

**COUNCIL MEETING: AS ADJOURNED FROM 24 AND 25 FEBRUARY 2009**

**MINUTES OF THIRD SESSION - 2 MARCH 2009**

**Present:** Councillor Beard (Mayor);

Councillors Ayub, Ballsdon, Bayes, Benson, Byrne, Chowdhary, Cumpsty, Duveen, Edwards, Ennis, Epps, Gittings, Goodall, Hanley, C Harris, Hartley, Hoskin, Hussain, Janjua, P Jones, T Jones, Khan, Lovelock, Lockett, Maskell, Merriott, Page, Pugh, Ralph, Ruhemann, Rynn, Singleton-White, Skeats, Stanway, Steele, Swaine, Townend, Warman, Watson and Willis.

**Apologies:** Councillors Orton and Tickner.

**78. BUDGET 2009/10**

Further to Minutes 70 and 71 of the session of the Council Meeting adjourned on 24 February 2009, and to Minutes 76 and 77 of the session of the Council Meeting adjourned on 25 February 2009, the Council reconvened to give further consideration to its Budget and setting of its Council Tax for 2009-10.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED.

**Resolved:**

- (1) That the General Fund budget as set out on pages B178 to B207 of the report by the Director of Resources and Head of Finance be agreed, subject to adjustments to the appropriate budget lines, in accordance with the measures in (a) and (b) below:

- (a) Budget Savings

- (i) Members' Allowances to be frozen at the 2008/09 level, at a saving of £12k;
- (ii) Refreshments at Council meetings to be reduced by £8k;
- (iii) The Chief Executive to be instructed to identify further savings to a total of £356k to be reported to Cabinet in March for recommendation to Council on 31 March 2009;
- (iv) The Chief Executive to report to the Budget Review Group (as below), for recommendation to Cabinet, on potential in-year savings, with a minimum target of £200k, over and above those already integrated into the budget, on Marketing & PR, agency staff, consultants, management, home-to-school transport and other areas that do not have adverse impact on front-line services.

- (b) Budget Increases

- (i) The following schemes to be approved at a cost of £215k:

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- The scheme of bulky waste removal to be reformed to reduce charges at a cost of £55k.
  - Create a "Green Hit Squad" to tackle illegal dumping and other environmental crime, at a cost of £100k (and that the possibility of the University of Reading part-funding this also be explored).
  - Develop an integrated programme of Neighbourhood Policing as part of the Safer Reading communications programme at a cost of £50k
  - Obtain at a cost of £10k "speed gun" equipment for use in road safety programmes;
- (ii) Any further savings identified and agreed by the exercise outlined in (a)(iv) above to be added to the Council's balances, with regular reports to the Budget Review Group on the projected year-end balances.
- (2) That the Capital Programme as set out on pages B208 to B215 of the report by the Director of Resources and Head of Finance be agreed;
- (3) That, after considering the advice of the Director of Resources and Head of Finance on the adequacy of balances and reserves and the robustness of the Budget, as set out in Sections 6 and 7 of the report, the minimum level of General Fund Balance to be maintained over the year to 31 March 2010 be set at £4m.
- (4) That the increase in fees and charges set out in Appendix 3 be agreed, subject to the adjustment in the charges for Bulky Waste, referred to in (1)(b)(i) first bullet point above;
- (5) That the budget requirement be set at £120,387,000 for 2009/10 and Council notes that a Council Tax increase of 3.99% is required to fund the overall budget, and that the minimum General Fund Balance will be £4.0m, the minimum recommended by the Director of Resources, but that reviews are in hand in the hope of increasing this.
- (6) That the Budget Risk Management Statement in Appendix 5 be agreed;
- (7) That the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy set out in Appendix 7, the Prudential Indicators set out in Annex A of the Strategy and the review of MRP Policy Statement in Annex B be agreed;
- (8) That the Medium Term Financial Plan 2010/11 to 2014/15 set out in Appendix 8 be agreed;
- (9) That a cross-party Budget Review Group be established for the 2009-2010 financial year, as a Member:Officer working group, to identify and examine budget items carrying a significant medium term risk in terms

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of both the Council's revenue budgets and forward Capital Programme and to make recommendations to Cabinet or full Council as appropriate in terms of the Council's budget framework and adequacy of balances and reserves; and that the following Councillors be appointed to the Group on the ratio set out below:

Labour (2)  
Conservative (2)  
Lib.Dem (1).

**79. COUNCIL TAX 2009-10**

The motion set out below was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED.

**Resolved:**

(1)	That it be noted at its meeting on 27 January 2009 the Council calculated the amount of 52,532 as its Council Tax base for the year 2009/10 in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 (as amended) made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.	
(2)	That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2009/10 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:	
(a)	401,445 ,000	being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (e) of the Act
(b)	281,058 ,000	being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act
(c)	120,387,000	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 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year
(d)	54,141,307	being the aggregate of the sums which will be payable for the year 2009/10 into the General Fund in respect of Formula Grant Allocation (redistributed non-domestic rates, revenue support grant) and decreased by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred to its Collection Fund from its General Fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act, 1988 (as amended by the

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		Local Government Finance Act, 1992).
(e)	1,261.05	Being the amount at 2(c) above less the amount at 2(d) above, all divided by the amount at 1 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year

(f)	<b>Valuation Bands</b>							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	840.70	980.82	1120.93	1261.05	1541.28	1821.52	2101.75	2522.10
	being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at 2(e) 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.							

(3) That it be noted that for the year 2009/10 Thames Valley Police Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

<b>Precepting Authority</b>	<b>Valuation Bands</b>							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Thames Valley Police Authority	£ 100.85	£ 117.65	£ 134.46	£ 151.27	£ 184.89	£ 218.50	£ 252.12	£ 302.54

(4) That it be noted that for the year 2009/10 Royal Berkshire Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

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<b>Precepting Authority</b>	<b>Valuation Bands</b>							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Royal Berkshire	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fire & Rescue Service	36.74	42.86	48.99	55.11	67.36	79.60	91.85	110.22

(5) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 2(f), 3 and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2009/10 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

<u>Valuation Bands</u>								
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
978.29	1,141.33	1,304.38	1,467.43	1,793.53	2,119.62	2,445.72	2,934.86	

(The meeting closed at 6.41pm)