

BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

Minutes of a meeting of the Borough of Telford & Wrekin held on Thursday, 7 March, 2013 at 6.30 p.m. at Telford College of Arts & Technology, Wellington, Telford.

PRESENT:

Councillors K.R. Guy (Mayor), S. Bentley, K.T. Blundell, S.P. Burrell, E.J. Carter, E.A. Clare, D.G. Davies, S. Davies, N.A. Dugmore, C.B.A. Elliott, A.R.H. England, N.A.M. England, R.C. Evans, I.T.W. Fletcher, V.A. Fletcher, G.M. Green, T.J. Hope, M.B. Hosken, M.G. Ion, A.S. Jhawar, R.T. Kiernan, A. Lawrence, J. Loveridge, A.A. Mackenzie, C.N. Mason, A.D. McClements, W.A.M. McClements, J.C. Minor, C.P.R. Mollett, L.A. Murray, R.A. Overton, F.R. Picken, J. Pinter, G.C.W. Reynolds, S.A.W. Reynolds, H. Rhodes, K.S. Sahota (Leader), R.G. Scammell, J.M. Seymour, R.J. Sloan, C.F. Smith, M.J. Smith, B.J. Thompson, K.L. Tomlinson, W.L. Tomlinson, C.R. Turley and D.R.W. White.

70. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24 January 2013, be confirmed and signed by the Mayor.

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors R.K. Austin, F.M. Bould, A.J. Eade, E.J. Greenaway, A.A. Meredith, A.J. Stanton and P.R. Watling

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor F.R. Picken declared a general personal interest in agenda item 8 – Service & Financial Planning 2013/14 – 2015/16 – in relation to any matter concerning Wrekin Housing Trust

Councillor S. Bentley declared an interest in agenda item 13b) – Notice of Motion – and stated that he would withdraw from the meeting during consideration of that item.

73. LEADER'S REPORT & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed Councillor Jane Pinter to her first meeting following her election to the Council in the recent by-election in the Dawley Magna ward.

The principal business to be conducted at this Council meeting was the Budget for 2013/14, which would be focussed on the Council's priorities for creating more jobs in the Borough and supporting young people. As a business winning Council, the recently opened First Point for Business would provide co-ordinated support to both new and existing businesses, and reference was made to a recent major plastic industries event at the International Centre, which had attracted 6,500 visitors to the Borough. A recent survey in the West Midlands had shown Telford & Wrekin to be the second best place for business, and there had been a record level

of new companies starting up in the Borough in the last 12 months – representing a 16% rise over the previous year. In terms of supporting young people to find work, the Council had now reached its target of employing 100 apprentices within the organisation.

The Leader also referred to the work that had taken place in Priorslee to secure the former Celestica site for a new Secondary school, following concerns that had been raised by local residents about the site that was originally proposed. A significant new Co-operative Council initiative to be launched in April was the issuing of a Telford Loyalty Card to every household in the Borough. The Card was designed to encourage more people to 'shop local', and would offer card-holders discounts on Council leisure activities and through participating businesses. The Leader also paid tribute to the winter highways maintenance teams who had been hard at work during the recent cold weather.

74. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor also welcomed Councillor Pinter to her first meeting, and invited her to say a few words. Councillor Pinter paid tribute to the late Councillor Brian Duce whom she had succeeded as Ward Member for Dawley Magna, and thanked the voters in that ward for putting their trust in her.

The Mayor thanked Telford College of Arts & Technology for hosting this particular Council meeting, and for their co-operation in setting-up the meeting room.

The Mayor referred to his list of engagements over the last month, which included the Ground Breaking ceremony for the new Women and Children Unit at the Princess Royal Hospital. He also paid tribute to 9 year old Jayden-Lee McIvor who had been tragically killed in a road accident in Hadley, and that everyone's thoughts were with his family.

75. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None received.

76. CABINET DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

Members received the report on the Cabinet decisions made since the last meeting of the Council on 24 January, 2013.

(Councillor T.J. Hope left the meeting at 6.42pm)

77. SERVICE & FINANCIAL PLANNING 2013/14 - 2015-16

Prior to discussion of this item the Chief Executive reminded Members that section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 placed limitations on voting on the setting of Council Tax for the forthcoming year by any Member who was at least 2 months in arrears in the payment of outstanding Council Tax. Any Member in this situation would also be required to disclose the fact that this section of the Act applied to them. No disclosures were made by Members.

Councillor W.A.M. McClements, Cabinet Member for Resources & Service Delivery, presented a series of reports of the Managing Director, the Assistant Director: Finance, Audit & Information Governance (Chief Financial Officer) and the Assistant Directors for Development, Business & Housing and for Environment & Leisure Services. The reports, detailing the Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and the Formal Council Tax resolutions, formed the Council's overall Medium Term Service & Financial Planning framework, and identified the service priorities and budget for 2013/14 as well as savings proposals to be delivered over the next three years, and a medium term capital programme. The proposals had been considered by Cabinet on 28th February 2013 and recommended to Council for approval. He thanked Officers for preparing the budget against a backdrop of such financial constraint, and thanked all those people who had taken part in the budget consultation exercise.

The Overview and Revenue Budget report set out the pressures facing the Council, including projected grant cuts of around £40m in real terms, reduced income from having a relatively low council tax, increasing numbers of older people needing adult care services, the impact of the PCT's withdrawal of funding for Continuing Healthcare cases and the resulting costs on the Council, the impact of the economic recession and inflation, and the repayment of debt incurred in respect of past capital investment decisions.

The report also outlined the actions already being taken to meet the financial challenges, including reducing the number of senior managers, cost savings of 35% in "back-office" functions, a strong focus on procurement to deliver savings, a rationalisation of operational buildings across the Borough, and the provision of services through shared or partnership arrangements with other local authorities and agencies. Following publication of the Cabinet's budget proposals in January 2013, there had been extensive consultation via a wide range of media and settings to involve local people and allow them to express their views. In total, 1,539 people were involved with the consultation programme, and the full findings/responses were appended to the report. Among the key results, were broad support for the Council's plans to encourage jobs, growth and protection of services, as well as support for the Council's campaign for a Fair Deal for government funding. A key part of the budget was to bring growth and jobs into the Borough to mitigate against the failure of national Government to generate economic growth. It was estimated that around £250m per year was being taken out of the local economy due to the lack of growth and the impact of cuts on benefits and incomes. In order to boost the local economy, investment would be made in a number of projects that would ensure the future prosperity of the area and its residents. This included continued investment in the Southwater redevelopment scheme in the Town Centre; the building of new schools as part of the BSF programme; the land stability work to protect the Ironbridge Gorge – the area's biggest tourist attraction; making it easier for businesses to come to the Borough and grow; a new £1m Commercial & Business Fund for investing in new commercial initiatives as a means of generating profits to support the provision of existing services under threat from reductions in Government funding; and continued regeneration of areas such as Brookside, Hadley and Oakengates.

As much as possible was being done to protect key front-line services through working co-operatively with residents, town and parish councils, and other partners.

Since the draft budget proposals were approved for consultation, the Government had issued the final settlement for 2013/14, and the forecast budget gap for 2013/14 was restated to £7.106m to reflect this and other changes. The overspend on children's safeguarding had risen to £3.1m, and it was considered prudent to create a one-off additional budget contingency of £1.3m for safeguarding, following robust modelling of the projected costs based on the latest placement information and the likely impact that the Safeguarding and Early Help Cost Improvement Plan would have on identifying savings. The funding would only be released following a review and approval process by Cabinet. It was also anticipated that further redundancy costs would be incurred during 2013/14 as a result of the on-going need for savings, and it was therefore being recommended that £1.219m be transferred to the severance fund.

In terms of council tax, the consultation on the budget strategy had indicated broad support for a moderate, below inflation increase in order to reduce the levels of cuts to services. It was therefore proposed to increase council tax by 1.9% for 2013/14. The Government had offered a short-term grant if council tax was frozen, but it was considered that the soundest option was to decline this offer in order to make the budget more sustainable over following years and avoid some of the most damaging cuts.

An equality impact analysis of the overall impact of the budget was appended to the report, along with environmental and economic impact assessments.

The Council's Chief Financial Officer was required to give a view on the robustness of the Council's financial strategy, including the use of balances, and this was appended to the report. This had concluded that the Council was pursuing a sound financial strategy in the context of the most difficult financial position it had ever faced.

The report on the Capital Programme presented the Council's Capital Strategy for 2013/14 – 2015/16 and later years and a capital programme of £287.306m that included the proposed investments contained in the overall budget strategy. Details of the major projects and investments to be resourced were annexed to the report. It also set out the Council's Asset Management Plan and planned building maintenance programme, particularly focusing on 2013/14, and the three year Highways and Transport capital investment programme.

The report on the Treasury Management Strategy detailed the Treasury Strategy to be adopted for 2013/14. The Strategy was set within the parameters of the latest guidance and accounting standards. It was expected the Council would borrow £3.4m in 2013/14 and would adopt a flexible approach, with consideration given to affordability, maturity profile of existing debt, interest rate and refinancing risk, as well as borrowing source. Where possible, maturing investments would be used to reduce the level of additional borrowing, and investment periods would be lengthened for new investments in order to achieve higher interest rates within acceptable risk parameters. The report also provided an update on the treasury

management activities during 2012/13. The weighted average return on internal investments at the end of December 2012 was 3.9% compared to a benchmark return for the period of 0.51%.

The report on Prudential Indicators sought approval of the prudential indicators for 2013/14 to 2015/16 required under the Prudential Code of Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

The report on Council Tax set out the formal resolutions to determine the levels of Council Tax for Telford & Wrekin Council for 2013/14. The levels of tax took account of the precept requirements of the West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner, Shropshire & Wrekin Fire Authority and the various Town and Parish Councils.

Councillor McClements commended the Budget to the Council, and moved all the recommendations in appendices D1 to D5. This was seconded by the Leader.

Councillor A. Lawrence, on behalf of the Conservative Group, told Members that although there were some good points, such as the measures to attract and support both new and existing businesses and for the stabilisation work in the Ironbridge Gorge, his Group would be opposing the proposed Budget. There was concern at the reduction in the number of school places, and at the proposal to increase Council Tax. The failure to accept the Government's grant to enable Council Tax to be frozen would hit local people's pockets this year, and risked further reductions in grant from Government in future years. There was concern at the impact the Safeguarding budget was having on overall Council finances, and that expenditure in this area was not under proper control. It was also considered that, while spending on highways had increased, it was not at a sufficient rate to meet the promises that had been made by the ruling Administration.

Councillor W.L. Tomlinson, leader of the Liberal Democrat/Independent Group, reflected on the detrimental effect that cuts in revenue grant funding and the loss of further grant through the damping mechanism/undercounting of the population would have on the Council and its services. On balance, his Group supported the proposed Council Tax increase, which would help to protect services for the most vulnerable. In term of expenditure on Children's services, it was accepted that this was demand-led, but he suggested that Scrutiny arrangements could be amended by establishing a Scrutiny Committee to specifically focus on Children's Safeguarding and to monitor the costs. But overall, he generally welcomed the main budget proposals.

A number of other Members spoke both for and against the proposed budget.

Councillor McClements, in response, highlighted where national economic and welfare policies impacted on the Borough and its residents. The example of Shropshire Council freezing Council Tax had been raised, but it needed to be remembered that they had a higher overall Council Tax, higher property values and less reduction in Government grant than Telford & Wrekin. He also responded to specific points regarding provision of a waste bulking station, and commented that the figures provided by Opposition members in support of this provision were not credible.

RESOLVED -

(i) Overview and Revenue Budget 2013/14 – 2015/16

- (a) that the base budget summarised by Service Delivery Unit in Appendix 9a be approved;**
- (b) that the feedback from consultation summarised in Appendix 5 and from scrutiny in Appendix 6 of the report be noted;**
- (c) that an increase of 1.9% in council tax levels in 2013/14 (32 pence per week for the average property in the Borough) and a strategy of increasing council tax by 1.9% in the following two years in order to maintain financial stability and to help protect the delivery of front-line services be approved;**
- (d) that the creation of a £1.3m contingency fund to offset pressures in the safeguarding budget, and potentially the adult services budget following the transfer of young people to semi-independent living be approved. This contingency to be held centrally and only allocated after consideration by Cabinet;**
- (e) that the 2013/14 net savings package of £8.611m detailed in Appendix 3, and the savings proposals set out in the appendix for future years, be approved;**
- (f) that the transfer of £1.219m to the severance fund as detailed in the report be approved;**
- (g) that the earmarking of £2.5m underspends in 2012/13 as a one-off budget contingency for 2013/14 be approved. This amount may be increased further should the Council underspend at the end of 2012/13 as currently projected;**
- (h) that the Education budget position set out in section 18 of the report be noted;**
- (i) that the statement of the Chief Finance Officer in section 11 (supported by Appendix 14 outlining the robustness of the Budget Estimates and the Adequacy of Reserves) be approved;**
- (j) that the policy framework for Reserves and Balances outlined in Appendix 10 of the report be approved;**
- (k) that the revenue implications of the medium term capital programme for the period 2012/13 - 2015/16 set out in the Capital Programme report be noted;**
- (l) that the Council's Pay Policy Statement, as shown at appendix 11 of the report, be approved;**

- (m) that, subject to the savings proposals being accepted, the updated Care & Support Community Care Policy & Procedure Document shown at Appendix 12b (amended to reflect the savings) be approved;**
- (n) that the Impact Assessments contained in Appendices 4a to 4d be noted;**
- (o) that the Safeguarding and Early Help Cost Improvement Plan contained in Appendix 2 be approved;**
- (p) that the Care & Support savings proposals and Public Health budget proposals contained in Appendices 12a, 13a and 13b be approved;**
- (q) that Telford & Wrekin's global Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme reduction be confirmed at 21% in line with the provisional agreement at full Council in November 2012;**
- (r) that a one-off sum of £0.065m be earmarked to award discretionary discounts in cases of extreme financial hardship arising from the introduction of the LCTS scheme;**
- (s) that the deferment of auto-enrolment in the local government pension scheme for existing employees until 30th September 2016 be approved;**
- (t) that authority be delegated to the Managing Director, after consultation with the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Resources & Service Delivery, to approve any expenditure to be funded from the £1m Capital "Commercial and Business Fund" and the £0.15m "Destination Telford" revenue budget;**
- (u) that, in recognition of our valued relationship with Town and Parish Councils and in line with our cooperative working principles, the full amount of LCTS grant attributable to Town and Parish Councils is passed on to them, reflecting the incidence of LCTS scheme claimants. In future years, the quantum of the grant to be devolved will be changed in line with the year on year percentage change in the Council's Revenue Support Grant and the allocation between Town & Parish Councils will be updated annually to reflect changes in the incidence of LCTS scheme claimants;**

(ii) Capital Programme

- (a) that the Capital Programme and associated capital estimates and variations for 2012/13 and 2013/14 – 2015/16, which incorporate the Capital Strategy, the Planned Building Maintenance Programme, the Asset Management Plan and the three year Highways & Transport capital investment programme, be approved.**

(iii) 2012/13 Treasury Strategy and Treasury Update

- (a) that the treasury management activities for the first half year be noted;**
- (b) that the updated Treasury Management Policy Statement, as shown at Appendix A of the report, be approved;**
- (c) that the Treasury Strategy, including the Annual Investment Strategy for 2013/14, together with the associated Treasury prudential indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, be approved.**

(iv) Prudential Indicators

- (a) that the prudential indicators for 2013/14 to 2015/16, as set out in the report, be approved.**

(v) Council Tax – Formal Resolution for 2013/14

(l) That it be noted that at its meeting on 24 January 2013 the Council calculated the following amounts for the year 2013/14 in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 made under Section 33 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended (The Act):-

- (a) 43,216.7 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 (The Regulations), as its Council Tax base for the year (The Council Tax Base).**

**(b) Part of the Council's Area
Tax Base**

The Parish of:-

CHETWYND	228.9
CHETWYND ASTON & WOODCOTE	165.3
CHURCH ASTON	467.3
DAWLEY HAMLETS	1,953.2
EDGMOND	505.5
ERCALL MAGNA	530.5
THE GORGE	1,203.1
GREAT DAWLEY	2,210.7
HADLEY & LEEGOMERY	3,499.5
HOLLINSWOOD & RANDLAY	1,246.2
KETLEY	989.0
KYNNERSLEY	70.2
LAWLEY & OVERDALE	1,908.7
LILLESALL & DONNINGTON	3,906.9

LITTLE WENLOCK	223.8
MADELEY	3,517.2
NEWPORT	3,295.7
OAKENGATES	2,034.3
PRESTON	96.4
RODINGTON	323.8
ST. GEORGES & PRIORSLEE	3,479.9
STIRCHLEY & BROOKSIDE	2,059.8
TIBBERTON & CHERRINGTON	261.3
WATERS UPTON	370.8
WELLINGTON	5,937.9
WROCKWARDINE	1,358.4
WROCKWARDINE WOOD & TRENCH	1,336.0
	43,180.3

being the amounts calculated by the Council in accordance with Regulation 6 of The Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(II) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2013/14 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of The Act:-

- (a) **£440,919,271** 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.
- (b) **£388,633,654** being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) **£52,285,617** being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- (d) **£1,209.85** being the amount at (c) above divided by the Council Tax base, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including parish precepts and special items).
- (e) **£3,322,581** being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.

- (f) £1,132.96 being the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates (calculated by deducting from the amount at (d) above, the quotient of the amount at (e) above divided by the Council Tax Base). The only area that this relates to is the Parish of Eyton.

g) <u>Part of the Council's Area</u>	£
The Parish of:	
Chetwynd	1,147.42
Chetwynd Aston & Woodcote	1,151.10
Church Aston	1,169.84
Dawley Hamlets (SF2*)	1,183.75
Edgmond	1,159.28
Ercall Magna	1,188.18
The Gorge (SF2*)	1,213.98
Great Dawley (SF2*)	1,271.08
Hadley & Leegomery	1,199.05
Hollinswood & Randlay	1,271.84
Ketley	1,226.50
Kynnersley	1,151.51
Lawley & Overdale (SF1*)	1,193.90
Lilleshall, Donnington & Muxton	1,178.90
Little Wenlock	1,188.54
Madeley (SF2*)	1,231.71
Newport	1,239.23
Oakengates (SF2*)	1,241.88
Preston	1,139.18
Rodington	1,159.80
St. Georges & Priorslee (SF1*)	1,173.39
Stirchley & Brookside(SF2*)	1,263.11
Tibberton & Cherrington	1,147.54
Waters Upton	1,166.94
Wellington (SF2*)	1,208.93
Wrockwardine	1,171.92
Wrockwardine Wood & Trench (SF1*)	1,200.19

**SF1 indicates a parish in the special fund area which has taken over responsibility for footway lighting. An additional charge is made for cemeteries.*

**SF2 indicates a parish in the special fund area which has not taken over responsibility for footway lighting. An additional charge is made for both cemeteries and footway lighting.*

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at (l)(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) The amounts in Appendix 1 being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (f) and (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.

(III) The West Mercia Police & Crime Commissioner precept for 2013/14 was set at its meeting on 15 February 2013. The following amounts were stated in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

<u>Valuation Band</u>	<u>Amount</u> £
A	119.15
B	139.00
C	158.86
D	178.72
E	218.44
F	258.15
G	297.87
H	357.44

(IV) The Shropshire & Wrekin Fire and Rescue Authority's precept for 2013/14 was set at its meeting on 13 February 2013. The following amounts were stated in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

<u>Valuation</u> <u>Band</u>	<u>Amount</u> <u>£</u>
A	59.11
B	68.96
C	78.81
D	88.66
E	108.36
F	128.06
G	147.77
H	177.32

(V) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (II)(h) and (III) and (IV) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, hereby sets the amounts in Appendix 2 (appended to these minutes) as the amounts of council tax for the year 2013/14 for each of the categories of dwellings shown.

78. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BOARDS and COMMITTEES

(a) 19 February Council Constitution Committee – Constitution Revisions

Councillor M.J. Smith, Chairman of the Council Constitution Committee, presented the recommendations set out at minute CCC-4 of the meeting held on 19 February 2013 in relation to revisions to the Constitution. The recommendations were listed 1) to 5) on the agenda sheet. Attached to the agenda was the report of the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection that had been considered by the Constitution Committee.

Councillor C.F. Smith moved an amendment to recommendation 5) as listed on the agenda sheet, by adding the words “be referred back to the Constitution Committee for re-consideration and clarification” after the word “report”. The amendment was seconded by Councillor I.T.W. Fletcher. In explanation, Councillor Smith advised that there needed to be clarity on the respective roles of Speaker and Mayor, and the proposal would benefit from further discussion by the Committee. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried. It was then

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the changes to Part 4 – Rules of Procedure, Section 6 - Financial Regulations, as shown in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved;**
- (b) that the changes to the Audit Committee terms of reference, as shown in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved;**
- (c) that the changes to the Constitution reflecting the changes to the ethical framework for Councillors, as shown in Appendix 3 of the report, be approved;**

- (d) that the changes to the Constitution reflecting the new regulations regarding Notices of Key Decisions, as shown in Appendix 4 of the report, be approved;
- (e) that the re-establishment of the Speaker's role and associated amendments to the Constitution, as set out in paragraph 3.5 and Appendix 5 of the report, be referred back to the Constitution Committee for re-consideration and clarification.

(b) 19 February Council Constitution Committee – Health & Wellbeing Board & Health Scrutiny

Councillor M.J. Smith, Chairman of the Council Constitution Committee, presented the recommendations set out at minute CCC-5 of the meeting held on 19 February 2013 in relation to new provisions for a Health & Wellbeing Board and Health Scrutiny. The recommendations were listed 1) to 4) on the agenda sheet. Attached to the agenda was the report of the Assistant Director: Social Care Specialist that had been considered by the Constitution Committee.

RESOLVED –

- (a) that the Health & Wellbeing Board be established as a Committee of the Council, and that the membership and terms of reference as set out in the report be approved;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director: Law, Democracy & Public Protection, in consultation with the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board and Chair of the Council Constitution Committee, to make any necessary amendments and recommendations following any further regulations or guidance;
- (c) that the health scrutiny power vested in Council under the Health & Social Care Act 2012 be delegated to the relevant Scrutiny Committee, and the consequent changes to the Constitution, as set out in the report and appendices, be approved;
- (d) that the changes to Scrutiny arrangements resulting from the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, as set out in the report and appendices, be approved.

(c) 13 February Personnel Board – Publication of the Council's Pay Policy Statement

The Mayor advised that the recommendation from Personnel Board for Council to approve the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2013/14 for publication on the Council's website had been dealt with earlier in the meeting at Minute 77 (i)(l) as part of the Service & Financial Planning item.

79. UPDATE ON BOROUGH BOUNDARY REVIEW

Councillor R.J. Sloan, Chairman of the Boundary Review Committee, presented an update on progress of the review of ward boundaries by the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC).

Some changes were inevitable, and the LGBC would be seeking to ensure that each Member represented approximately the same number of people. They were starting from a clean sheet, and the Boundary Review Committee was working on a cross-party basis to find a credible outcome. However, the Council's proposals needed to be submitted by 17 April 2013, which was before the next full Council meeting. He therefore moved that authority be delegated to the Boundary Review Committee to submit the proposals to the LGBC by the deadline. The motion was seconded by Councillor R.A. Overton.

In response to a question about the timetable of the Boundary Review, Cllr Sloan advised that the process needed to be completed by the end of the year. A timetable would be circulated to all Members for information.

RESOLVED – that authority be delegated to the Boundary Review Committee to submit the Council's ward boundary proposals to the LGBC by 17 April 2013.

(Councillor M.B. Hosken left the meeting)

80. MINUTES OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Council noted the resolved minutes of Boards and Committees:

Audit Committee	29 January 2013
Licensing Committee	16 and 23 January 2013
Plans Board	16 January and 6 February 2013

81. QUESTIONS

The following Questions were asked in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10:

- a) Councillor V.A. Fletcher asked the following question of Councillor K.S. Sahota, Leader of the Council:

“Would this Council join with me in congratulating Harper Adams University and the Vice-Chancellor, Mr David Llewellyn in particular, in achieving University status – the first university in Shropshire which is within the Borough of Telford & Wrekin, and amongst its many attributes and accolades, is a Fairtrade University?”

Councillor Sahota, on behalf of the Council, offered his congratulations to Harper Adams on achieving University status, which reflected its importance as an educational institution. The Council was very pleased to support Fairtrade products and initiatives, and, in response to a supplementary question from Councillor

Fletcher, he congratulated Harper Adams University for recently launching the Telford & Wrekin Fair Trade Alliance.

- b) Councillor I.T.W. Fletcher asked the following question of Councillor S. Davies, Cabinet Member: Neighbourhood Services & Co-operative Council:

“Will Councillor Shaun Davies please advise residents of Priorslee regarding the current status of Priorslee Community Centre following the decision of the Cabinet to remove the centre from the community portfolio?”

Councillor Davies reminded Members that the decision to remove the centre from the community folio was taken following a Scrutiny review that concluded that the Priorslee facility was operating as a nursery rather than a community centre. The property was still owned by the Council as part of its Asset portfolio. In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Fletcher regarding access to the centre when not in use by the pre-school, he added that the lease was being reviewed and local residents would be consulted.

- c) Councillor I.T.W. Fletcher asked the following question of Councillor H. Rhodes, Cabinet Member: Transport & Community Protection:

“Following her response to my question at the last Council meeting, will the Councillor use her good offices to institute measures to ensure the safety of persons near to and accessing the Aldi/Wickes development on the Old Holyhead Road?”

Councillor Rhodes reiterated that there had been no reported accidents in this area, and that a highways/transport assessment had concluded that the current road arrangement would cope with the traffic flows using this junction. The cost of providing traffic lights would be significant to the Council within the current financial constraints, although it was possible that contributions from some future development might provide the necessary funding. There was improved access for pedestrians in the vicinity. The situation would continue to be monitored.

- d) Councillor I.T.W. Fletcher asked the following question of Councillor P.R. Watling, Cabinet Member: Children, Young People & Families:

“Would the councillor explain why no consultation was had with residents of Priorslee regarding the access to the proposed school site via Teece Drive before he and his Cabinet colleagues went ahead with the decision to purchase the site?”

Councillor R.A. Overton, Deputy Leader, replied on behalf of Councillor Watling who was not able to attend the meeting. He referred to the extensive consultation that had taken place with Priorslee residents regarding the location of the proposed new School in Priorslee, and that the majority of local people were in favour of the School being on the former Celestica site. In response to a supplementary question from Councillor Fletcher as to why access from Castle Farm Way had not been considered, the Deputy Leader stated that there would be further consultation during the planning process. But further information could be forwarded to the

Councillor as to decisions that had been taken on proposed access routes to the site.

82. NOTICES OF MOTION

a) Councillor M.G.Ion moved, in accordance with Council procedure rule 11, the following motion:

“This Council urges the government to take immediate action to counteract the proliferation of legal loan sharking by ensuring that a bill introducing a cap on the amount of interest that can be charged on short-term and payday loans is scheduled for debate during this parliament. The Council also urges the government to further strengthen consumer protections by ensuring a breach of these rules would make any loan agreement unenforceable by the lender”.

The motion was seconded by Councillor R.A. Overton.

Following a debate during which a number of Members spoke in favour of the motion, it was unanimously

RESOLVED – that the motion be approved.

Councillor S. Bentley, having declared an interest in the following item, withdrew from the meeting room.

b) Councillor D.R.W. White moved, in accordance with Council procedure rule 11, the following motion:

“That this Council resolves to seek an urgent amendment of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 in order to repeal changes to Housing Benefit, commonly known as ‘Bedroom Tax’, and instructs the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State asking him to rethink his plans which would adversely affect 660,000 tenants nationally including 2613 of the poorest and most vulnerable in Telford and Wrekin

Council agrees that the Bedroom Tax will place an intolerable financial burden on households in the Borough, many of whom include working or disabled occupants and/or children living in poverty.

Council rejects The Government’s rationale that tenants who are under-occupying will be able to downsize to alternate properties as there is not sufficient housing in the Borough to facilitate this.

Council believes the provisions of the ‘Bedroom Tax’ are inconsistent and fail to consider the additional needs of many households with regards to disabilities; adaptation’s made to homes, foster carers, parents of serving military or parents who share custody of their children”.

The motion was seconded by Councillor S. Davies.

Following a debate during which a number of views were expressed about the impact of imminent benefit changes on local residents, it was moved and seconded

that a recorded vote be taken. Upon the requisite number of Members signifying their support, a recorded vote on the motion as published was taken:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstention</u>
Cllr K Blundell	Cllr R T Kiernan	Cllr S P Burrell
Cllr E A Clare		Cllr E J Carter
Cllr D G Davies		Cllr N A Dugmore
Cllr S Davies		Cllr I T W Fletcher
Cllr C B A Elliott		Cllr V A Fletcher
Cllr A R H England		Cllr A Lawrence
Cllr N A M England		Cllr C P R Mollett
Cllr R C Evans		Cllr R G Scammell
Cllr G M Green		Cllr J M Seymour
Cllr K R Guy		
Cllr M G Ion		
Cllr A S Jhawar		
Cllr J Loveridge		
Cllr A A Mackenzie		
Cllr C N Mason		
Cllr A D McClements		
Cllr W A M McClements		
Cllr J C Minor		
Cllr L A Murray		
Cllr R A Overton		
Cllr F R Picken		
Cllr J Pinter		
Cllr G C W Reynolds		
Cllr S A W Reynolds		
Cllr H Rhodes		
Cllr K S Sahota		
Cllr R J Sloan		
Cllr C F Smith		
Cllr M J Smith		
Cllr B J Thompson		
Cllr K L Tomlinson		
Cllr W L Tomlinson		
Cllr C R Turley		
Cllr D R W White		

The Mayor declared the motion carried, and it was

RESOLVED – that the motion be approved.

The meeting ended at 9.09 pm

Mayor:

Date: