

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCIL MINUTES

Committee: Council **Date:** 22 February 2011

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.30 - 9.30 pm

Members Present: Councillors Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), K Angold-Stephens (Vice-Chairman), R Barrett, R Bassett, A Boyce, Ms R Brookes, K Chana, Mrs T Cochrane, R Cohen, Mrs D Collins, D Dodeja, Ms C Edwards, Mrs R Gadsby, P Gode, A Green, Ms J Hart, D Jacobs, D C Johnson, Mrs S Jones, B Judd, J Knapman, Ms Y Knight, Mrs J Lea, L Leonard, A Lion, J Markham, Mrs M McEwen, G Mohindra, R Morgan, S Murray, J Philip, Mrs C Pond, Mrs P Richardson, B Rolfe, B Sandler, Mrs M Sartin, Mrs P Smith, P Spencer, D Stallan, Ms S Stavrou, Mrs J Sutcliffe, H Ulkun, Mrs L Wagland, Ms S Watson, C Whitbread, Mrs J H Whitehouse, J M Whitehouse, D Wixley and J Wyatt

Apologies: Councillors W Breare-Hall, Mrs P Brooks, J Collier, C Finn, J Hart, Ms J Hedges, W Pryor and Mrs E Webster

Officers Present: D Macnab (Acting Chief Executive), R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT), I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), G Lunnun (Assistant Director (Democratic Services)), A Mitchell (Assistant Director (Legal)), S G Hill (Senior Democratic Services Officer), P Seager (Chairman's Secretary) and J Boreham (Assistant Public Relations and Information Officer)

123. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Assistant to the Chief Executive, on behalf of the Chairman of the Council, reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the Internet, and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

124. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Council meeting held on 14 December 2010 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

125. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Staff Code of Conduct, Mr D Macnab, Acting Chief Executive declared a personal interest in agenda item 16A (Report of the Committee for the Appointment of a Chief Executive) by virtue of reference to him in the report. He advised that he had determined that his interest was prejudicial and that he would leave the meeting for the consideration and voting on the matter.

126. ANNOUNCEMENTS**(a) Announcements by the Chairman of the Council****(i) Attendance at Events**

The Chairman reported on her attendance at a Musical Concert held at West Hatch School which had been a very enjoyable evening.

The Chairman also reported on the Civic Carol Service held at St Andrew's Church, North Weald. She thanked members and officers for attending despite the inclement weather.

Councillor Mrs Grigg advised that she had attended Mansion House together with four children who had taken part and had great fun at the Lord Mayor's Children's Fancy Dress Party.

The Chairman announced that nearly £1,000 had been raised for her charities at the Charity Quiz held at Theydon Bois Village Hall. She thanked members and officers who had participated and the officers who had organised the event.

(ii) Flowers from the meeting

The Chairman advised that the flowers from the meeting would be sent to Cunningham House, North Weald, recently acknowledged as the best Care Home in the South East Region.

(b) Announcements by the Leader of the Council

There were no announcements by the Leader under this heading.

(c) Announcements by Portfolio Holders

There were no announcements by Portfolio Holders under this heading.

127. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (IF ANY)

The Council noted that there were no public questions for this meeting.

128. REPORTS FROM THE LEADER, CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Council received written reports from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Environment Portfolio Holder, the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, the Housing Portfolio Holder, the Legal and Estates Portfolio Holder, the Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, the Operational Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder, the Performance Management Portfolio Holder and the Safer and Greener Portfolio Holder.

The Chairman invited the Leader to provide an oral report and other members of the Cabinet to give an oral update of their written reports.

(a) Leader of the Council

The Leader advised that she had attended a meeting of the West Essex Alliance together with the Deputy Leader. There had been a discussion regarding local proposals for consideration for Local Enterprise Partnership funding and these were to be pursued by an Executive Committee to which Councillor Whitbread had been appointed. The first meeting of the Executive Committee was to take place later this month.

Councillor Collins advised that she had also attended the first meeting of the Essex/Kent/East Sussex Local Enterprise Partnership which had been held at Dartford. There had been 44 delegates at the meeting which had been considered too many and agreement had been reached on setting up a smaller Executive Board of 24 members. The Executive Board would formulate bids for consideration by the main body.

The Leader reported that Robert Halfon MP for Harlow, had met with representatives of the Youth Council on 28 January 2011.

Councillor Collins reported that Improvement East had agreed to support the Council in relation to a number of issues.

The Leader reminded members of the success of the Future Jobs Fund in West Essex which had resulted in approximately 170 young people gaining employment in councils, schools, businesses etc. She advised that 60% of the young people whom had taken part in the first phase of the scheme had obtained full time employment or had returned to full time education. The Leader advised that in November 2011 the scheme would be discontinued and that a new Government Scheme would follow, although details of the latter were not expected until later in the year.

Councillor Collins reported on her attendance at a meeting with other Council Leaders at which there had been a discussion about future Central Government funding. She advised that, subject to legislation, business rates would be retained by local authorities in future and this should enable the Council to increase its assistance to local businesses. However, this would result in less grant being received from Central Government.

The Leader reported on her attendance at an Away Day at Loughton College at which the Rt Honourable Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government had spoken about the "Big Society" proposals.

The Council noted that the recently appointed Deputy Portfolio Holders were now working with Portfolio Holders in order to gain experience.

Councillor Collins advised that she would shortly be signing the Memorandum of Understanding with other West Essex authorities which had been agreed by the Council at its last meeting.

(b) Environment Portfolio Holder

Councillor Sartin drew attention to the visit which had been arranged to the SITA Material Recycling Facility (MRF) in Barking on 8 March 2011 and asked members wishing to attend to e-mail the Director of Environment and Street Scene by 23 February 2011.

(c) Legal and Estates Portfolio Holder

Councillor Wagland drew attention to her written report on T11/Langston Road Depot Joint Re-development Site advised that she had been asked to clarify the statement that Loughton Town Council had declined the opportunity of a presentation. She advised that earlier in the day she had received an e-mail from County Councillor Chris Pond who had advised that the Town Council had accepted the offer of a presentation but that subsequently a planning application had been received and in accordance with the Town Council's Standing Orders any such presentation would have been required to have not exceeded three minutes. Accordingly, it had been decided that such presentation would not be of benefit.

(d) Operational Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder

Councillor Stavrou advised that a further meeting of the Shadow Board of the North Partnership for Decriminalised Parking Enforcement was to be held on 28 February 2011.

(e) Safer and Greener Portfolio Holder

Councillor Smith advised that the next meeting of the Safer, Cleaner, Greener Scrutiny Panel on 8 March 2011 would be held at St Mary's Church Hall, Loughton and the main item on the agenda would be presentations from Council Officers and Essex Police on the processing, monitoring and enforcement of licensing conditions and on the Police powers and their recent operations in relation to licensed establishments. Councillor Smith encouraged members of the public to attend the meeting.

129. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS WITHOUT NOTICE**(a) Town Centre Manager**

Councillor Spencer drew attention to the decision not to renew the contract for the Town Centre Manager after July 2011 and asked what assistance would be given to local traders after that time.

Councillor Whitbread advised that the decision regarding the Town Centre Manager was the subject of a call-in to be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 February 2011. He pointed out that the post had been funded by Section 106 Agreement money which came to an end in July 2011 and that this had been a difficult decision for the Cabinet. He said he looked forward to a healthy debate at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting.

(b) Parking Review – Buckhurst Hill

Councillor Spencer pointed out that the Epping Parking Review was due to be completed by 31 July 2011 following which work would commence on the Buckhurst Hill Review. He asked if the Buckhurst Hill Review would start in August which was a holiday period or later.

Councillor Stavrou, Operational Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder, advised that work on the Buckhurst Hill Review would commence as soon as possible after the Epping Review. She reported that the Epping Review was currently on target and she would keep members informed of progress.

(c) Sports Leisure Management Contract

Councillor R Brookes drew attention to the negotiations which were nearing completion regarding a contract extension from January 2013 to January 2016. She asked whether any major changes were being put forward especially in relation to the opening of facilities during Bank Holidays.

Councillor Rolfe, Leisure and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder, advised that he was not yet in a position to provide details of the negotiations and that he would make these available to members as soon as possible.

(d) Safeguarding of Children

Councillor Boyce stated that he had recently attended a seminar on Safeguarding of Children with Councillor Wixley and 25 Council junior staff who came into contact with families and might need to liaise with Essex County Council Social Services on child protection concerns. He said that he had been impressed about the way in which the staff addressed this issue and drew attention to apparent difficulties they faced in getting satisfactory answers from Social Services when cases were referred. He asked the Portfolio Holder for Legal and Estates and the Council's representative on the West Essex Area Children's Trust Board what could be done to support front line officers to ensure that Social Services acted on such referrals promptly.

Councillor Wagland, Portfolio Holder for Legal and Estates and the Council's representative on the West Essex Area Children's Trust Board, stated that she shared the concerns expressed by Councillor Boyce. She acknowledged that child protection was a particularly difficult area and drew attention to recent unsatisfactory Ofsted reports which had been made in relation to Essex Social Services. She emphasised the need for the County Council to adopt an outcomes process rather than a procedural approach and repeated concerns which she had made at previous Council meetings regarding the apparent lack of references in the County Council's procedures to children. Councillor Wagland advised that a senior officer from the County Council would be addressing the Children Services Task and Finish Panel on 28 February 2010 and she encouraged all members to attend in order to express their views to that officer.

(e) Police Community Support Officers

Councillor Sutcliffe drew attention to the proposed reduction in funding for Police Community Support Officers and asked if this would affect the service currently being provided in Buckhurst Hill.

Councillor Smith, Safer and Greener Portfolio Holder, advised that the Cabinet had decided to reduce the funding from six officers to four officers. She stated that she was unable to comment on which particular officers would be affected by this decision but would obtain details for Councillor Sutcliffe if she wished.

(f) Decriminalised Parking Enforcement

Councillor Mrs J H Whitehouse drew attention to the County Council's decision to cease the current On-Street Enforcement Agency with the District as from 1 April 2011. She continued that concerns about the County Council's proposals for the future had been expressed at a recent Epping Forest Locality meeting between local County Councillors and County Council Officers. As a result she had made representations to the Leader of the County Council and he had agreed to review the proposals.

Councillor Stavrou, Operational Planning and Transport Portfolio Holder advised that she was giving this matter a lot of attention and that a Group Leaders' meeting had been arranged for 28 February 2011 to discuss the suggested approach to be taken by the District Council. She pointed out that she had already written to the County Council requesting clarification of the proposals and she confirmed that she would keep all Members of the Council involved of progress.

(g) Disasters in Australia and New Zealand

Councillor Richardson asked if the Council would be establishing a Disaster Fund for those affected by the recent flooding in Australia and the earthquake in New Zealand.

The Chairman of the Council pointed out that residents were encouraged to contribute to national funds which had been set up.

(h) Royal Wedding

Councillor Murray drew attention to the emphasis on communities being encouraged to do things for themselves and asked if the Council would be doing everything possible to assist local residents in running street parties on the day of the Royal Wedding.

Councillor Collins, Leader of the Council, drew attention to a report to be considered later in the meeting which was aimed at making things as easy as possible for residents to hold street parties at minimum cost.

(i) Information Centre – Loughton Library

Councillor Pond drew attention to the excellent sharing of services by the County Council and the District Council in Loughton Library and expressed concern that the decision to close the District Council Information Desk after 1.00 p.m. every day would have a detrimental effect on the provision of the services. She asked if the decision could be re-considered in line with the County Council's current consultation on a potential reduction in hours of service at libraries.

Councillor Collins, Leader of the Council, advised that discussions were taking place with the County Council about how some afternoon information services might be provided in the future.

(j) Area Plans Sub-Committees

Councillor J H Whitehouse drew attention to the proposal to run Area Plans Sub-Committees on a four week cycle from May 2011 and asked if this would affect Development Control performance.

Councillor Collins, Leader of the Council, drew attention to the savings which would be achieved by introducing a four week cycle and pointed out that if necessary the performance targets could be relaxed as they were no longer a national performance indicator.

(k) Carpets in Communal Areas of Flats/Maisonettes

Councillor Knapman thanked the Housing Portfolio Holder for agreeing to review the decision to remove carpeting from communal areas. He drew attention to carpeting in a 20 storey building in another district.

Councillor Stallan, Housing Portfolio Holder, thanked Councillor Knapman for his remarks and pointed out that when his letter was submitted to the Housing Minister it would be published and subject to call-in. He continued that when the call-in period had passed he would be happy to publish the letter in the Members' Bulletin.

(I) Carpets in Communal Areas of Flats/Maisonettes

Councillor Ms J Hart agreed with Councillor Knapman's comments and suggested it was unfortunate that a distinction had not been made between maisonettes and high rise flats.

Councillor Stallan, Housing Portfolio Holder thanked Councillor Hart for her comments.

130. MOTIONS

The Council was advised that there were no motions for consideration at this meeting.

131. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS UNDER NOTICE

There were no questions by Members of the Council under notice in respect of this item.

132. REPORT OF THE CABINET - CAPITAL STRATEGY

Mover: Councillor Whitbread – Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder reported on the Capital Strategy 2010-2015.

Councillor Whitbread advised that a good Capital Strategy enabled the Council to make sound strategic decisions in relation to the use of capital resources and formed an important part of the Council's Performance Management and Financial Planning frameworks.

Report as first moved ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

That the Capital Strategy 2010-2015 be approved.

133. REPORT OF THE CABINET - BUDGETS AND COUNCIL TAX DECLARATION 2011/12

Mover: Councillor Whitbread – Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder submitted a report regarding budgets and Council Tax declaration for 2011/12.

Councillor Whitbread reported that good financial planning in the past had placed this Council in a better position than many others to meet the savings required for 2011/12. As a result it had not been necessary to make major changes to service provision for the forthcoming financial year and no increase was proposed for the District Council Tax. He cautioned however, that greater challenges would need to be met in future years.

The Portfolio Holder reported on the process for preparing the budget which had involved all members through Overview and Scrutiny, the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee and the Cabinet.

Councillor Whitbread advised of the need to save some £1.3m in 2012/13 and pointed out that it would be extremely difficult to maintain the Council's current service levels and members should accept that a degree of change was inevitable.

The Portfolio Holder expressed his thanks to fellow Portfolio Holders and officers for their input into the proposals before the Council.

Report as first moved ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the list of CSB growth and savings for the 2011/12 budget (set out in Annex 1) be approved;
- (2) That the list of District Development Fund items for the 2011/12 budget (set out in Annex 2) be approved;
- (3) That the revenue estimates for 2011/12 and the draft Capital Programme for 2011/12 be approved as set out in Annexes 3, 4 (a-i) and 5 including all contributions to and from reserves as set out in the attached Annexes;
- (4) That the medium term financial forecast be approved as set out in Annexes 8 a and 8 b;
- (5) That the 2011/12 HRA budget be approved and that the application of rent increases and decreases in accordance with the Government's rent reforms and the Council's approved rent strategy, resulting in an average increase of 7.2% from £76.66 to £82.19, be approved.

Declaration of Council Tax

- (6) That it be noted that on 9 November 2010, the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee calculated the following amounts for the year 2011/12 in accordance with regulations made under Section 33(5) and 34(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:
 - (a) 54,609.2 being the amount calculated by the Council in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 as the Council Tax Base for the year;

(b) Part of the Council's Area	Tax Base No.
Essex County Council (General Expenses)	54,609.2
Essex Police Authority	54,609.2
Essex Fire Authority	54,609.2
Epping Forest District Council (General Expenses)	54,609.2
Abbess, Beauchamp & Berners Roding	199.7
Buckhurst Hill	5,301.8
Chigwell	5,983.1
Epping Town	5,110.8
Epping Upland	414.9
Fyfield	410.4
High Ongar	575.0
Lambourne	936.6
Loughton Town	13,038.3
Matching	333.9
Moreton, Bobbingworth and The Lavers	669.1
Nazeing	2,108.1
North Weald Bassett	2,569.2
Ongar	2,767.9
Roydon	1,326.5
Sheering	1,367.4
Stanford Rivers	364.9
Stapleford Abbots	512.4
Stapleford Tawney	72.3
Theydon Bois	1,979.7
Theydon Garnon	66.5
Theydon Mount	108.4
Waltham Abbey Town	8,145.1
Willingale	247.2

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

(7) That the following amounts be now calculated for the year 2011/12 in accordance with sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:

- (a) £116,779,498 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2) (a) - (e) of the Act;
- (b) £98,161,497 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3) (a) - (c) of the Act;
- (c) £18,618,001 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act as its budget requirement for the year;

- (d) £7,386,942 being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed Non Domestic Rates and Revenue Support Grant and increased by the amount the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its Collection Fund to the General Fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and the amount which the Council estimates will be transferred from the Collection Fund to the General Fund pursuant to the Collection Fund (Community Charges) (England) Directions 1994 made under Section 98(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988;
- (e) £205.66 being the amount at (c) above, less the amount at (d) above, all divided by the amount at (6)(a) 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) £3,106,848 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act;
- (g) £148.77 being the amount at (e) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at (f) above by the amount of (6) (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;

(h) Part of the Council's Area	Amount £
Abbess, Beauchamp & Berners Roding	173.81
Buckhurst Hill	218.02
Chigwell	185.20
Epping Town	232.61
Epping Upland	176.49
Fyfield	174.17
High Ongar	172.25
Lambourne	180.65
Loughton Town	197.95
Matching	180.22
Moreton Bobbingworth and The Lavers	168.63
Nazeing	183.15
North Weald Bassett	200.23
Ongar	218.67
Roydon	170.50
Sheering	171.92
Stanford Rivers	180.83
Stapleford Abbots	161.72
Stapleford Tawney	167.84
Theydon Bois	200.94
Theydon Garnon	163.36
Theydon Mount	162.67
Waltham Abbey Town	243.23
Willingale	166.97

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (7)(g) 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 (6)(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;

(i) the amounts shown in Annex 6 to this report, being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (7)(h) above by the number which is 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;

(8) That it be noted that for the year 2011/12 the major precepting authorities have stated that the amounts shown in Annex 7 Part A (tabled) are the 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;

(9) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (7) (i) and (8) above, the Council in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts in Annex 7 Part B (tabled) as the amounts of Council Tax for the year 2011/12 for each of the categories of dwellings shown;

(10) That the Council's policy of retaining revenue balances at no lower than £4.0M or 25% of the net budget requirement whichever is the higher for the four year period to 2013/14 be amended to no lower than £4.0M or 25% of the net budget requirement whichever is the higher during the four year period up to and including 2014/15;

(11) That the recommendations included in the report on the Prudential Indicators and the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/12 (set out in Annex 9) be approved; and

(12) That the report of the Chief Financial Officer on the robustness of the estimates for the purposes of the Council's 2011/12 budgets and the adequacy of the reserves (see Annex 10) be noted.

134. REPORT OF THE CABINET - CORPORATE PLAN 2011 TO 2015

Mover: Councillor Bassett – Performance Management Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder reported that the Corporate Plan (formerly known as the Council Plan) was the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out service delivery priorities, with strategic themes reflecting those of the Sustainable Community Strategy for the District. He advised that the Corporate Plan translated the vision for the District set out by the Community Strategy into the Council's strategic direction, priorities and the most important outcomes that it wanted to achieve, and informed all other plans and helped to prioritise resources to provide quality services and value for money. Councillor Bassett reported that the draft document had been subject to wide consultation which was continuing with residents and partners during February and March 2011.

Amendment moved by Councillor Stallan and seconded by Councillor Rolfe.

“That the word “temporary” be inserted before references to the new depot at North Weald Airfield in Key Objective (1)”

Carried

Report as amended ADOPTED**RESOLVED:**

(1) That, subject to:

(a) the outcome of appropriate resident and partner consultation during February and March 2011; and

(b) insertion of the word “temporary” before references to a new depot at North Weald Airfield in Key Objective (1);

the Council’s Corporate Plan for the period 2011/12 to 2014/15 be approved; and

(2) That in order to publish the Corporate Plan by 1 April 2011, the Performance Management Portfolio Holder be authorised to approve any significant amendments to the Plan arising from on-going resident and partner consultation.

135. REPORT OF THE CABINET - CALENDAR OF COUNCIL MEETINGS 2011/12**Mover: Councillor Collins – Leader of the Council**

The Leader of the Council submitted a report proposing a calendar of meetings for the period May 2011 – May 2012.

Report as first moved ADOPTED**RESOLVED:**

That the calendar of meetings for the period May 2011 to May 2012 attached as an Appendix to the report be adopted.

136. REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - FINANCIAL REGULATIONS - ACCEPTANCE OF E-INVOICES**Mover: Councillor Morgan - Chairman of the Committee**

Councillor Morgan reported that the Constitution and Members’ Services Scrutiny Panel had considered a proposal to allow electronic or e-invoicing as part of the annual review of Financial Regulations. The meeting noted that a pilot scheme had been undertaken with a number of ICT providers which allow the submission of electronic invoices to a secure e-mail account held by the Council. Councillor Morgan advised that Internal Audit had given its support to the proposed security and restrictions placed on access to this account. The meeting noted that to enable the

Council to introduce the system on a permanent basis an amendment was required to Financial Regulation 3.24.

Report as first moved ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

(1) That the following amendment be made to Paragraph 3.24 of Appendix E to the Council's Financial Regulations:

"3.24 To ensure that payments are not made on a faxed invoice, statement or other document other than a formal invoice. Formal invoices may include e-invoices received in PDF format via the dedicated e-mail address provided by the Chief Finance Officer in the Finance and ICT Directorate";

(2) That the internal controls which will be put in place to regulate the receipt and processing of e-invoices be noted; and

(3) That the decision not to bring forward any other proposals in relation to Financial Regulations as part of the 2010/11 review be noted.

137. REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE PROCEDURE RULE 1.6

Mover: Councillor Morgan – Chairman of the Committee

Councillor Morgan reported that Executive Procedure Rule 1.6 currently stated that the Cabinet should complete its business by 10.00 p.m. and hold a minimum of 12 meetings each year. He advised that the Constitution of Members' Services Scrutiny Panel having been requested by the Cabinet to examine the "guillotine" procedure had recommended that it should be removed from the Constitution so as to enable the Cabinet to complete all the items of business on an agenda in one meeting. The Panel had also recommended removal of the requirement to hold a minimum of 12 Cabinet meetings per year as over time the number of Cabinet meetings had been reduced to the current eight per year.

Report as first moved ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

That the following amendments to Executive Procedure Rule 1.6 be approved:

(a) deletion of the requirement to complete all business at a Cabinet meeting by 10.00 p.m.; and

(b) deletion of the requirement to hold a minimum of 12 Cabinet meetings a year.

138. REPORT OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE - TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES - THE ROYAL WEDDING

Mover: Councillor A Lion – Vice-Chairman of the Committee

Councillor Lion reported that the District Council had received a number of applications from members of the public requesting it to make road closure orders to allow street parties to be held to celebrate the Royal Wedding. Enquiries had been made at Essex County Council and officers had been informed that the County Council would be making a policy decision as to how the applications would be administered. Councillor Lion advised that the Communities and Local Government website contained a guide to holding a street party which provided a simple form for a street closure and stated that completed forms should be submitted to the District Council. There was an expectation, therefore, that District Councils would process these applications and the District Council needed to have a process in place in the event that the County Council directed applicants to the District Council.

Councillor J H Whitehouse requested that all members be informed of the process for making an application.

Report as first moved ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the following delegated authorities be granted to agree road closures for events to be held to celebrate the Royal Wedding:
 - (a) to officers where all information/consultation is undertaken by the applicant(s) and the responses are satisfactory and no objections have been received; or
 - (b) to the Licensing Sub-Committee in all other cases;
- (2) That no fee be charged in connection with such road closures except to cover any necessary expenses; and
- (3) That all Members of the Council be informed of the process for making an application via the Council Bulletin.

139. REPORT OF COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Mover: Councillor Collins – Chairman of the Committee

Councillor Collins submitted a report on the work being undertaken by the Committee on behalf of the Council in connection with the vacant position of Chief Executive. Councillor Collins reported that although the Committee had acknowledged some advantages, in principle, of the shared Chief Executive idea they had also identified some negative points, not least the need for this Council to make its own case on matters affecting the District.

Amendment moved by Councillor J M Whitehouse and seconded by Councillor Jacobs

“That the words “at this time” be inserted after the words “not pursued” in recommendation (1)”.

Carried

Report as ADOPTED

RESOLVED:

- (1) The option of a shared Chief Executive with other neighbouring Councils be not pursued at this time; and
- (2) That the other discussions by the Committee on the Chief Executive post be noted.

140. MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES, CHAIRMANSHIP AND VICE-CHAIRMANSHIPS AND REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

The Council considered a report of the Deputy Monitoring Officer on the implications of one councillor not having signed the statutory notice regarding membership of the Conservative Group. The Council noted that the effect on pro rata arrangements was marginal, only affecting the allocation of representatives and deputies on outside organisations.

RESOLVED:

That a review of pro rata arrangements in relation to the membership of Council Committees, Chairmanship, Vice-Chairmanship and Representatives on Outside Organisations be not undertaken at the present time.

141. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY PORTFOLIO HOLDERS AND MEMBER TO SHADOW THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Council noted the decision of the Leader of the Council to appoint eight Deputy Portfolio Holders and one member to shadow the Audit and Governance Committee Chairman for the remainder of the current municipal year.

142. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

The Council received a written report from Councillor Wagland, the Council's representative on the West Essex Children's Trust Board.

The report outlined a review of the West Essex Children's Trust Board in terms of its role and effectiveness, and its renaming to West Essex Children's Commissioning and Delivery Board. Councillor Wagland advised that if the proposals were agreed at the next meeting of the West Essex Children's Commissioning and Delivery Board on 14 April 2011, the reduction in membership of the Board should ensure a clearer focus on the work of the District Children's Partnerships and should provide a better opportunity to influence decisions on the Commissioning of Children's Services in Essex.

The Leader of the Council thanked Councillor Wagland and Julie Chandler, Assistant Director, Office of the Deputy Chief Executive, for their work in relation to Children's Services.

CHAIRMAN