that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2017/18 is not excessive in accordance with the principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended.

As the billing authority, the Council has not been notified by a major precepting authority that its relevant basic amount of Council Tax for 2016/17 is excessive and that the billing authority is not required to hold a referendum in accordance with Section 52ZK of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended.

Please see Table A overleaf.

TABLE A (DRAFT subject to final confirmation of precepts)

2017/2018 COUNCIL TAX CHARGES BY PRECEPTING AUTHORITY								
Authority	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Essex County	775.80	905.10	1,034.40	1,163.70	1,422.30	1,680.90	1,939.50	2,327.40
Essex Police	104.70	122.15	139.60	157.05	191.95	226.85	261.75	314.10
Essex Fire	46.02	53.69	61.36	69.03	84.37	99.71	115.05	138.06
Maldon District	124.91	145.73	166.55	187.37	229.01	270.65	312.28	374.74
Althorne	1,073.58	1,252.52	1,431.45	1,610.38	1,968.24	2,326.11	2,683.96	3,220.76
Asheldham	1,076.30	1,255.68	1,435.07	1,614.45	1,973.22	2,331.99	2,690.75	3,228.90
Bradwell-on-Sea	1,082.46	1,262.88	1,443.29	1,623.70	1,984.52	2,345.35	2,706.16	3,247.40
Burnham-on-Crouch	1,093.24	1,275.45	1,457.66	1,639.87	2,004.29	2,368.71	2,733.11	3,279.74
Cold Norton	1,086.01	1,267.01	1,448.02	1,629.02	1,991.03	2,353.03	2,715.03	3,258.04
Dengie	1,076.30	1,255.68	1,435.07	1,614.45	1,973.22	2,331.99	2,690.75	3,228.90
Goldhanger	1,069.81	1,248.11	1,426.42	1,604.72	1,961.33	2,317.93	2,674.53	3,209.44
Great Braxted	1,070.91	1,249.40	1,427.88	1,606.37	1,963.34	2,320.32	2,677.28	3,212.74
Great Totham	1,061.67	1,238.62	1,415.56	1,592.51	1,946.40	2,300.30	2,654.18	3,185.02
Hazeleigh	1,059.89	1,236.54	1,413.19	1,589.84	1,943.14	2,296.44	2,649.73	3,179.68
Heybridge	1,102.33	1,286.05	1,469.78	1,653.50	2,020.95	2,388.39	2,755.83	3,307.00
Langford	1,087.65	1,268.93	1,450.20	1,631.48	1,994.03	2,356.59	2,719.13	3,262.96
Latchingdon	1,118.45	1,304.86	1,491.27	1,677.68	2,050.50	2,423.32	2,796.13	3,355.36
Little Braxted	1,076.20	1,255.57	1,434.94	1,614.31	1,973.05	2,331.79	2,690.51	3,228.62
Little Totham	1,069.70	1,247.99	1,426.27	1,604.56	1,961.13	2,317.70	2,674.26	3,209.12
Maldon	1,094.86	1,277.33	1,459.81	1,642.29	2,007.25	2,372.20	2,737.15	3,284.58
Mayland	1,095.28	1,277.82	1,460.37	1,642.92	2,008.02	2,373.11	2,738.20	3,285.84
Mundon	1,071.31	1,249.86	1,428.42	1,606.97	1,964.08	2,321.18	2,678.28	3,213.94
North Fambridge	1,076.14	1,255.49	1,434.85	1,614.21	1,972.93	2,331.64	2,690.35	3,228.42
Purleigh	1,100.06	1,283.41	1,466.75	1,650.10	2,016.79	2,383.48	2,750.16	3,300.20
Southminster	1,105.02	1,289.19	1,473.36	1,657.53	2,025.87	2,394.21	2,762.55	3,315.06
St. Lawrence	1,076.14	1,255.49	1,434.85	1,614.21	1,972.93	2,331.64	2,690.35	3,228.42
Steeple	1,072.58	1,251.35	1,430.11	1,608.88	1,966.41	2,323.94	2,681.46	3,217.76
Stow Maries	1,102.78	1,286.58	1,470.38	1,654.18	2,021.78	2,389.38	2,756.96	3,308.36
Tillingham	1,107.46	1,292.03	1,476.61	1,661.19	2,030.35	2,399.50	2,768.65	3,322.38
Tollesbury	1,106.37	1,290.77	1,475.16	1,659.56	2,028.35	2,397.15	2,765.93	3,319.12
Tolleshunt D'arcy	1,081.60	1,261.86	1,442.13	1,622.40	1,982.94	2,343.47	2,704.00	3,244.80
Tolleshunt Knights	1,067.63	1,245.57	1,423.51	1,601.45	1,957.33	2,313.21	2,669.08	3,202.90
Tolleshunt Major	1,071.86	1,250.51	1,429.15	1,607.80	1,965.09	2,322.38	2,679.66	3,215.60
Ulting	1,082.41	1,262.81	1,443.22	1,623.62	1,984.43	2,345.23	2,706.03	3,247.24
Wickham Bishops	1,059.74	1,236.36	1,412.99	1,589.61	1,942.86	2,296.11	2,649.35	3,179.22
Woodham Mortimer	1,059.89	1,236.54	1,413.19	1,589.84	1,943.14	2,296.44	2,649.73	3,179.68
Woodham Walter	1,086.24	1,267.29	1,448.33	1,629.37	1,991.45	2,353.54	2,715.61	3,258.74

995. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2017 / 18 TO 2020 / 21

The Council considered the report of the Interim Director of Resources presenting the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017 / 18 to 2020 / 21 (attached as Appendix A to the report) for approval by the Council.

Councillor A S Fluker raised concern regarding the progression of the project relating to the Caravan Site at Riverside Park, Burnham-on-Crouch. He outlined some detail

relating to the project and the tender process and requested that the Interim Director of Resources meet with him to move the project forward. Councillor Fluker then proposed that the recommendation as set out in the report be agreed. This was duly agreed.

RESOLVED that the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017 / 18 to 2020 / 21 be approved.

996. QUESTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROCEDURE RULE 6 (2) OF WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

There were none.

997. CORPORATE PLAN, KEY ACTIVITIES, INDICATORS AND TARGETS 2017 / 18

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive seeking Council's approval of the proposed Corporate Activities, Performance Indicators and Targets for 2017 / 18 and for their inclusion in the annual update to the Corporate Plan (2015 – 19).

The key corporate activities proposed for 2017 / 18 were attached as Appendix 1 to the report and new activities were set out in the report along with those 2016 / 17 activities not being carried forward. Appendix 2 to the report set out the indicators / measures and proposed targets. An update to the Corporate Plan (2015 - 19) was also proposed and set out in Appendix 3.

The Leader of the Council advised that having looked at the plan she had a number of concerns and in light of the business rate element looming, thought the Council should take an extra cycle to look at its goals, outcomes and how it may wish to progress them. She highlighted a number of areas where she felt further review was required. The Leader proposed that approval of the Corporate Plan be deferred for a cycle to drill down and give Officers a clear vision and some strategy so that they could show Members how they were going to deliver it.

Some concern was raised in response to the proposal. Councillor Mrs P A Channer seconded the proposal and also commented on the corporate plan making reference to consultation responses awaited from the Department for Communities and Local Government and other important documents which were coming forward. Councillor Mrs Channer declared an interest at this point as she was an Essex County Councillor.

The Chairman then put the vote in the name of the Leader of the Council to the Council. Upon a vote being taken this was duly agreed.

RESOLVED that approval of the 2017 / 18 Key Corporate Activities, Indicators / Measurers and targets and Update of the Corporate Plan (2015 – 19) be deferred to the next meeting of the Council to allow time to drill down and give Officers a clear vision and some strategy that they can show Members how they were going to deliver it.

998. SUPPORT FOR THE VULNERABLE PERSONS RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME

The Council considered the report of the Chief Executive seeking Members' views about the extent to which they wished to support various Refugee Resettlement Schemes and the Asylum Dispersal Scheme, including financial regulations.

It was noted that the Home Office had approached all Local Authorities to pledge support for two schemes to resettle Refugees that were currently outside the UK, and a third scheme to house Asylum Seekers that have already entered the UK. The report provided further detail of these schemes.

Members were informed that an offer of accommodation had been made which would be suitable to meet the needs of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. The timetable for the next arrival of families in June 2017 required the Council to give an early indication of whether it wished to continue to explore this offer of accommodation.

The Leader of the Council presented the report and advised how, because of the amount of interest within the Town, she had been working with the Interim Director of Resources and Customers Manager to identify alternative sources of funding. She did not feel that any shortfall should come from the Council, but that the Council should act in a leadership role with the funding being sourced from elsewhere e.g. crowd-funding. The Leader referred to the high level of public interest in this matter and provided an update as to how many families had been housed in other Districts / Boroughs. The Leader of the Council proposed that recommendation (i) be agreed but the Council states it would not meet any shortfall but act in a leadership role to look at sourcing funding for this from another source and potentially set up, oversee and facilitate a crowd-funding scheme.

In response to a question, the Chief Executive clarified the accommodation that had been offered was not rent free but it had been heavily discounted. The Customers Manager advised that the housing benefit scheme could meet the rent proposed but a benefit cap, resulting from a change made by central government, would mean that any families total benefits and income would be capped to a certain level. The impact of this cap would be applied to housing benefit entitlement and therefore there was potential financial implications for the Council.

A debate ensued. In response to a request the Leader of the Council clarified that she was proposing that the Council agree recommendation (i) but that the Council would not meet any financial deficit, retain within the recommendations the proposal that the Home Office provides assurance that there will be no financial costs to the Council and add a recommendation detailing that the Council in the interim takes a leadership role and continues to work with churches and other interested parties to investigate other sources of funding and the potential for a crowd funding initiative.

It was suggested that 'in principle' referred to in the first recommendation should be changed to 'non-financial interest and support'. This was supported. Some concern was raised regarding the financial impact to the Council through Officer time / resources and further information was provided by the Leader of the Council in response.

Following a request from the Chairman, the Leader of the Council reiterated her proposal as follows:

- (i) that the Council pledge a non-financial interest and support for:
 - a. the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme
 - b. the Wider Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (Refugee families from a wider area, including Middle East and North Africa)
 - c. the National Asylum Dispersal Scheme
- (ii) that the Home Office be asked to provide assurance that there will be no direct financial cost to the Council in respect of families being placed in the District under the schemes at (i).
- (iii) that the Council in the interim takes a leadership role and continues to work with churches and other interested parties to investigate other sources of funding and the potential for a crowd funding initiative

This proposal was duly seconded and upon a vote being taken agreed.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the Council pledge a non-financial interest and support for:
 - a. the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme
 - b. the Wider Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (Refugee families from a wider area, including Middle East and North Africa)
 - c. the National Asylum Dispersal Scheme
- (ii) that the Home Office be asked to provide assurance that there will be no direct financial cost to the Council in respect of families being placed in the District under the schemes at (i).
- (iii) that the Council in the interim takes a leadership role and continues to work with churches and other interested parties to investigate other sources of funding and the potential for a crowd funding initiative.

999. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2016 / 17 AND 2017 / 18

The Council considered and agreed a number of revisions to the 2016 / 17 and 2017 / 18 Schedules of Meetings as set out on the agenda.

RESOLVED that the following revisions to the 2016 / 17 and 2017 / 18 Schedules of Meetings be agreed:

- To bring forward the date of the April 2017 meeting of the Council from 6 April to 5 April 2017 due to the known unavailability of a number of Members.

- To remove the meeting of the Audit Committee scheduled for 15 February 2018 as not required.
- To bring forward the date of the 2018 statutory annual meeting of the Council from 17 May to 10 May 2018. Given that elections are not due to be held in May 2018 this revision will assist the scheduling of meetings for 2018 / 19.

1000. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN SITE ALLOCATIONS DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

In light of their earlier declarations of interest Councillors J P F Archer, A T Cain, R P F Dewick, D M Sismey and Miss S White left the meeting at this point and did not return.

The Council considered the report of the Interim Head of Planning Services setting out the key recommendations from the Planning and Licensing Committee on the preparation of a Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD).

The report set out the resolutions from the Planning and Licensing Committee meeting on 19 January 2017 where it was endorsed that the need for a DPD had passed due to the passage of time and change in circumstances.

The report provided Members with detailed information regarding the:

- Local Development Plan (LDP);
- Planning Policy Framework;
- Task and Finish Working Groups;
- Site Allocations DPD, including Gypsy and Traveller DPD, Rural Housing Allocations and Employment Allocations;
- Implications for the LDP.

Members were reminded that at the time of the pre-submission LDP there was considerable merit in the production of DPDs to allocate sites for Gypsy and Travellers and rural housing and employment. At this time sites had not been identified, nor were any planning consents in place on sites which could contribute towards the overall targets. Since then planning permission had been granted for a significant proportion of the requirements within Policies S2 and E1. Members were advised that a consequence of this was that the small number of sites required did not justify preparation of a DPD.

RESOLVED that the Council does not proceed with the preparation of a Site Allocation Development Plan Document.

1001. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2017

The Council considered the report of the Interim Head of Planning Services, seeking Members endorsement of an update to the Local Development Scheme (LDS) (attached as Appendix A to the report) following the recent Examination in Public (EiP) into the Maldon District Local Development Plan (LDP). The new LDS would replace the updated document approved by the Planning and Licensing Committee in March 2015 and take into consideration the revised timetable for the progression of the LDP and other planning policy documents.

The report provided detailed background information regarding the LDS and Officers highlighted the revisions proposed.

RESOLVED that the revised Local Development Scheme be approved.

1002. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following urgent item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

1003. INSPECTORS POST EXAMINATION MODIFICATIONS TO THE MALDON DISTRICT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Council received the report of the Interim Head of Planning Services, setting out the draft Post Examination Modifications to the Maldon District Local Development Plan (LDP) (attached at Appendix A to the report).

It was noted that the Modifications formed the next stage in the preparation and finalisation of the LDP and were designed to make the Plan sound. The modifications were being made at the request of the Planning Inspector and in response to the Matters, Issues and Questions issued in November 2016 and the subsequent Examination Hearings held between 10 and 19 January 2017.

Members were advised that the Inspector had to agree the modification and currently had sent the Council his initial comments, including some suggested wording changes and had requested further information prior to agreeing the modifications.

RESOLVED that the Modifications to the Local Development Plan be noted and when the Modifications are approved by the Inspector that they be published for a six week period of public consultation.

Appendix 1

There being no further items of business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.52 pm.

P G L ELLIOTT
CHAIRMAN

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Leader's Budget Speech – 16 February 2017

Mr Chairman, Members of the Council, it is my responsibility and privilege as Leader of the Council to present the proposed budget for the year 2017 / 18, commencing on 1 April 2017.

The budget before us this evening is the result of a process was started in the summer of 2016. In this time of national austerity and international change Officers and Members have worked hard together to achieve a balanced budget which would protect our front-line services from cuts whilst maintaining the quality of service our residents deserve. This budget, I can proudly say, has not come about by accident or good luck but rather by strong and disciplined financial management, hours of discussion and a close eye on our Districts priorities.

It is widely known that Local Government has been hit harder than virtually any other part of the public sector as a result of the austerity programme introduced by national government, in answer to the 2008 financial crisis.

The reality is that this Council's core funding from Central Government will have been reduced by 51% (£1.25m) in the period 2015 / 16 to 2019 / 20.

This is a sizeable sum for our district council to absorb year on year. But that is exactly what this Council has done through sound, disciplined and prudent financial management (whilst protecting and maintaining front-line services).

Even in this difficult financial environment, we have invested in our services and we continue to do so. Our capital programme in 2017 / 18 amounts to £950k, and includes key improvements to our assets. We have supplemented this by punching above our weight and successfully bidding for funds such as £300k from the Coastal Communities Fund for the Dengie Gateway Project for example. This has not only provided improved access to our coastline and the wider district but also funded the development of our new tourist website, benefits from which have already contributed to an increase of 140,000 day visitors as reported by the latest Visit Essex Volume and Value Survey. Many of our businesses rely on tourism and the total visitor spend in the Maldon District now equates to over £155m and adds £189m value to the local economy which is an increase of 3.5% on last year.

The Council also secured £50k from the Coastal Revival Fund with which we have commissioned a Historic Waterfront Review to compliment the Maldon and Heybridge Master Plan, due to go out to public consultation very soon.

In addition to enjoying this benefit now, these successes allow the Council to access and match other external funding to progress additional work which will ultimately lead to greater long term security and prosperity for local businesses as well as generally boosting the visitor economy.

We are also actively engaging and working with EDF Energy and Chinese partners CGN identify opportunities, ways to maximise the benefit from the development of a new nuclear power station at Bradwell in terms of local employment and procurement and in creating training opportunities for new worker entrants and up-skilling existing workers in our District.

This Council continues as always to seek to provide valued, cost effective services. Our new waste collection contract which commenced in the summer of 2016 has bedded in well and we have collected an additional 900 tonnes of recyclable waste to be diverted away from landfill. In the first six months of operation with our new partners Places for People our £2m investment in

the Blackwater and Dengie Hundred leisure centres we have seen an increase of usage and participation in physical activity of 13% overall.

As a Council, our Corporate Plan sets out how we will deliver our vision and goals for our District. Our business and resident communities are at the heart of the Plan, a plan that sets the basis upon which the allocation of our resources and supporting strategies and policies including this budget planning, stem from.

Last year, I set out the three significant priority areas that we should underpin at all times and these are:

- The people who live in the District and the visitors.
- The people who rely on the services we provide, in particular the vulnerable.
- Our staff and how we support them in their daily endeavours to provide good quality, cost effective and valued services with reducing resources.

As I said earlier the budget before us this evening is the result of months of hard work, careful planning, and discussion, occasional disagreements but always to work towards a solution to provide the best outcomes for the whole of the Maldon District.

Throughout the coming year 2017/18 the Council's finances will continue to come under severe pressure and our core grant will be reduced by 19% (£363k). Further reductions of 25% (£405k) by 2019 / 20 are expected. Overall the Council will suffer reductions of 52% (£1.262m) in the period 2015 / 16 to 2019 / 20. This is worse than the England average reduction of 32% and shire District average reduction of 44%.

This makes the job of managing the Council's finances more difficult each year by year and yet the Net Cost of Services is currently running £173k (1.9%) lower than in 2016 / 17.

The Government has recognised the financial pressures on District Council's and I have already explained the disproportionate cuts absorbed by District Councils to date. As a result the government is allowing us the flexibility to increase our Council Tax by £5.00 before a referendum is triggered. We are proposing to use this £5 increase our Band D council Tax which amounts to around nine pence per week in real terms. We are not proposing this increase lightly and I believe the Council Tax charge from this Council represents excellent value for money for the wide range of good, quality services we provide.

Our activity does not end there however. We will soon have a comprehensive Transformation vision and programme for the way we work and deliver our services underpinned by newly worked Workforce Development, Customers and Information and Communications Technology Strategies. This provides the wherewithal that allows the Council to achieve our Corporate Goals, delivering our Corporate Plan. More will be heard about this later in the meeting.

Going forward, the Council will continue to plan for savings of £1.04m before the end of the decade to close the gap between what our forecasts show is the level of resources we need to deliver the services we will have. Any additional projects will have to be funded over and above this and we do not intend to be complacent. It is our intention that the budget setting process will be starting early again next year and as your elected Members we continue to have a vital role to play in shaping our spending priorities, meeting our ambitions, retaining our Districts unique character to make the Maldon District a better place to live, work and enjoy for us and our families and for future generations.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to Councillor Sismey's leadership of the Finance committee for their role in this budget, together with both the previous Director of Resources and our current Interim Director of Resources Mr. Kamal Mehta who has shown remarkable resolve in getting to know this District, it's priorities and pressure points. Tonight, he is my favourite Honorary Maldonian. Together their advice and guidance in the ever complex and changing world of local government finance has been essential but freely given, thank you.

Chairman, I commend this budget to Council.

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