

DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL (BUDGET)

MINUTES of the proceedings of the meeting of the General Assembly of the Council (Budget) held on Monday 27 February 2012.

PRESENT:

The Mayor

Councillor E J Lampkin

The Deputy Mayor

Councillor Mrs A D Allen

Councillor J P Adams

Councillor A S Sandhu, MBE

Councillor D A Hammock

Councillor Mrs R L Shanks

Councillor J S Hawkes

Councillor C J Shippam

Councillor J A Hayes

Councillor M J Street

Councillor D E Hunnisett

Councillor D Swinerd

Councillor K M Kelly

Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow

Councillor P Kelly

Councillor A Wells

Councillor J A Kite, MBE

Councillor R J Wells

Councillor A R Lloyd

Councillor Mrs N C Wightman

Councillor T A Maddison

Councillor I D Armit JP

Councillor A R Martin

Councillor A Bardoe

Councillor D J Mote

Councillor L J Bobby

Councillor Mrs A Muckle

Councillor S H Brown

Councillor J I Muckle

Councillor M J Bryant

Councillor J M Ozog

Councillor R Bryant

Councillor M I Peters

Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill

Councillor G T Prout

Councillor P J Cannon

Councillor B E Read

Councillor P F Coleman

Councillor Mrs J A Rickwood

Councillor M J Davis

ABSENT:

Councillor R S L Perfitt

Councillor G Reynolds

Councillor J Burrell

Councillor S East

1. PRAYERS: REVEREND ARDING

The Reverend Arding led the Council in prayer. Special mention was made of the late Neil Pearson Coffey, Bean Parish Councillor and Parish Councillor Representative on the Joint Transportation Board, who had recently passed away and for the recovery of Councillor Sheila East and Colin Cloke who were both seriously ill.

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2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Alan Twyman, Member Services Manager, declared a personal interest on behalf of all Officers present at the meeting in staffing matters referred to in Agenda item 6, Revenue and Capital Budgets 2012/2013. He also announced the following declarations on behalf of Members:

In respect of Agenda item 6, for Parish/Town Councillors, a personal interest by virtue of their Parish/Town Council membership.

In respect of Agenda item 6, recommendation 3.7 (Members' Allowances and Mayoral Allowances), all Members and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have a personal interest.

In respect of Agenda item 6, recommendation 3.10 (Mayoral Allowances – standard rate of income tax), the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have a personal interest.

In respect of Agenda item 6, recommendations 3.31 (a) (Council Tax Base) all Members resident in the Borough have a personal interest.

In respect of Agenda item 6, recommendations 3.31(b) and 3.32 (Parish/Town Council Tax Base/Precepts) Councillors J P Adams, Mrs A D Allen, I D Armitt, L J Bobby, S H Brown, S P Butterfill, P F Coleman, D A Hammock, J A Hayes, D E Hunnisett, J A Kite, E J Lampkin, A R Martin, M I Peters, B E Read, Mrs J Rickwood, R L Shanks, M J Street, and Mrs P A Thurlow have a personal interest.

Councillor J P Adams declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Labour Party which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor A D Allen declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. The Councillor declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as a trustee of Dartford Almshouses Charity, Age Concern North West Kent and of Dartford Citizens Advice Bureau, and as a member of the management committee of Health Action Dartford.

Councillor I D Armitt declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of DGSM Your Choice and as Vice-President of the Dartford District Scouts Association. He also declared a personal interest as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. The Councillor declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 as he is an employee of Wilmington Parish Council.

Councillor A Bardoe declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as Chair of the 3rd Dartford Scout Group. He also declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6 as he is a member of the Becketts Gym.

Councillor L J Bobby declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association and a member of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Sports and Social Club.

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Councillor S H Brown declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of Dartford Football Club Supporters' Club and because his father is a shareholder in Dartford Football Club. He also declared a personal interest as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival

Councillor S P Butterfill declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association. She also declared a personal prejudicial interest as she is a resident director of Ingress Park (Greenhithe) Management Limited.

Councillor P J Cannon declared a personal interest as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor P F Coleman declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as he is a patron of the Dartford Dramatic and Operatic Society, a member of the Samaritans and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. He also declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as honorary treasurer of Rural Age Concern Darent Valley, North West Kent Carers Support and the 1st Sutton-at-Hone Scout Group, and as President of the Dartford Association for the Disabled and the Sutton-at-Hone Horticultural Society, as President elect of St John Ambulance Dartford, as a member of the management committee of Gravesham Churches Housing Association and as a Trustee and Chairman of Wroth and Hill Almshouses.

Councillor M J Davis declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as he is Vice-Chairman of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor D A Hammock declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of Ellenor Lions. He declared a personal prejudicial interest as President of the New Yorkers Club (Disabled and Children with learning difficulties).

Councillor J S Hawkes declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of Compass and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Labour Party which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor J A Hayes declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association and as secretary of the Kent Sub Clubs Convalescent Federation. The Councillor declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as a committee member of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Sports and Social Club.

Councillor D E Hunnisett declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as Council representative on Gravesham Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Support Group, as a member of the Executive Committee of the

Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival and as his granddaughter is an attendee of the Arrow Riding Centre for the Disabled for which he raises funds. The Councillor declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as a director of DGSM YourChoice and a trustee of Age UK North West Kent and the Dartford Almshouse Charity.

Councillor K Kelly declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6 as he is a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. He declared a personal prejudicial interest as he is a director of Ingress Park (Greenhithe) Management Limited.

Councillor P Kelly declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as secretary of the Dartford Constituency Labour Party which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. He also declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 as he is a trustee and member of the unit management board of the Dartford and Crayford Sea Cadets.

Councillor J A Kite declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as Council representative on the Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership, Kent Thameside Economic Board, Thames Gateway Kent Partnership Board, Thames Gateway London Partnership Board, Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust and the Town Centre Board and as a season ticket holder for Dartford Football Club, Princes Park. He declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6 as he is a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. He also declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 as he is a director of Dartford Football Club, a director of the Leigh Technology Academy and as Life President of Southfleet Cricket Club.

Councillor E J Lampkin declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley MIND, Dartford Golf Club and the Beckett Gym and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. He also declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as he is a director of DGSM YourChoice.

Councillor A R Lloyd declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6 as he is a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor T Maddison declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as secretary of the Dartford & District Co-operative Party which has sponsored the Dartford Festival in the past. He also declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 as he is a trustee of the Co-operative Foundation and of the Dartford Almshouse Charity.

Councillor A R Martin declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6 as his partner's daughter is an attendee of the Arrow Riding Centre for the Disabled and he is a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. He also declared a personal interest in item 6 and Treasury Indicators as in the course of his employment he occasionally issues certificates of deposit indirectly to the

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Council via its fund managers. He further declared a personal and prejudicial interest as a trustee of the Dartford Citizens Advice Bureau.

Councillor D J Mote declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as he is the Chairman of Stone (Dartford) Scout Group. He also declared a personal interest as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association, which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival and further declared a personal prejudicial interest as his wife is an employee of Stone Parish Council.

Councillor Mrs A Muckle declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of Stone Lodge Bowls Club and Halls Bowls Club and as she rents a garage from the Council. The Councillor declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as trustee of the RSPCA Kent North West Branch.

Councillor J I Muckle declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the RSPCA Kent North West Branch, Stone Lodge Bowls Club and Halls Bowls Club, and the Dartford Photographic Society. The Councillor declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6 as a season ticket holder of Dartford Football Club and as he rents a garage from the Council.

Councillor J Ozog declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6 as he is a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor M I Peters declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as she is a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. The Councillor declared a personal prejudicial interest as a trustee of the Joydens Wood Residents Community Association.

Councillor G T Prout declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of Dartford Golf Club and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Labour Party which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor B E Read declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents' Association and of the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Sports and Social Club.

Councillor Mrs J A Rickwood declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association, which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. She also declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 as she is a trustee of the Dartford Alms House Charity and of the Dartford Citizens Advice Bureau.

Councillor A Sandhu declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as he is a season ticketholder of Dartford Football Club. He declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6 as a trustee of the Temple Hill Trust, Kent Equality Cohesion Council, the Kent Peoples Trust and of the Council for Voluntary Service North West Kent.

Councillor C Shippam declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association, which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival and as a member of the Town Centre Board.

Councillor M J Street declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival. He also declared a personal prejudicial interest as a member of the YMCA Thames Gateway (South) Board of Management.

Councillor D Swinerd declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as she is a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival and as a member of the Dartford Lions Club. She also declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as a trustee of Groundwork Kent and Medway.

Councillor A Wells declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Management Committee of the Beckett Sports Centre.

Councillor R J Wells declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Dartford Conservative Association which hires a stall at the Dartford Festival.

Councillor N C Wightman declared a personal interest in Agenda item 6, as a life Vice-President of Dartford Harriers Athletics Club.

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Burrell, S East, R S L Perfitt and G Reynolds.

4. **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor made the following announcements:

Mayor's Charity Ball

The Mayor thanked Members for supporting a highly successful Charity Ball held at Princes Park Football ground which had proved an excellent venue.

Colin Cloke

The Mayor reported that he had received no further update on the condition of Colin Cloke and that the position remained the same as outlined in the last email sent to Members by the Member Services Manager along with a copy of an article which had been published in the local press.

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Neil Pearson Coffey

The Mayor led the General Assembly in sending the Council's condolences to the family of the late Neil Pearson Coffey. The Mayor advised Members that Mr Pearson Coffey's funeral would take place at 11.00 am on Wednesday 7 March at Medway Crematorium.

Successes across the Borough

The Mayor announced that he had written to a number of residents of the Borough who had recently made significant achievements:-

- Miss Hanah Cubicis, of the 9th Dartford Scout Group who had received the Baden Powell Challenge Award;
- Terry Holland, who had taken 3rd place in the World's Strongest Man competition and 1st place in the All American Strongman Challenge; and
- The Head Teacher of Knockhall Primary School to congratulate the School on reaching its centenary. He had encouraged the Head Teacher to make any publications celebrating the School's history and achievements available to the Dartford Library and Museum for posterity.

Councillor Jeremy Kite, MBE

The Mayor congratulated the Leader of the Council for being awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours list. The Mayor paid tribute to Councillor Kite as an outstanding Dartfordian and Leader of the Council and praised his commitment and enthusiasm to working on behalf of the people of Dartford.

Diamond Jubilee

Finally the Mayor announced that he had also written to Her Majesty the Queen to congratulate her on celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of her accession to the throne.

5. URGENT ITEMS

The Mayor announced that no urgent items had been submitted for consideration.

6. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2012/2013

The General Assembly of the Council considered a report which set out the Council's capital and revenue budgets for 2012/2013. The report, which included the revenue and capital estimates, identified the level of precepts for Kent County Council, the Kent Police Authority, Kent Fire and Rescue and the Town and Parish Councils within the Borough.

Members were asked to set the level of expenditure for Dartford Borough Council Capital and Revenue Budgets for 2012/13, to approve the level of rents chargeable for Housing Revenue Account dwellings for 2012/13, to

agree the level of Council Tax for Dartford Borough in its parished and unparished areas, and to determine sundry related matters. Members were also asked to approve the Council's Pay Policy Statement and proposals for restructuring the organisation following changes within the senior management structure.

In accordance with Standing Order 16(4), a motion was proposed, seconded and carried, to allow extra time for Leaders of the Political Groups to deliver their speeches on the Budget report.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J A Kite, commended the budget proposals to the Council and explained that his Group had taken control in 2003 following a year in which the previous administration had increased the Council tax by 9.88% against an increase in the RPI of 1.5%. Since that time there had not been a single year during which the Council had increased the level of Council tax by even half of that figure and low Council tax increases combined with a programme of real achievement and delivered promises had seen the current administration returned for a third term of office in May 2011. Whilst in 2003 the administration had required a coalition to retain control this had long ceased to be the case but the Majority Group had chosen to continue to work in coalition with the Swanscombe and Greenhithe Residents Members voluntarily. The Leader felt that the Council operated most effectively when Members from all groups worked together and not politically.

The Leader paid tribute to the Managing Director, the Management Team, Head of Finance and Resources and the Finance Department for continuing to deliver good services and for robust financial management during a difficult economic climate. He also paid tribute to the management of The Orchard Theatre for delivering a superb service for the public and the Council. The Leader informed Members that he had recently attended two budget briefings for Council staff to explain the budgetary approach that the Council was proposing and that a choice had been made to follow an approach of pay restraint rather than sacrificing jobs. Unlike some other Council's which were cutting jobs and slashing services he felt that the Council's staff were a valuable resource worth protecting. Whilst he was happy to announce a pay award of 1% he recognised that this was a sub-inflationary award but was pleased that staff had responded well and appreciated the fact that any increase was proposed and that the Council was looking to provide a stable work environment without compulsory job cuts. He was also proud that the Council had been able to make the considerable savings required in recent years with only 6 compulsory redundancies in the last five years.

The Leader of the Council drew attention to the hard work of the Finance Team in delivering a robust budget and in particular the work undertaken with PriceWaterhouseCoopers to recover VAT which rightfully belonged to residents of the borough and would be used for their benefit. He also thanked Members from all groups for their support of the work of the Council and highlighted the benefits of collaborative working despite some political differences. The Leader further highlighted successful partnership working with partners with whom the Council had Service Level Agreements, the Parishes and tenant and leaseholder groups. He commented on the tremendous opportunities to progress partnership work and encouraged the Parish Council's to adopt a similar approach to the Borough Council in terms of budgetary restraint and responsibility in the provision of services which

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would allow more funds to be provided from the centre for services to be delivered locally. The Leader also congratulated the Strategic Director, Head of Housing and their staff for their work and achievements in delivering social housing and effective housing services and commended the forward looking Housing Review being carried out against the background of significant changes to the funding of the Housing Revenue Account.

The Leader of the Council highlighted some key features of the budget proposals:

- Council tax to remain frozen and would remain at £162.90 for a Band D property, the third year without an increase;
- Fees and charges: where increased were broadly in line with inflation, but many would not be increased at all;
- 1% pay award for Council staff from 1st April 2012;
- The Cash Offices at Swanscombe and the Civic Centre to close due to the continued reduction in cash payments which had made cash transaction costs very high per unit, particularly given the alternative payment methods available. However in order to allow time for people to become familiar with these alternatives the closure of the cash offices would be delayed until the 4th quarter of the financial year and a local advisory group including Members from Swanscombe would oversee the transition process;
- Extended powers for the Council's Enforcement Team including the Civil Enforcement Officers;
- Establishing a cross-party Leader's Advisory Group to advise the Cabinet on the implications of local, regional and national policies upon children and young people in the borough. This would not only look at Council services but at opportunities to work with local partners through mechanisms such as Locality Boards and to seek to influence local, regional and national agendas to address lack of opportunity for children; and
- Following the success of the community fund scheme and the "Salute to Youth" initiative in 2011/12 a further £50,000 to be provided for each of the next three years to continue the community grants programme

In response the Shadow Leader commented that the budget needed to be seen in the wider economic context of a flat-lining national and local economy, an alarming rise in unemployment, particularly long-term youth unemployment, falling demand and cuts in central government funding of 23% in the last two years. He also believed that freezing Council tax in order to take advantage of the Government's offer of funding would store up problems of underinvestment in future years. The Shadow Leader also commented on the need for Parishes to show restraint and highlighted significant increases in some parish precepts, amounting to 20% in one case. Whilst welcoming the reclaiming of VAT this could not be relied upon in future years and efficiency savings and savings from joint working could not continue indefinitely without

placing dangerous strains and stresses on remaining staff. He also welcomed the advent of Homes Bonus funding and the extension of the working hours of the Empty Property Officer but stressed that this did little to address the lack of social housing and lack of social housing support services. He also questioned why £600,000 of Homes Bonus money was being placed in reserves and expressed regret for the abolition of the Regional Homes Fund and the Council's withdrawal of support for Housing Renewal Assistance.

The Shadow Leader also questioned the impact of the restructuring of the police and the impact that this might have on crime detection and prevention locally and the reallocation of resource towards more affluent parts of the county. He expressed concern at the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners and the likely reduction of 1,500 posts within Kent Police and also at the 60% reduction in community safety funding provided by Kent County Council over the past two years. He noted the proposal for the closure of the cash offices and the transitional arrangements being made to assist current users to use alternative payment methods and also welcomed the creation of the cross-party Leaders Advisory Group for Children and Young People but wondered how this would interact with the Policy Overview Committee.

Councillor Read broadly welcomed the budget proposals and noted past achievements within the borough both in terms of service delivery and major projects which had delivered facilities such as Princes Park and the Dojo for Dartford. Whilst regretting the closure of the Swanscombe cash office he noted that the cash office had only been open 4 mornings a week and had been reassured that alternative payment options would be carefully checked out and would offer a more complete payments service. He welcomed the transitional arrangements and proposed steps to be taken to assist current users. He felt that in the current difficult financial circumstances the budget should be commended and remained optimistic for the future.

Other Members commented that the proposals represented a tough but balanced budget, welcomed the proposed freeze for Council tax and the steps taken to secure the VAT rebate. The commitment to seek ways to enhance opportunities for children and young people was also welcomed and issues relating to child poverty in the Borough were highlighted by a Member who felt that there was nothing in the budget which would address these issues directly. Another Member drew attention to the vibrancy of youth within the borough and felt that there was a genuine willingness within the community to engage with the Council which needed to be accessed.

In response the Leader of the Council reiterated his earlier comments and stressed that whilst other authorities were shedding staff and cutting services the Council had developed a budget which did neither and had not attracted any proposals for amendment. He assured the Shadow Leader that the Advisory Group on Children and Young People could work in harmony with the Policy Overview Committee and that it was purely advisory but would seek to influence the wider agenda and if successful could provide a blueprint for working with partners to address other issues of social concern.

The recommendations in the budget, having been duly moved and seconded were put to the vote and were carried.

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RESOLVED: That

1. That the probable outturn and overall financial position for 2011/2012 as set out in Section 6 of this report be noted.
2. That in the light of the probable outturn of the General Fund for 2011/2012, the estimated General Fund balance of £3,688,000 at 31 March 2012 be noted as set out in paragraph 7.6.1 of this report.
3. That the main changes to the General Fund Budget, as set out in Appendix A (ii), be noted.
4. That the council tax requirement of £5,712,822 for 2012/2013, as set out in Appendix B (i) to this report, be approved.
5. That the Pay Policy Statement 2012/13 at Appendix P (i) be approved and that only Directors be designated as "Officers reporting to the Council".
6. That an increase of 1% be applied to local salary levels, and other relevant allowances with effect from 1 April 2012.
7. That no increase be applied to Members and Mayoral allowances for 2012/2013.
8. That the Managing Director be given delegated authority to agree fees payable for elections as outlined in the Pay Policy Statement at Appendix P (i).
9. That the proposals set out in Appendix P (ii), and the exempt annex, be approved, and subject to any necessary consultation with staff the Managing Director implement the organisational and staffing changes as noted in section 11 and Appendix P (ii) of the report in accordance with the operational requirements of the Council.
10. That the level of Mayoral allowances be based on a standard rate income tax payer, and this be adjusted to reflect individual tax circumstances, as required.
11. That the fees and charges, as set out in Appendix B (ii), be approved with effect from 1 April 2012 or, where specifically indicated within the Appendix, from such alternative dates as are set out therein, and that the Managing Director be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to set and amend fees and charges at Acacia to meet business demand, and to set fees for the Dartford Festival.
12. That the Identified Initiative Reserve, as set out in Appendix B (iii), be approved.

13. That the Managing Director be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to determine any expenditure funded from the Homes Bonus, to vire between the individual items during the year, and to report such determinations to Cabinet.
14. That the Community Grants budget, as set out in Appendix B (iv), be approved.
15. That the Housing Revenue Account Budget, at Appendix C (ii), be approved and the summary Housing Business Plan covering the period 2012/13 to 2021/22 at Appendix C (v) be noted.
16. That, in accordance with the latest Government guidance (issued in November 2011), and consistent with the rent escalator applied in recent years, the average rent increase of 6.02% for Housing Revenue Account dwellings, be approved; that the fees and charges relating to Housing Revenue Account properties, as set out in Appendix C (v) be approved. That the rent chargeable for pitches at Claywood Lane Caravan Site, Bean be increased by 6.02% from the first rent week in 2012/2013.
17. That the Corporate Property Maintenance and Improvement Programme be noted, as set out in Appendix E, and the Managing Director be given delegated authority to vire between individual items during the year.
18. That in the light of reducing usage and growing volumes of payments made by alternative methods the Council cease to offer cash handling facilities at Swanscombe and that the cash office be closed.
19. That the Capital Programme and budget for 2012/2013 to 2014/15 be agreed, as set out in Appendices D (i) and D (ii).
20. That the Medium Term Financial Plan shown at Appendix B (v) be noted.
21. That the Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Statement shown at Appendix D (iii), and the Prudential Indicators detailed therein, be approved.
22. That the Managing Director be given delegated authority to borrow for capital investment purposes, in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy, should it be in the interest of the Council to do so.
23. That the Managing Director be authorised to charge such sums as may be possible and prudent, which are currently anticipated to be met from revenue, balances or reserves, or capital accounts, to other accounts, as deemed to be in the interest of the authority.

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24. That the cash limiting rules for 2012/2013, as set out in Appendix G, be agreed.
25. That the special expense General Fund budget (parish precepts) as set out in Appendix K(i), totalling £966,737, be noted.
26. That the requirement of major preceptors, as detailed in Appendix K (i) to this report, be noted.
27. That the CIPFA statement on the role of the Director of Finance, reproduced as Appendix N, be noted.
28. That the financial threshold for the definition of a key decision, in accordance with Article 13.03(b) of the Constitution, be set at £400,000.
29. That, pursuant to Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972, the placement of staff employed by Dartford Borough Council at the disposal of Sevenoaks District Council for the purposes of its Environmental Health functions, be agreed.
30. That, Sevenoaks District Council's Chief Executive being the Head of Paid Service, be authorised to undertake on behalf of Dartford Borough Council the Environmental Health functions detailed in Appendix P (iii) of the report, in accordance with Dartford Borough Council's policies and procedures, the Service Level Agreement between the two Councils and the delegation arrangements agreed by Dartford Borough Council's Managing Director being Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of Dartford Borough Council.
31. That it be noted that at its meeting on 12 December 2011, the General Assembly of the Council calculated the following amounts as its Council Tax Base for the year 2012/2013 in accordance with regulations made under Section 31 B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended (the Act)

and

- (a) £35,069.50 - being the Council Tax Base 2012/13 for the whole Council area.
- (b) the aggregate of the amounts for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates, as follows:

	£
Bean Parish	596.27
Darenth Parish	1,643.70
Longfield and New Barn Parish	2,335.57
Southfleet Parish	587.18
Stone Parish	3,724.11

Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish	1,545.47
Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town	4,932.96
Wilmington Parish	3,036.12

32. That the following amounts now be calculated by the Council for the year 2012/2013 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended:-

- (a) £48,361,008 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the amounts set out in Section 31 A (2) of the Act, taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
- (b) £41,681,449 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in section 31 A (3) of the Act.
- (c) £6,679,559 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with sections 31 A (4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- (d) £190.47 being the amount at (c) above, divided by 3.31 (a) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with section 31 B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts
- (e) £966,737 being the aggregate amount of all special items, i.e. the total of the parish and town council precepts, referred to in Section 34(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992
- (f) £162.90 being the amount at (d) above, less the result given by dividing the amount at (e) above by the amount at 3.31 (a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, 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
- (g) Part of the Borough's area

£185.42	Bean Parish
£202.42	Darenth Parish
£188.96	Longfield and New Barn Parish
£177.97	Southfleet Parish
£224.31	Stone Parish
£212.00	Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish
£251.19	Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL (BUDGET)

MONDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2012

£188.76 Wilmington Parish

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3.32(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 3.31(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, 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) That the following amounts, given by multiplying the amounts at 3.32(f) and 3.32(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, 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 Local Government Finance Act 1992, be the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

(i)

Bean Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
123.61	144.22	164.82	185.42	226.62	267.83	309.03	370.84

Darenth Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
134.95	157.44	179.93	202.42	247.40	292.38	337.37	404.84

Longfield and New Barn Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
125.97	146.97	167.96	188.96	230.95	272.94	314.93	377.92

Southfleet Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
118.65	138.42	158.20	177.97	217.52	257.07	296.62	355.94

Stone Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
149.54	174.46	199.39	224.31	274.16	324.00	373.85	448.62

Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
141.33	164.89	188.44	212.00	259.11	306.22	353.33	424.00

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
167.46	195.37	223.28	251.19	307.01	362.83	418.65	502.38

Wilmington Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
125.84	146.81	167.79	188.76	230.71	272.65	314.60	377.52

Unparished Parts of the Borough

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
108.60	126.70	144.80	162.90	199.10	235.30	271.50	325.80

33. That it be noted that, for the year 2012/2013, the major precepting authorities 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 dwellings shown below:-

Precepting Authorities

Kent County Council

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
698.52	814.94	931.36	1047.78	1280.62	1513.46	1746.30	2095.56

Kent Police Authority

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
92.45	107.86	123.27	138.68	169.50	200.32	231.13	277.36

Kent Fire and Rescue

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
45.30	52.85	60.40	67.95	83.05	98.15	113.25	135.90

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34. That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3.32(h) and 3.33 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts of Council Tax for the year 2012/2013 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Bean Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
959.88	1119.87	1279.85	1439.83	1759.79	2079.76	2399.71	2879.66

Darenth Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
971.22	1133.09	1294.96	1456.83	1780.57	2104.31	2428.05	2913.66

Longfield and New Barn Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
962.24	1122.62	1282.99	1443.37	1764.12	2084.87	2405.61	2886.74

Southfleet Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
954.92	1114.07	1273.23	1432.38	1750.69	2069.00	2387.30	2864.76

Stone Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
985.81	1150.11	1314.42	1478.72	1807.33	2135.93	2464.53	2957.44

Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
977.60	1140.54	1303.47	1466.41	1792.28	2118.15	2444.01	2932.82

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1003.73	1171.02	1338.31	1505.60	1840.18	2174.76	2509.33	3011.20

Wilmington Parish

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
962.11	1122.46	1282.82	1443.17	1763.88	2084.58	2405.28	2886.34

Unparished Parts of the Borough

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
944.87	1102.35	1259.83	1417.31	1732.27	2047.23	2362.18	2834.62

The meeting closed at 8.27 pm

Councillor I D Armitt
MAYOR

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS