

COUNCILLOR JEFFREY CHEETHAM MAYOR

MINUTES OF: THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF ROSSENDALE

Date of Meeting: 23rd February 2006

**PRESENT: The Mayor Councillor J Cheetham (in the Chair)
Councillors Alcroft, Atkinson, D Barnes, L Barnes,
Challinor, Crosta, Disley, Eaton, Farquharson, Forshaw,
Graham, Hancock, Huntbach, Lamb, Marriott, Neal,
Nicholass, Ormerod, J Pawson, S Pawson, Pilling,
Robertson, Ruddick, Sandiford, Starkey, H Steen, P Steen,
Thorne, Unsworth and Young.**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Owen Williams, Chief Executive
George Graham, Executive Director of Resources
Lynn Hurrell, Director of Housing Services
Phil Seddon, Head of Financial Services
Linda Fisher, Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Nick Molyneux, Communications Manager
Julian Joinson, Democratic Services Manager**

APOLOGIES: Councillors A Barnes, Driver, Entwistle, McShea and Swain.

BUSINESS MATTERS

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR, LEADER AND HEAD OF THE PAID SERVICE

The Mayor informed Members of the recent death Mr Ted Dugdale, who had served both as Mayor and Leader of the former Rawtenstall Council prior to local government reorganisation.

A period of one minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect.

The Leader indicated that he had had sight of two recent publications which had highlighted the progress and performance of the Council. The first had been based upon a Parliamentary answer given by Greg Pope, MP, which had described Rosssendale Borough Council as a 'shambles' and had suggested that large increases in government funding had not been spent appropriately. The Leader described the comments made as being selective. He pointed out financial inaccuracies in the report and indicated that funding had in fact led directly to the

improvement in the BFI rating from Poor to Fair and the carrying out of one of the most successful Housing Stock Option Appraisals in the country.

The second publication was the Audit Commission's Progress Assessment Report of February 2006 which had been published today. Because of the changes to the CPA system a further Progress Assessment had been undertaken and, accordingly, it had not been possible to change our overall CPA score. However, comparison between the previous and current reports had highlighted numerous improvements. Favourable comments were made in relation to increased capacity, improved customer satisfaction and better political and officer leadership. The Council had become increasingly self-aware and was rising to the challenge of its community leadership role. It was envisaged that the good progress made might result in further relaxation of the inspection regime.

The Leader also reported the retirement next week, of Chris McConville, Principal Administrative Officer, who had provided many year's loyal service to the Council and had worked closely with elected Members throughout. A presentation was due to be held on Friday, 24th February 2006 at lunch time. Members thanked Mr McConville for his hard work and wished him well for the future.

There were no communications from the Chief Executive.

3. MEMBERS QUESTION TIME

Councillor Robertson asked the following question:-

Now that the Town Hall is empty and the staff have moved into rented accommodation, can the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management tell me how much the annual rent will be for Futures Park, the IT Section in Hardman Mill and the offices at Hurstwood Court?

Councillor Ormerod replied that the rent for Futures Park and Hurstwood Court had previously been reported to Members in April 2005 as part of the Accommodation Strategy.

The rent at Futures Park, as reported, was £110,000 pa. Rent at Hurstwood Court and associated accommodation at New Hall Hey was £106,000. That expenditure was met fully by the Housing Revenue Account and was marginally less than that reported in the accommodation strategy.

The Rent for the IT department at Hardman Mill was £28,000 pa and had been offset by reduced annual charges from Sunguard Vivista.

Councilor Disley asked the Leader if he was happy with the use of different venues for Council meetings and whether the Council would eventually have a permanent base.

The Leader responded that he would like to see a purpose built civic facility with a Council Chamber. However, the Town Hall was due to be demolished to make way for the revitalised shopping centre in Rawtenstall. The Council continued to look for

opportunities for a new civic facility. He accepted that it was not ideal to hold Council meetings in school premises, but that Authority was nonetheless grateful for the welcome extended to it by external venue providers.

Councillor Forshaw asked whether Councillors' photographs could be posted at the One Stop Shop. Initial enquiries had been made, but a lack of wall space had been cited as the reason for not displaying photographs. Subsequently, posters of County Councillors had been displayed.

The Leader indicated that steps were being taken to rectify the lack of Councillors' photographs. These should be available soon.

Councillor Forshaw also enquired about the proposal to spend money on etchings on the glass at the One Stop Shop when that building would also be demolished in the future.

The Leader responded that an etching effect was being considered as part of the signage requirements for the One Stop Shop. He was not in a position to provide any information on the likely cost, but would send a full reply as soon as possible.

Councillor Neal referred to the Area Forums held throughout Rossendale and highlighted that members of the public often raised the same matters at subsequent meetings because the issues had not been resolved. He asked the Leader if responses to floor issues could be provided before the next available Area Forum meeting.

The Leader indicated that he was aware that there had been instances where responses were not available. However, efforts were being made to continue to improve the effectiveness of Area Forums.

Councillor Lamb reminded members that the legislation regarding high hedges had come into force last year. She indicated that the fee of £500 seemed too high and recalled that the Cabinet had agreed to review the fee after six months. She asked the Leader when that review would take place.

The Leader concurred that the Cabinet had agreed to review the fee and indicated that this would take place at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor Young asked if the leader shared his joy that the Standards Board had found that there was no case for Councillors Disley, Hancock and Pilling to answer in respect of recent referrals to the Standards Board.

The Leader replied that he had taken legal advice prior to reporting the matter and had been informed that he would himself be in breach of the Code of Conduct not to report any matter which might constitute a breach. His understanding had been that items taken in private, due to a likely disclosure of exempt information, should not be reported to the press. However, the Standards Board had clarified the extent to which the information contained within the Agenda item might be treated as exempt.

Councillor Hancock asked the following questions:-

The Council's Housing staff have relocated to Hurstwood Court in preparation for the transfer to Green Vale Homes, which is incurring rental costs. Can the Leader explain why the former Neighbourhood Office at Waterfoot was not considered as a possible office base?

Will the Council retain any responsibility for housing issues?

What progress has been made in relation to the proposed Members' accommodation in the vicinity of the Town Hall, Rawtenstall?

The Council's IT providers have moved to Hardman Mill, but I was not aware of this until receiving a message that computer access would be disrupted over the weekend. Can the Leader indicate when the move was agreed and who agreed it.

The Leader replied as follows:-

The former Waterfoot Neighbourhood Office had been considered as a base for Housing Services along with various other options. However, the premises were considered to be too small.

The Council would retain strategic responsibilities for the housing function, although the funding would now transfer to Green Vale Homes.

Members' accommodation would be provided in the Environmental Services Offices in the Town Hall Spur. Refurbishment was taking place at Stubblelee Hall to enable Environmental Services to relocate in the near future.

In respect of the transfer of IT Services to Hardman Mill a written reply would be provided.

Councillor Forshaw enquired about the progress made in relation to the Council making an application for the licensing parks and open spaces. A number of members of the public had asked her to raise this issue on their behalf. The view was expressed that a number of youth events planned and other public events scheduled for the Easter weekend would benefit from the existence a Council held licence.

Councillor Huntbach indicated that Licensing Committee had to remain impartial, but that the Council or an officer could make such an application. No application had been received to date by the Licensing Authority.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr P Mulderrig, a local solicitor, circulated a letter dated 23rd February 2006, in which he asked the following questions in respect of Section 106 planning agreements:-

“Can the Council Leader please say:-

1. Whether the proposed budget, and the Council Tax levy, on which it is based, makes any contingency provisions to meet potentially huge claims for compensation to which these issues may give rise if they are not satisfactorily resolved in accordance with the Council’s previously minuted decisions in respect of them?
2. Whether the Council carries appropriate insurance cover for negligence on behalf of its officers, if so what the level of that cover is, and whether the Council’s insurers have been put on notice of the likelihood of claims being made?
3. That he intends to do all within his power to ensure that this sorry affair will finally be made public via a committee hearing, and if so can he say whether he intends that such a meeting will take place before or after the May elections?”

The Leader agreed to send a full written response to the letter to Mr Mulderrig.

5. HOUSING STOCK TRANSFER

Members considered a report of the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Resources on approval to the terms for transfer of the Council’s housing stock to Green Vale Homes Ltd. Mr Graham provided a summary of the report, which included information on the background; financial deal; value of the stock; sale of assets; repayment of long term borrowing; sharing of Right to Buy receipts; VAT sharing agreement; transfer contract; and next steps in the process. The report also contained information about the warranties in relation to the environmental conditions in relation to transferring the property and the formal relationship between the Council and Green Vale Homes set out in Service Level Agreements.

Councillor Disley referred to concerns expressed by certain vulnerable groups in Council housing about the future. Regular information had been provided prior to the vote on stock transfer, but subsequently there had been little communication. Mr Graham confirmed that the Director of Housing Services would be requested to contact Councillor Disley and those concerned as soon as possible.

Councillor Neal enquired if Green Vale Homes were fully aware of the issues in respect of roads within the estates and of the discussions with Lancashire County Council concerning the Brookville Sheltered Housing Scheme. Mr Graham confirmed that they were aware of these issues.

Councillor Alcroft asked if the pension rights of employees transferred under the TUPE Regulations had been considered. Mr Graham confirmed that transferring staff would join the West Yorkshire Pension Fund.

Councillor Atkinson enquired about the ability of Green Vale Homes to replace any stock lost under Right to Buy legislation. Mr Graham indicated that there was a balance between planning requirements and the need to replace the housing stock.

Green Vale Homes would be asked to provide further affordable housing.

Councillor Hancock enquired about the 'gap funding' provided by the government to reflect the negative value of the stock. Mr Graham reported that the application of the formula used gave a negative value of between £17M and £19M. The precise amount was still the subject of negotiations between ODPM and Green Vale Homes.

The Leader thanked the Chief Executive, Mr Graham, Ms Hurrell and all the staff who had been involved in the housing stock transfer process. Councillor Challinor also thanked the members of the Shadow Board. Members acknowledged the significant contribution made by other groups, such as residents' associations.

It was **Moved** and **Seconded**:-

"1. To confirm that the Council is content with the terms of the transfer and financial package on offer and to agree the following formal resolutions;

That the execution (whether by application of the Council's seal (to deeds) or otherwise), delivery and performance of the Agreement (including all ancillary agreements detailed in the Schedules thereto) to be made between Green Vale Homes Limited and the Council, and any other agreement, document, transfer and deed to be entered into thereunder or in connection therewith be approved;

- (a) that the execution, delivery and performance of the transfer be approved, subject to receipt of the consent of the Deputy Prime Minister (in his capacity as First Secretary of State at the office of the Deputy Prime Minister) pursuant to Sections 32-34 and 43 of the Housing Act 1985 for the disposal of the Council's housing stock to the Company, together with any other appropriate consents which may be necessary for the disposal of any non-housing related assets;
- (b) that the execution, delivery and performance of the Deeds of Warranty which form part of the Agreement to be given to the funders or to any security trustee for the funders and the Company be approved;
- (c) that the Acting Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council Leader be authorised to agree any final financial issues which must be settled before completion of the transfer;
- (d) that the Acting Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to resolve any outstanding matter which might need to be dealt with before completion of the transfer, including agreement of the final terms of all documentation;
- (e) that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to attend to the sealing and signing of all appropriate documentation in relation to the transfer by the Council to the Company.

2. To note that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services is required to give an opinion to funders in the form set out in Appendix 1.”

The following **Amendment** was **Moved** and **Seconded**:-

“That in respect of the Paragraphs 1. (c) and (d) above the following wording be substituted:-

- ‘(c) That any final financial issues which must be settled before completion of the transfer, be referred back to the full Council;
- (d) That any outstanding matter which might need to be dealt with before completion of the transfer, including agreement of the final terms of all documentation, be referred back to full Council;”

On being put the **Amendment** was **Lost**, whereupon a further **Amendment** was **Moved** and **Seconded**:-

“That in respect of the Paragraphs 1. (c) and (d) above the following wording be substituted:-

- ‘(c) That the Acting Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council Leader, Deputy Leader and Opposition Spokespersons, be authorised to agree any final financial issues which must be settled before completion of the transfer;
- (d) That the Acting Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Opposition Spokespersons, be authorised to resolve any outstanding matter which might need to be dealt with before completion of the transfer, including agreement of the final terms of all documentation;”

On the **Amendment** being put, three Members present requested a recorded vote, in accordance with Paragraph 16.5 of the Council Procedure Rules at Part 4 - Rules of Procedure of the Constitution.

Voting took place on the **Amendment**, the result of which was as follows:-

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
Alcroft	✓		
Atkinson	✓		
Barnes D		✓	
Barnes L		✓	
Challinor		✓	
Cheetham		✓	
Crosta		✓	
Disley	✓		
Eaton	✓		
Farquharson		✓	
Forshaw	✓		
Graham		✓	
Hancock	✓		
Huntbach		✓	
Lamb	✓		
Marriott		✓	
Neal	✓		
Nicholass		✓	
Ormerod		✓	
J Pawson		✓	
S Pawson		✓	
Pilling	✓		
Robertson	✓		
Ruddick		✓	
Sandiford		✓	
Starkey		✓	
H Steen		✓	
P Steen		✓	
Thorne		✓	
Unsworth	✓		
Young	✓		
TOTALS	12	19	0

Accordingly, the **Amendment** was **Lost**, whereupon the **Substantive Motion** was put and it was:-

Resolved:

1. To confirm that the Council is content with the terms of the transfer and financial package on offer and to agree the following formal resolutions;

That the execution (whether by application of the Council's seal (to deeds) or otherwise), delivery and performance of the Agreement (including all ancillary agreements detailed in the Schedules thereto) to be made between Green

Vale Homes Limited and the Council, and any other agreement, document, transfer and deed to be entered into thereunder or in connection therewith be approved;

- (a) that the execution, delivery and performance of the transfer be approved, subject to receipt of the consent of the Deputy Prime Minister (in his capacity as First Secretary of State at the office of the Deputy Prime Minister) pursuant to Sections 32-34 and 43 of the Housing Act 1985 for the disposal of the Council's housing stock to the Company, together with any other appropriate consents which may be necessary for the disposal of any non-housing related assets;
- (b) that the execution, delivery and performance of the Deeds of Warranty which form part of the Agreement to be given to the funders or to any security trustee for the funders and the Company be approved;
- (c) that the Acting Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council Leader be authorised to agree any final financial issues which must be settled before completion of the transfer;
- (d) that the Acting Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to resolve any outstanding matter which might need to be dealt with before completion of the transfer, including agreement of the final terms of all documentation;
- (e) that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to attend to the sealing and signing of all appropriate documentation in relation to the transfer by the Council to the Company.

2. To note that the Head of Legal and Democratic Services is required to give an opinion to funders in the form set out in Appendix 1.

NOTE: Ms L Hurrell, Director of Housing, left the room during consideration of the above item of business.

POLICY AND BUDGET FRAMEWORK ITEMS

6. REPORT UNDER SECTION 25 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2003 AND UPDATE OF THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Members considered a report of the Head of Financial Services, in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, in respect of the robustness of the budget proposals and the adequacy of reserves reflected in the Cabinet's budget proposals. Mr Seddon highlighted a number of key areas within the report and responded to queries from Members. Issues included:- pay and pensions; running expenses; major contracts; volatile expenditure budgets; income budgets; capital finance and interest; housing stock transfer; major procurement processes and reduced spending. Councillors also received an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Resolved:

1. To note the advice of the Chief Finance Officer with regard to the robustness of the budget and adequacy of reserves and to have regard to it when setting the budget for 2006/07, which appears elsewhere on the agenda.
2. To approve the update to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, subject to any further amendments arising from the Council's final budget decisions.

7. REVENUE BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX 2006/07

Members considered a report in respect of the Cabinet's recommendations for the Council's 2006/07 budget and the consequential level of Council Tax. The Leader of the Council summarised the main elements of the report, including the Policy Context for the budget, which was based upon the outcome of the consultation on revised priorities as part of the budget process. The revised priorities reflected the progress which had been made in respect of housing stock transfer, the build up of financial reserves, Member development and human resources.

The Leader outlined the proposals to promote Rossendale, and to tackle low level crime, which featured highly within the budget. In addition, a number of savings had been identified.

The Leader also referred to the proposals to close the greenhouses at Stubblelee Park, which would not be implemented until the end of June 2006. It was acknowledged that any organisation wishing to continue to operate the greenhouses as a social care or educational facility could make any proposals to the Council within that period.

In summary the budget gave a rise of Council Tax at Band D of £232.58 representing an increase of 2.2%, which was the lowest in Lancashire. The Leader thanked the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management and officers for their work on the budget, together with local groups who had participated in the consultation.

Councillor Eaton spoke against the proposed closure of the greenhouses at Stubblelee Park. He referred to the social and educational use of the facilities and asked whether options such as retaining one greenhouse or marketing its services might be considered. Councillors Lamb and Hancock also spoke in favour of retaining the operation of the greenhouses. Councillor P Seen enquired whether there were any other options to secure the future of the greenhouses, such as working in partnership.

Councillor Neal commented on the impact of Council Tax on people on low incomes. Councillor Young expressed a preference for a local income tax.

Councillor Hancock reported that the Labour Group provided its observations on the draft budget and that, in general, there was support for the main thrust of the budget. He expressed the view that the closure of Waterfoot Neighbourhood Office

had led to the closure of the adjacent library. He also commented that the closure of the Kay Street Offices would lead to an overall reduction in expenditure on tourism in the sum of £10k.

Councillor Eaton enquired about the Local Land and Property Gazetteer. The Leader indicated that the system would help to address issues about asset management which had been identified by the Audit Commission. He agreed to forward some further information to him on this matter.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management indicated that this was a robust budget, which had been the subject of wide public consultation. He commended the budget to elected Members.

It was **Moved** and **Seconded**:-

- “1. To approve the revised corporate priorities set out in Paragraph 3.1.1 as the cornerstone of the Policy and Budget framework for the coming year;
2. To approve the savings identified for 2006-07 in the sum of £224,040 as detailed in Appendix 1;
3. To approve investments in the sum of £384,880 as detailed in Appendix 2, to be included in the Revenue Budget for 2006-07;
4. Approve the amount of £287,000 and £85,000 as detailed in Appendix 3, to be transferred from the Change Management Reserve and Planning Delivery Grant, respectively, to fund the items identified on a non-recurrent basis;
5. To approve the Councils net budget requirement for 2006/07 of £10,805,878;
6. To approve a Rossendale Borough Council Tax band D equivalent of £232.58 for 2006/07 representing a 2.2% increase on 2005/06;
7. To approve the formal Council Tax resolutions (attached at Annex 1);
8. To approve the Concessionary Fares scheme as detailed in Appendix 4;
9. To note that by Scheme of Delegation, dated 11th November 2005, The Head of Financial Services in consultation with The Leader of Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2006-2007 in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by Section 84 Local Government Act 2003 for the whole area of the Borough 21,040 “D” Band equivalent units being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year end. For that part of the Council’s area being Whitworth Parish, the amount of 2,308 “D” Band equivalent units, being the amounts calculated by the Council in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its

Council Tax for the year for dwellings in that part of its area to which the special Items relate;

10. To authorise that the Head of Customer Services and e-Government take all appropriate steps to recover amounts of Council Tax owed.”

The following **Amendment** was **Moved** and **Seconded**:-

“That in addition to Paragraphs 1 to 10 above the following wording be agreed:-

- ’11. That, in the light of the poor level of response to direct queries from the public and Members from some sections of the Council, a sum of £5,000 is allocated from the Change Management Reserve for the purpose of carrying out a review of the way in which the Council responds to residents and Members with a view to developing a clear and consistent system across the Council.”

On being put the **Amendment** was **Carried**, whereupon a further **Amendment** was **Moved** and **Seconded**:-

“That in respect of Paragraph 2. the following wording be substituted:-

- ‘2. To approve the savings identified for 2006-07 in the sum of £224,040 as detailed in Appendix 1, subject to Item ES1 in respect of the Closure of the Greenhouses at Stubblelee Park not being taken and the consequential adjustments being made to the budget calculation.

On the **Amendment** being put, three Members present requested a recorded vote, in accordance with Paragraph 16.5 of the Council Procedure Rules at Part 4 - Rules of Procedure of the Constitution.

Voting took place on the **Amendment**, the result of which was as follows:-

COUNCILLOR	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTENTION
Alcroft	✓		
Atkinson	✓		
Barnes D		✓	
Barnes L		✓	
Challinor		✓	
Cheetham		✓	
Crosta		✓	
Disley	✓		
Eaton	✓		
Farquharson		✓	
Forshaw	✓		
Graham		✓	
Hancock	✓		
Huntbach		✓	
Lamb	✓		
Neal	✓		
Nicholass		✓	
Ormerod		✓	
J Pawson		✓	
S Pawson		✓	
Pilling	✓		
Robertson	✓		
Ruddick		✓	
Sandiford		✓	
Starkey		✓	
H Steen		✓	
P Steen		✓	
Thorne		✓	
Unsworth	✓		
Young	✓		
TOTALS	12	18	0

Accordingly, the **Amendment** was **Lost**, whereupon the **Substantive Motion** was put and it was:-

Resolved:

1. To approve the revised corporate priorities set out in Paragraph 3.1.1 as the cornerstone of the Policy and Budget framework for the coming year;
2. To approve the savings identified for 2006-07 in the sum of £224,040 as detailed in Appendix 1;
3. To approve investments in the sum of £384,880 as detailed in Appendix 2, to

be included in the Revenue Budget for 2006-07;

4. Approve the amount of £287,000 and £85,000 as detailed in Appendix 3, to be transferred from the Change Management Reserve and Planning Delivery Grant, respectively, to fund the items identified on a non-recurrent basis;
5. To approve the Councils net budget requirement for 2006/07 of £10,805,878;
6. To approve a Rossendale Borough Council Tax band D equivalent of £232.58 for 2006/07 representing a 2.2% increase on 2005/06;
7. To approve the formal Council Tax resolutions (attached at Annex 1).
8. To approve the Concessionary Fares scheme as detailed in Appendix 4;
9. To note that by Scheme of Delegation, dated 11th November 2005, The Head of Financial Services in consultation with The Leader of Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2006-2007 in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by Section 84 Local Government Act 2003 for the whole area of the Borough 21,040 "D" Band equivalent units being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year end. For that part of the Council's area being Whitworth Parish, the amount of 2,308 "D" Band equivalent units, being the amounts calculated by the Council in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in that part of its area to which the special Items relate;
10. To authorise that the Head of Customer Services and e-Government take all appropriate steps to recover amounts of Council Tax owed;
11. That, in the light of the poor level of response to direct queries from the public and Members from some sections of the Council, a sum of £5,000 is allocated from the Change Management Reserve for the purpose of carrying out a review of the way in which the Council responds to residents and Members with a view to developing a clear and consistent system across the Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

Cabinet - 22nd February 2006

8. ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

There were no recommendations made by the Cabinet to Council under the above item and, accordingly, with the agreement of the meeting the item was withdrawn.

9. ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Members were informed that, at its meeting on 22nd February 2006, the Cabinet had considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive on the second draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) to be issued for a further round of public consultation, in accordance with the regulatory requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Councillor Challinor, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, outlined the purpose of the document, which set out the policy for involving stakeholders in the development of the Local Development Framework, and provided a summary of the outcome of an initial consultation on that document.

Resolved:

To endorse the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in order for it to be published for consultation.

10. RENT SETTING REPORT 2006/07

Members were informed that, at its meeting on 22nd February 2006, the Cabinet had considered a report of the Director of Housing on the annual rent increase for 2006/07, in accordance with Office of the Deputy Prime Minister guidelines on rent restructuring, and on increases on other rental/service charge income.

The report had outlined how the amendments to the Government's rent setting formula impacted on rents for Council tenants in Rossendale and proposed amendments to the Council's previous policy and an increase lower than that available through maximising rental income via the Government's (ODPM) formula. Members were also reminded that if stock transfer proceeded this would be the last time the Council set the rents. In future, rent setting would fall within the remit of Green Vale Homes.

Resolved:

1. To increase dwelling rents by an average of 5.27%;
2. To increase garage rents by 2.7%;
3. To increase communal heating charges by 5%;
4. To increase miscellaneous charges by 2.7%; and
5. To increase Supporting People charges by 2.5% in line with the increase determined by the Supporting People Commissioning Body on 9th February 2006.

11. VOTE OF THANKS FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Leader of the Council and the Group Leaders of the other political parties thanked Mr Owen Williams for his leadership and hard work as Chief Executive of the Council. An inscribed glass memento was presented in recognition of his efforts and the Elected members wished him well for the future.

Mr Williams acknowledged the significant part played by Rossendale in both his professional and personal life and thanked elected Members past and present. He expressed the view that Rossendale was well placed to progress in the coming years.

(The meeting started at 7.00 pm and concluded at 10.05 pm.)



Rossendale Borough Council

Special Council Meeting – 23rd February 2006

Revenue Budget and Council Tax 2006-07

FORMAL COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS

1 – Budget Requirement

- 1.1. That the savings identified from for 2006-07 in the sum of £224,040 as detailed in Appendix 1 of the budget papers be approved
- 1.2. That investments in the sum of £299,880 (£384,880 - £85,000 (see 1.3)) as detailed in Appendix 2 of the budget papers be included in the Revenue Budget for 2006-07
- 1.3. That an amount of £287,000 be transferred from the Change Management Reserve and £85,000 from the Planning Delivery Grant as detailed in Appendix 3 of the budget papers.
- 1.4. That consequent upon resolutions 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 above, and the Head of Finance opinion on the robustness of the 2006-07 Estimates and the level of balances, the Council's Budget for 2006-07, as amended, be approved in the sum of £10,805,878.

2 – 2006/07 Precepts

- 2.1 That the receipt, or anticipated receipt, of the following precepts for 2006-2007 be noted:

		£
Lancashire Police Authority	(General Expenses)	2,379,509
Lancashire County Council	(General Expenses)	20,973,821
Lancashire Fire Authority	(General Expenses)	1,151,098
Rossendale Borough Council	(General Expenses)	4,893,432
Whitworth Parish Council	(Special Expenses)	46,854

3 – Council Tax Base

- 3.1 That it is noted that by Scheme of Delegation, dated 11th November 2005, The Head of Financial Services in consultation with The Leader of Cabinet calculated the following amounts for the year 2006-2007 in accordance with Section 33 (1) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by Section 84 Local Government Act 2003 For the whole area of the Borough 21,040 "D" Band equivalent units being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year end.

3.2 For that part of the Council's area being Whitworth Parish, the amount of 2,308 "D" Band equivalent units, being the amounts calculated by the Council in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in that part of its area to which the Special Items relate.

4 – Budget impact on Council Tax

4.1 That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2006-2007 in accordance with Section 32 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992:-

- (a) £33,703,946 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) £22,898,068 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) £10,805,878 being the amount by which the aggregate at 4.1(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4.1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year.
- (d) £5,912,446 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, Revenue Support Grant, (increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its Collection Fund to its General Fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Council Tax Surplus) or (reduced by the amount of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its General Fund to its Collection Fund in accordance with Section 97(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988) (Council Tax Deficit)
- (e) **£232.58** being the amount at 4.1(c) above less the amount at 4.1(d) above, all divided by the amount at 3.1 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) **£46,854** being the aggregate amounts of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (g) **£20.30** being the amount at 4.1(f) above all divided by the amount of 3.2 above, calculated by Council and applicable to the Parish of Whitworth area only for the Special items.

VALUATION BANDS								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Special Items Only, Parish of Whitworth	13.53	15.79	18.04	20.30	24.81	29.32	33.83	40.60

- (h) **£252.88** for part of the Council's area, Parish of Whitworth, being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 4.1(e) 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 3.2 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) Being the amounts shown below that are given by multiplying the amounts at 4.1(e) and 4.1(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 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.

VALUATION BANDS								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Parish of Whitworth	168.59	196.68	224.78	252.88	309.08	365.27	421.47	505.76
All other parts of the Borough	155.05	180.90	206.74	232.58	284.26	335.95	387.63	465.16

- (j) That it be noted that for the year 2006-2007 the Lancashire County Council 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:-

VALUATION BANDS								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Lancashire County Council	664.57	775.33	886.09	996.85	1218.37	1439.89	1661.42	1993.70

- (k) That it be noted that for the year 2006-2007 the Lancashire 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 dwellings shown below:-

VALUATION BANDS								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Lancashire Police Authority	75.39	87.96	100.52	113.09	138.22	163.35	188.48	226.18

- (l) That it be noted that for the year 2006-2007 the Lancashire 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 dwellings shown below:-

VALUATION BANDS								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Lancashire Fire Authority	36.47	42.55	48.63	54.71	66.87	79.03	91.18	109.42

- (m) That, being calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 4.1(i) above and 4.1(i), (j) and (k) 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 2006-2007 for each of the categories of dwellings show below:-

VALIDATION BANDS								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Parish of Whitworth	945.02	1102.52	1260.03	1417.53	1732.54	2047.54	2362.55	2835.06
All other parts of the Borough	931.49	1086.73	1241.98	1397.23	1707.73	2018.22	2328.72	2794.46

5 - Concessionary Fares

- 5.1 That the Concessionary Fares scheme as detailed in the budget papers (Appendix 4) be approved.

6 – Council Tax Collection

- 6.1 That the Head of Customer services and e-Government and her officers be authorised to take all necessary steps to ensure collection and recovery of the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).