



Chief Executive's Department
Civic Centre
HARTLEPOOL

14th February, 2011

The Mayor (Stuart Drummond)

Councillors Aiken, C Akers-Belcher, S Akers-Belcher, Atkinson, Barclay, Barker, Brash, R W Cook, Cranney, Fleet, Fleming, Flintoff, Gibbon, Griffin, Hall, Hargreaves, Hill, Ingham, Jackson, James, Laffey, Lauderdale, Lawton, A E Lilley, G Lilley, London, Maness, A Marshall, J Marshall, J W Marshall, McKenna, Dr. Morris, Payne, Plant, Preece, Richardson, Rogan, Shaw, Simmons, Sutheran, Thomas, H Thompson, P Thompson, Turner, Wells, Worthy and Wright

Madam or Sir,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the COUNCIL to be held on THURSDAY, 24th February, 2011 at 7.00 p.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool to consider the subjects set out in the attached agenda.

Yours faithfully

P Walker
Chief Executive

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COUNCIL AGENDA



24th February 2011

at 7.00 p.m.

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

1. To receive apologies from absent members.
2. To receive any declarations of interest from members.
3. To deal with any business required by statute to be done before any other business.
4. To receive questions from and provide answers to the public in relation to matters of which notice has been given under Rule 10.
5. To approve the minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on 10th February 2011, as a correct record (to follow).
6. Questions from Members of the Council on the minutes of the last meeting of the Council.
7. To answer questions of members of the Council under Council Procedure Rule 11;
 - (a) Questions to members of the Executive about recent decisions of the Executive (without notice)
 - (b) Questions to members of the Executive and Chairs of Committees and Forums, for which notice has been given.
 - (c) Questions to the appropriate members on Police and Fire Authority issues, for which notice has been given.

8. To deal with any business required by statute to be done.
9. To receive any announcements from the Chair, the Mayor, members of the Cabinet or the head of the paid service.
10. To dispose of business (if any) remaining from the last meeting and to receive the report of any scrutiny forum or other committee to which such business was referred for consideration.
11. To receive reports from the Council's committees and working groups other than any overview and scrutiny committee and to receive questions and answers on any of those reports;
12. To consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, including consideration of reports of the overview and scrutiny committees for debate and to receive questions and answers on any of those items;
13. To consider reports from the Executive:-
 - (a) Proposals in relation to the Council's budget and policy framework
 - (i) Formal Council Tax Setting 2011/2012 – Incorporation of Police and Fire Authority Precepts.
 - (ii) Safer Hartlepool Partnership's crime, disorder, substance misuse and reducing re-offending strategy 2011-2014
 - (b) Proposals for departures from the budget and policy framework
14. To consider any motions in the order in which notice has been received.

“The Council notes, with indignation, that whilst Hartlepool is facing a massive 25% reduction in its financial settlement over the next two years, the UK's contribution to the European Union (EU) is set to increase by an incredible 60% over two years.

This Council notes that, despite the opposition of some Conservative MPs, and Labour and Conservative MEPs, it is likely that the government will agree to a further 2.9% increase in the overall EU budget.

This Council believes that the EU should be treated the same as the other tiers of government and in these austere times should share responsibility, along with central and local government, for public spending reductions. Sharing the burden would result in less severe cuts for local authorities, and give more assistance to councils to protect front line services.

This Council therefore urges our own MP Iain Wright and his fellow MPs for Middlesbrough, Stockton on Tees, Darlington, Redcar and Easington not to support an increase in the EU budget.”

Signed by: -

Councillor Chris Simmons

Councillor Marjorie James

Councillor Robbie Payne

Councillor Trish Lawton

Councillor Sarah Maness

15. To receive the Chief Executive's report and to pass such resolutions thereon as may be deemed necessary.

<p style="text-align: center;">COUNCIL</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 FEBRUARY 2011</p>

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

PRESENT:-

The Chairman (Councillor C Richardson) presiding.

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

COUNCILLORS:

C Akers-Belcher	S Akers-Belcher	Atkinson
Barclay	Barker	Brash
Cook	Cranney	Fleet
Fleming	Gibbon	Griffin
Hall	Hargreaves	Hill
James	Laffey	Lauderdale
Lawton	G Lilley	London
Maness	A Marshall	McKenna
Dr. Morris	Payne	Preece
Rogan	Shaw	Simmons
Thomas	H Thompson	P Thompson
Turner	Wells	Worthy
Wright		

OFFICERS:

Paul Walker, Chief Executive
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer
Joanne Machers, Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer
Alyson Caman, Head of Legal Services
Nicola Bailey, Director of Child and Adult Services
John Mennear, Assistant Director, Community Services
Graham Frankland, Assistant Director, Resources
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning
Alistair Rae, Public Relations Manager
David Cosgrove, Angela Hunter and Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Team.

109. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENT MEMBERS

Councillors Aiken, Flintoff, Ingham, Jackson, A Lilley, J Marshall, J W Marshall, Plant and Sutheran.

110. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillor C Akers-Belcher declared a prejudicial interest in Minute No. 116 and in accordance with the Council Procedure Rule 23 and the Members' Code of Conduct left the meeting during its consideration.

Councillors C Akers-Belcher, Barclay, Cook, Fleet, Hargreaves, James, Lauderdale, Lawton, A Marshall, Richardson, Rogan, Thomas, and P Thompson declared personal interests in Minute No. 121 (a) (ii) in accordance with the Councillors Code of Conduct.

111. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE TO BE DONE BEFORE ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

112. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- (i) Question from Teresa Lee to Councillor Jonathon Brash – Portfolio Holder for Performance

Why is it necessary for the Diversity Officer job to be cut and for what reason? Can the Council please take into account the needs of people from different background living in Hartlepool and change the decision of depriving us of our officer and opportunity to meet together?

The Portfolio Holder thanked Teresa Lee for her question and commented that the proposal to make the Diversity Officer post redundant had been the subject of debate among Cabinet and other Members. There had also been a lot of correspondence received from many interested groups and individuals.

The council is facing an unprecedented budget situation as we are losing £112 in government grant for every man, woman and child in Hartlepool in comparison to the national average of £49. The Council has worked hard over the past months to adapt to these changes and while some services are changing, some are disappearing altogether. Diversity is one of those areas where we have had to make changes to the way the service is provided. The proposal is that the diversity budget be reduced from £53,000 to £13,000, which would result in the redundancy of one full-time employee. The post does have responsibility for co-ordinating the Council's arrangements for equalities and diversity. Unfortunately, the Diversity budget was not an area that could remain untouched during these budget considerations.

An equality impact assessment has identified where there may be a detrimental impact on diverse groups, specifically people from an ethnic minority background and so further consultation has been undertaken with the Talking with Communities group.

Cabinet considered the written comments received in reply to the consultation before deciding to propose the budget reduction. Particular regard was given to issues raised about:

- The importance of the 'Talking with Communities' group continuing;
- Having a single point of contact within the Council;
- The personal attributes of the post holder.

Cabinet heard that officers are undertaking a review of all the community groups which are organized or accessed to engage and consult with the people of Hartlepool.

The Talking with Communities group is an excellent example of a group that has established itself and grown into a popular and useful forum for diverse ethnic groups to come together. The budget proposals do not mean the group will end as there is sufficient budget provision for the group to continue and I believe it should do so.

Cabinet also considered that a great deal of progress has been made across all departments to embed an equalities approach to delivering services and that customer care skills will be further developed so that a range of staff can deliver the sort of support valued by the people who replied to the consultation. It is important to recognise that the majority of the post-holder's work was related to functions internal to the Council.

We have 86 staff that are facing compulsory redundancy because of these budget proposals. Each and every one of them currently contributes to delivering excellent services for the Council. Sadly it is impossible to take £14million from our budgets without difficult and unpleasant decisions and this is one of them.

In a supplementary question, Teresa Lee appreciated the points made by the Portfolio Holder and made reference to the great respect that the Diversity Officer was held in by the ethnic minority groups in the town and requested that the Portfolio Holder look again at the decision to make the post redundant.

The Portfolio Holder understood and appreciated the respect with which the post-holder was seen by the various groups in the town but stated that he believed that this was the right decision, however it was for Council members at this meeting to make the final decision. The Portfolio Holder did indicate that he had received considerable feedback from the communities which he had taken into consideration in reaching his view. The Portfolio Holder stressed that no one should be in any doubt about the Council's commitment to diversity and equality and it would ensure that all the various groups would continue to receive support from the authority.

(ii) Question from Christine Blakey to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Why, when the council is supposed to be socially inclusive, are people not allowed to voice concerns, unless they are praising people, management, delivery and evaluation of Tall Ships?

The Mayor commented that he believed the Council was socially inclusive and gave everyone and anyone the opportunity to raise their concerns. This was shown through the fact that there were three questions on the Tall Ships at this meeting. The issue of the Tall Ships event has been questioned in great detail at meetings of Cabinet, scrutiny and other meetings of the council over the last 6 months with ample opportunities for input from the public.

In a supplementary question Christine Blakey complained that she had been denied the opportunity at meetings to criticise the Tall Ships event and particularly the disabled access to the event stated that she considered that diversity was not being followed in Hartlepool Borough Council. The evaluation undertaken of the event was invalid. Why when the authority had Tall Ship's staff paid a fortune over three years was the event site so underprepared with people falling on the unmade dolomite surface and disabled access severely restricted?

The Mayor indicated that he was not aware of the meetings referred to by Ms Blakey where people were prevented from commenting on the Tall Ships event. In terms of the evaluation carried out, the Mayor questioned how it could be substantiated that the evaluation carried out was invalid. Any Councillor on the authority would wish to see evidence that this council was not fulfilling its duties on social inclusion. The Mayor stated that in relation to the salaries paid to those involved in the organisation of the event, they were paid what the jobs were worth.

The Mayor moved to the issue of the disabled access and commented that there was no secret about the fact that there was a part of the Tall Ships site which was uneven and difficult to access. The site belongs to PD Ports and is a working port site. It could not be tarmaced as had been suggested as it would have cost a seven figure sum to improve access for just four days which could not be justified. Signage was altered and improved during the event for disabled visitors particularly from the disabled parking area. I accept there was problem and that some people did have access issues.

In a second supplementary question, Ms Blakey stated that she had evidence that that the evaluation was not independent, that there was legal action being taken against the council by concessionaires and questioned whether anyone in the Council would be investigated and made accountable?

The Mayor stated that there was no legal action being taken against the council and he considered that it was scurrilous to say so. The company that undertook the evaluation was fully independent but that he would be happy to see any evidence to the contrary.

(iii) Question from David Simpson to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

What comparison or mapping exercise has been undertaken to analyse the quality of the services we provide out in the community against similar initiatives by Connexions/Economic Development?

The Mayor stated that he was not aware of any mapping exercise carried out to map the services in the community against those provided by Connexions and the Economic Development service. The Council was in the position of having to make some very difficult decisions on next year's budget but the fact was that the year after would be even worse and we had to start now in working to prepare next year's budget. The Council would be looking at the voluntary sector next year to assess if it was the case that they could deliver the services better than authority.

In a supplementary question Mr Simpson asked how many people the Council had assisted into work compared with the voluntary sector and why wasn't the council supporting this service in the current economic climate and when it was making redundancies?

The Mayor stated that he didn't have those figures. The Mayor indicated that Mr Simpson must be referring to those schemes that had been funded by the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) which the government had ceased in its entirety. The Council had little choice but to say with all WNF schemes that they had to stop. Everyone involved should have been aware that this was a time limited government funding stream. The major problems were caused by the funding being pulled in-year. Hartlepool had lost in excess of £5m of funding for schemes that were very successful but the Council was left in a position where it could do nothing else other than end those projects.

(iv) Question from Julie Marshall to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Can the council confirm what was their results of their equality impact assessment, on the community, from their proposed reduction in the community pool funding of 30%?

The Mayor stated that the situation had changed since the question was submitted and the proposal before Council this evening was to reduce the Community Pool by 10% rather than 30%. In relation to the Equality Impact Assessment, the Mayor stated that such an assessment would be undertaken at the time the Grants Committee considered the individual grant bids. Council was looking at the whole of the funding pool tonight. Council was aware that any reduction in the overall pool could have an affect on the bodies submitting bids to the Community Pool however that impact could not be assessed until the actual bids were considered.

(v) Question from Paul McCraith to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Why did the Cabinet support a recommendation to cut the allocation to the

Community Pool before making any assessment of the impact upon local communities in relation to the services that would be affected?

The Mayor commented that the response was very similar to the previous question. The question was obviously submitted prior to Cabinet meeting on Monday when the recommendation was agreed to reduce the Community Pool by 10% which was more in line with the government cut in grant funding to the authority.

In a supplementary question, Mr McCraith acknowledged the Mayor's comment but asked again if any assessment had been made?

The Mayor commented that Cabinet felt very strongly about this issue and would be looking to work much more closely with the voluntary sector in the future through more commissioning of services. The current set up of the Community Pool meant that voluntary bodies bid for money. In the future it was hoped to move to more commissioning of services and working closer with the voluntary sector rather than simply giving grants out. This process had, however, only started.

Members debated the issue and indicated that the work on moving to a closer working relationship with the voluntary sector needed to be moved on apace. Members considered that the government's 'big society' had been in existence in Hartlepool for years though the town was now at threat of losing the voluntary sector it now needed more than ever.

(vi) Question from Jan Hollis to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Why didn't the Council carry out a review of Working Neighbourhood Fund funded schemes such as Hartlepool Carers to see whether or not any of the Working Neighbourhood Fund funded schemes provided better outcomes than other areas of service delivery provided by the Council?

The Mayor indicated that the Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) funded schemes were analysed in depth twice independently and the Economic Development service also regularly examined the quality of the schemes. As to why all the WNF schemes had been stopped, the Mayor admitted that it was the easier option. If Cabinet had prioritised some WNF schemes then the Council would be cutting deeper than it is having to do so tonight. The Council was well aware of the excellent WNF schemes that were operating out in the community but simply could not fund them without cutting even more from services than it was having to do.

In a supplementary question, Jan Hollis asked if the schemes should not have been looked at in the broader sense so that the impact on services could have been assessed?

The Mayor commented that the major problem was that the funding was withdrawn so quickly from WNF schemes. The in-year cuts had taken everyone by surprise. The Council did want to work with the groups out in the community

and have those conversations on the future provision but it had to be acknowledged that some services and organisations were going to fall by the wayside. It was about the best people providing the best services to Hartlepool no matter where they are. Everyone in the Council was ready for that task.

(vii) Question from Angie Wilcox to Councillor Cath Hill, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Do the local authority have a commitment to the continued delivery of key children's services by the voluntary sector organisations who have developed an exemplary track record of delivering key services over the past ten years, for example Children's Fund, FAST, Strengthening Families Programme?

The Portfolio Holder stated that the simple answer to the question was 'yes'.

In a supplementary question Ms Wilcox asked how the voluntary sector could be involved in the strategy to develop the key children's services at the heart of the community. The authority had commitments to ensure that services remained on the ground but what mechanism will be put in place by Children's Services Department to ensure those services remain.

The Portfolio Holder indicated that that was already in place though the compact that the authority had signed with the voluntary sector groups to ensure that in the future services were commissioned from the best providers.

In a second supplementary question Ms Wilcox indicated that some groups were equipped to do that but many smaller organisations that don't have the capacity to go through a procurement process. These groups still undertook excellent work on the ground but could in the future be ruled out of providing services. What provision was the local authority putting in place to assist the smaller community groups?

The Portfolio Holder indicated that the council would be redesigning what the authority was doing to assist community groups. There would also be assistance from HVDA to help those groups in pulling bids together. The Portfolio Holder indicated that, unfortunately, she had to repeat what the Mayor had said earlier, in that if the council was having its funding cut by 22% then there wouldn't just be cuts to local authority services there would be cuts in the voluntary sector as well. No one was going to be exempt from the cuts being imposed.

(viii) Question from Rachel Lowery to Councillor Pamela Hargreaves, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development

It is increasingly likely that as we move towards 2012/13 that the local authority will explore the potential of setting up community interest companies to deliver key services, would it not be an idea to look at community interest companies already developed in the third sector as

vehicles for service delivery?

The Portfolio Holder commented that in short the answer was 'yes'. I am a passionate supporter of the voluntary and have worked in and supported the sector for a number of years. The voluntary sector in Hartlepool reached those parts of the community that council services often couldn't reach. To paraphrase the Carlsberg TV advert, Hartlepool voluntary sector is probably the best voluntary sector in the world. If the Prime Minister is looking for a model on which to base the 'big society', he should come and visit Hartlepool to see our model of the big society at work.

Commissioning services from the voluntary sector was not, however, the only option that would be considered. The Council has to find £14m of savings and the cuts this year as a result of government cuts. This was leading to a shameful waste of both local authority and voluntary sector jobs. No options were off the table and we would be seeking the right solution to the problems. We would have to accept that some services may best be provided by the public sector, the voluntary sector and even the private sector. We must focus on the outcomes and the beneficiaries of the services rather than who provides them. The Portfolio Holder gave her personal assurance that any process the council embarked upon would be open and fair and would take into account information from a wide range of bodies for making any decisions on the process and to who and how we transfer services.

In a supplementary question, Rachel Lowery asked what mechanism would be put in place to ensure that the voluntary sector is involved in those negotiations?

The Portfolio Holder stated some decision still need to be made and as was said earlier, we need to decide how we are going to do that quickly. Whatever process was put in place would be fair and transparent and would be designed not to alienate or prevent smaller organisations from taking part in the process. There were things that the council could do to facilitate that and assist groups to be fit for purpose.

(ix) Question from Sue Harriman to Councillor Jonathan Brash, Portfolio Holder for Performance

Has the Council done an analysis on the impact of voluntary sector losses and the impacts on local people including the reduction in services?

The Portfolio Holder commented that the impact was difficult to assess at this time as the individual grant allocations were made by the Grants Committee; today we were setting only the total budget. It was clear that the cuts could have a devastating affect on services both in the public and voluntary sector. Some services were already disappearing; a great deal of damage was being done. A full Economic Assessment for Hartlepool was underway and the first report on that was being referred to the Economic Development and Regeneration Portfolio Holder tomorrow.

A lot has been made in the press and meetings here of the affect these cuts will have on smaller groups and organisations. The government are to provide a transitional grant fund but groups can only apply to it if they receive at least £50,000 a year from the local authority. The government appears not to care about these small organisations yet wants them to deliver its aspirations on the 'big society'.

The Portfolio Holder commented that on this issue he had become a pessimist, particularly through the major cuts that had happened when Working Neighbourhood Fund had ended so suddenly. The Council now needed to ensure that in the future it delivered the right services to the right people with all agencies and groups working to the right ends for the people of the town.

In debate Members commented that the authority shouldn't wait until the end of the process to analyse the effects on the voluntary sector, but should look to carrying that analysis out at the earliest opportunity.

- (x) Question from Ray Harriman to Councillor Ged Hall, Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health Services (read by the Chair of Council in Mr Harriman's absence)

The Government will allocate £80 billion through GP consortia in order to deliver health services, £2 billion will be ring-fenced for local authorities to deliver health and social care outcomes, how will the local authority engage with the third sector in order to ensure services are delivered by organizations working at the heart of communities?

The Portfolio Holder indicated that he had for quite some time been involved in the debate on the long term care of the elderly in our communities. In recent years there had been extensive studies of the various approaches that could be taken on this major issue and it did seem that agreement had been reached on the future funding of adult social care. These studies had identified that £6bn each year was needed to address health and social care needs yet only £2bn was to be allocated which didn't come anywhere near meeting the real need. Over £80bn of NHS expenditure was being allocated through GP consortia with a further £20bn through a national commissioning board, though no one knows how this money will be allocated.

At recent seminars at Durham University former Councillor Professor Gerald Wistow was promoting the model of Connected Care that was so successful in the Owton Ward. This local authority would seek to connect with local service providers and assess what is being done on the ground now, though the changes coming through had left precious little time to do this. The £2bn allocated to local authorities was welcome but not nearly enough. One reassuring glimmer of hope was the public turn out at this meeting tonight. The public were now realising the wide range of services the council delivered or funded and wanted to protect those services. I would therefore encourage all of you to engage with us in these discussions as we too only want the best for the people of Hartlepool.

- (xi) Question from Peter Carroll to Councillor Pamela Hargreaves, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development

Will the local authority be working with the third sector to develop strategies for joint working that enhance the effective delivery of cost effective services across the town?

The Portfolio Holder stated that the Council would be working with the third sector because we had to and we should do as no other approach made any sense. This was the right way forward and the most economically sound approach. The focus must be on the beneficiaries of any service and on outcomes as much, if not more, than delivery.

We must not lose sight of the contribution of the voluntary sector. One statistic I find most significant on the voluntary sector is that one paid member of staff in these groups facilitates eight volunteers. If these people were paid at national minimum wage that would be in excess of £17m of work. Every pound invested in the voluntary sector brings another pound from other sources. The total turnover each year from this money was £11.2m; that's money being brought into this town that results in life-changing opportunities through training or employment.

We were now consigned to four and half years of misery and unprecedented cuts before we can change this government. However it was dressed up, giving local authorities less money than last year without the means to replace it is not a spending reduction it is a cut. We can all pull together to fight these cuts and create innovative solutions for Hartlepool. We were already doing this through a new programme for young people not in education or training, 'Going Forward Together' that would involve voluntary community groups as sub contractors. We are awaiting confirmation of the financial award which we anticipate to be £613,000 over three years. Around £400,000 of which will be utilised to procure services from external organisations.

Economic Development was also leading negotiations with potential DWP Prime Providers on behalf of the Hartlepool Works to deliver subcontracting opportunities under the new Works Programme.

Economic development had also encouraged voluntary community groups to pursue discussions with potential Prime Providers and we have provided significant support to assist these organisations in any applications to Prime Providers. In addition Economic Development has provided letters of support to organisations wishing to secure Transition Funds from the Government and offered one to one meetings on potential funding sources and opportunities.

The Portfolio Holder stressed that these opportunities were in some cases, long shots or only small pots of money but if they were successful we would ensure that the money got right to the heart of the community.

- (xii) Question from Jimmy McKenna to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

The loss of funding for the volunteer centre will have a detrimental impact on those who wish to volunteer and groups which receive volunteers. Wouldn't keeping the volunteer centre open have made good sense given that cuts in public services will mean that local communities will be even more reliant on volunteers?

The Mayor commented that this was another of the victims of the cut in the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) and an example of the excellent schemes that were supported by the WNF.

There had been lots of references to the Community Pool during the meeting so far. It had to be noted that there would only be £444,000 in the pool but there were already over £700,000 of bids, with more likely to come, so the pool was already heavily over-subscribed. Currently the system worked by groups bidding for money, being allocated funds and then providing services as they saw fit. This may have to change and it highlights the problems we now have.

In a supplementary question, Mr McKenna asked that considering the strategic nature of providing a voluntary programme of services to the community, was the Mayor aware that other local authorities have found money to keep some of these programmes going?

The Mayor indicated that he was aware and could only comment that those councils must be in a better financial position and have more money than Hartlepool does. We would be looking towards greater commissioning but with the money available that would mean some provision may get done and some may not.

(xiii) Question from Fred Corbett to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Given that it is now apparent the Tall Ships event lost £2.14 million pounds, with the possibility of that amount rising even further due to possible legal proceedings being taken over the event, has Mayor Drummond & his cabinet agreed that HBC should bid for the event in the future ?

The Mayor stated that the Cabinet had never discussed the matter.

In a supplementary question Mr Corbett stated that the event had lost £2.14m and anyone in the private sector who had been involved in such a loss would have been subject to disciplinary action. Had anyone in the Council been subject to disciplinary action over these huge losses?

The Mayor stated that the Tall Ships event did not lose £2.14m, and it was spurious to say so; the event was delivered on budget. The budget for the event were agreed in this chamber by the full council. There was a shortfall of £720,000 in income from the park and ride provision. We were told in advance of the event by the Highways Agency that the park and ride provision was inadequate and that there would be major traffic queues. There wasn't and all

the measures put in place worked well. If we had a crystal ball and we had foresight of the shortfall in advance I am sure this council would have funded it. The Tall Ships was one of the best events, if not the best, we have ever had in Hartlepool and it was £2m very well spent.

In his second supplementary question Mr Corbett considered that while the tall Ships event could be described as a good weekend the £2m could have been better spent elsewhere. The event cost the people of this town that money and did the Mayor not consider that he should resign because of that?

The Mayor asked how Mr Corbett could criticise the event when he hadn't even attended. The Mayor stated that the feedback he had received had been excellent with very positive comments from Sail Training International. The legacy from the event won't be that it cost a fortune because it didn't and with any event, you don't something for nothing. Funding had been secured by the council in advance from other public bodies and there was private sector involvement as well. Other port towns around the country and Europe were fighting to host the event in the future as they could see the transformation that it could bring. People have told me of how proud of their town they felt during the event and when we could do it again. There were no critics of the event until the final figures came out. The vast majority of the people of the town supported the event and those that didn't are, in my view, not fit to be called Hartlepudlian.

In debate Members commented that they had and would again vote for the finance for the event. The shortfall in park and ride income was annoying but even if it had been known in advance, the event would still have been fully backed by this council. Members considered that there appeared to be two clear 'camps' of people, one where people were proud of and had aspirations for Hartlepool and the other who did not seem to like success or standing up for themselves. Members indicated their pride in Hartlepool when attending the event.

(xiv) Question from John Reid to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

How many services or jobs could have been saved if the £2 million deficit from hosting the Tall Ships was still held in the reserves? (read by the Chair of Council in Mr Read's absence)

The Mayor considered that the issues on the funding of the Tall Ships event had been cleared up during his answers to the previous questions on this matter. The shortfall in funding arose only due to the lower than expected income from park and ride and that £720,000 had been found without any affect on services. The majority of this money had come from lower interest costs on the Council's borrowings and higher interest income on cash investments. Both were monies we would not normally have had and in no way affected a front line services.

(xv) Question from Bev Jones to Councillor Jonathan Brash, Portfolio Holder for Performance

The impact on job losses in the voluntary sector – “the big society” – how do we have a big society when the government are destroying the third sector, how when on a reduced capacity because of budgetary constraints at a time when we have increasing workloads, how are services going to be delivered, the disappearance of services, leaving others to fill the gaps, how does the local authority envisage this work being carried out?

The Portfolio Holder referred to a statistic quoted by the Economic Development and Regeneration Portfolio Holder in that every full-time voluntary sector post brought forward eight volunteers. The recent cuts and the affects on the voluntary sector meant that using that statistic, 830 volunteers could be lost from the sector in this town. It seems that the Prime Minister is keen to promote the ‘big society’ but not to support it.

The ‘Big Society’ is conceptually flawed because:

- It fails to recognise local democratic accountability and structures;
- It shows no understanding of how the existing voluntary sector is funded, supported and intertwined with local government;
- It overlooks local government’s capacity as a commissioner, supporter and enabler of local activism;
- It favours the ‘wants’ and ‘demands’ of the well off, organised or time-rich over those whose needs are greater but whose capacity for activism is less;
- It enshrines an almost Victorian model of philanthropy which will enable those with time and money to decide which causes are ‘deserving’;
- It is based on a lie that vital public services will not disappear due to savage cuts because “if people really want them they can get together and save them”;
- It insults professionals whose jobs Civil Servants in Whitehall don’t understand; implying that they are easy and can be done by others without skills or training;
- It legitimises public sector redundancies when clearly the roles and responsibilities are not ‘redundant’, Mr. Cameron it would seem would simply prefer people to work for nothing;
- It is accompanied by cuts which will savage the infrastructure for local voluntarism in Hartlepool where it has already been so effective.

This is all too reminiscent of the picture painted by Robert Tressell of an early Edwardian town, Mugsvile (Hastings) in his novel the Ragged Trousered Philanthropist, wherein unemployment is dealt with by the rich setting up an “Organised Benevolence Society”. Without rights the unemployed are obliged to seek charity. It is this disempowerment of the working classes, satirised by Tressell, which seems to form a central part of this government’s ideology.

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) Head of Policy Belinda Pratten said:

'We hear every day from organisations that are fearful for their future, and public spending cuts are already having a severe impact on charities' ability to deliver

vital services. Spending cuts must be managed intelligently; otherwise they will compromise the sector's ability to support the individuals and communities who need them most. By working together, we can send a strong message to government about the scale of the challenges ahead.'

Neil Cleeveley, The National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) Director of Policy and Communications said:

'Public spending cuts are hitting local charities and community groups hard. Local grants budgets are being slashed and neighbourhood services face cuts at a time when people are turning to local charities for help. It's a double whammy - squeezing them just as demand is rising. This will cause real damage to many communities, which is why we all have a duty to speak out to protect services for our most vulnerable citizens.'

The big society will fail. If the government turn around in four years time and say that they made a mistake, there will be no voluntary sector left. I feel assured that Dorset County Council who has had its budget increased will not be having this kind of debate.

(xvi) Question from Kalby Barry to The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

We have been informed that all activities at Manor West Youth Project will cease in March 2011 as there is no funding. What is going to happen to the young people, who are gaining awards such as Sports Leadership (UK Level 1 Award), Street Mark, Life Guard which will lead into volunteering and employment?

The Mayor welcomed the question particularly as it came from one of the young people involved in the project. This highlights the issues that the cancellation of the Future Jobs Fund and the Working Neighbourhood Fund was having on people who have learnt new skills and found new jobs. We now have the problem of a bunch of motivated and skilled young people with no outlet and nothing to do. The Manor West Youth Project was victim of national government cuts. The local Integrated Youth Support Service would be able to provide support to any young person who wishes to continue to participate in courses/programmes to support their employment opportunities and who find themselves disadvantaged by the potential reduction in services at Manor West Youth Project brought about by these broader national reductions in funding. The Council was aware of the young people that had received the training mentioned and the Youth Support Service would do what it could to support them but there would be no additional money.

In a supplementary question Kalby Barry asked if there was to be any money to keep the youth project going?

The Mayor indicated that the continuation of the Youth Project was a matter for Manor West to decide how they were going to prioritise the funding they did have. The Council had only acted in passing the money on from central government. If there was no money there the Council would work with groups

to assist in prioritising schemes. What is clear was from the discussions I have had with many councillors is that the support for schemes for young people will be at the top of our agenda.

In debate Members commented that the attendance of people from all walks of life, young and old, at this meeting showed the effects the governments cuts were having. The work of the Manor group was well known to councillors who commented that cuts like this were a false economy. A Member commented that in a meeting they had had with representatives from the Home Office they had stated how impressed they were with the work undertaken with young people in Hartlepool. There was concern expressed at the involvement of the Youth Support Service as there was a view that it failed to engage fully with the voluntary sector. Other members did express support for the service and its work.

113. MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

The Minutes of Proceedings of the Council held on the 9 December 2010, and the Minutes of the Proceedings of Extraordinary Council held on 16 December 2010, having been laid before the Council.

RESOLVED - That the minutes be confirmed.

The minutes were thereupon signed by the Chairman.

114. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL ON THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

None.

115. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

- (a) Questions to Members of the Executive about recent decisions of the Executive

None.

- (b) Questions to Members of the Executive and Chairs of Committees and Forums, for which Notice has been given

- (i) Question from Councillor G Lilley to Councillor Ged Hall, Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health Services: -

'Do you support the decision of the Board of NT&H NHS trust to spend £22,000,000 each year over a 30 year period to pay the cost of servicing a PFI loan to finance a new hospital at Wynyard'?

Councillor Lilley requested that consideration of his question be deferred to the meeting of Council on 24 February 2011.

- (ii) Question from Councillor G Lilley to Councillor Marjorie James, Chair of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee: -

'At the full Council meeting of 30th July 2009 the recommendation presented by you on the issue of publishing members attendance records was;

"The Committee recommended that:-

- (i) The working group, explore and agree methods of collation of member attendances which would enable the fullest disclosure possible to be made and that member attendances be published alongside expenses claimed from September 2010". This was agreed by Council. Why has the information on members attendances not been published in Hartbeat or anywhere else to date'?

Councillor Lilley requested that consideration of his question be deferred to the meeting of Council on 24 February 2011.

- (c) Questions to the appropriate Members on Police and Fire Authority issues, for which notice has been given.

None.

116. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

- (i) Report of Independent Remuneration Panel

The Chief Executive submitted for Council's consideration the report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel. It was highlighted that there was an error in the report and it was clarified that there was only one Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Second Minority Member, not two as listed in the table.

The Panel had made a number of reports to The Council over the years, reviewing various parts of the Members Allowances Scheme including Basic and Special Responsibility allowances. Whilst there were annual indexing facilities built into the Panel's recommendations, the Panel had a three-year review programme of the basis of allowances to ensure that they are robust and fit for purpose.

Last February the Panel noted that no special responsibility allowance had been included in the Council's scheme for the role of Chair of Audit Committee and whilst sympathetic towards recommending a new allowance for this role it was of the view that the extent of the role was insufficiently determined to allow it to come to a conclusion on the amount. It therefore determined to review in twelve months time.

The Panel had undertaken the review and considered further information regarding the responsibilities of the Chair of Audit Committee's role. Consideration had been given to the importance of high standards of internal governance arrangements and the risks to the organisation if not adequately monitored. Accordingly the Panel recommend that a Special Responsibility allowance of 20% be allocated to this role, which would currently equate to £1,153.

The Panel noted that the changes above would marginally increase the cost of allowances by £1,153 per annum, however this could be contained within the existing budget provision for members expenses. There would be no additional budget required for this small change.

The Panel reported that it continued to carry one vacancy. The Panel welcomed the appointment of Professor Brian Footitt, a new member who filled one of the two vacancies and wished to draw Council's attention to the fact that there remained one vacancy which needs to be filled.

RESOLVED - that Council award a Special Responsibility Allowance of 20% to the position of Chair of Audit Committee.

(In accordance with the Code of Conduct and the declaration of interest declared at the commencement of the meeting, Councillor C Akers-Belcher was absent from the Chamber during the consideration of the above item.)

(ii) Report on Special Urgency Decisions

Council was informed that no Special Urgency Decisions were taken in the period October to December 2010.

117. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair asked Members to note that the Council had very recently received a 92 name petition seeking the retention of the Dial a Ride service. The receipt of the petition had been acknowledged and the Chair requested that Members bear the petition in mind when considering the budget recommendations later on the agenda.

The Chair announced that he was holding his Annual Charity Event on Friday 4 March 2011 at Seaton Carew Social Club. All proceeds will be going to the Denise Taylor Cancer Trust.

118. TO DISPOSE OF BUSINESS (IF ANY) REMAINING FROM THE LAST MEETING AND TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF ANY SCRUTINY FORUM OR OTHER COMMITTEE TO WHICH SUCH BUSINESS WAS REFERRED FOR CONSIDERATION.

None.

119. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE COUNCIL'S COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

None.

120. TO CONSIDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS SPECIFIED IN THE SUMMONS OF THE MEETING

None.

121. REPORTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE

(a) Proposals in relation to the Council's budget and policy framework

(i) Local Development Framework – Annual Monitoring Report 2009/10

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Planning Authorities are required to prepare a number of documents which together form the Local Development Framework (LDF) for an area. These documents include:-

(a) a Local Development Scheme (LDS) setting out a rolling programme for the preparation of planning policy documents,

(b) a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) setting out the standards to be achieved in involving the community in the preparation of planning documents included in the LDS, and

(c) an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) assessing the progress of preparation work against key milestones identified in the LDS and the effectiveness of existing planning policies.

The third of these three documents covering the period 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010 was now submitted for Council's approval. The full detailed report was available the Council's website.

It was a statutory requirement that the AMR was submitted to the Secretary of State by 31st December each year. Following approval by Cabinet, a draft AMR has been submitted to Government Office for the North East (GONE) with an indication that the document required formal endorsement by Council, as it formed part of the Budget and Policy Framework. Because of the scheduling of Council meetings it had not been possible to secure Council approval before the end of December, but GONE had confirmed that submission of the draft report would be acceptable in fulfilling the Government's requirements.

RESOLVED – That the 2009/10 Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report be approved.

(ii) Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/12 to 2014/15

The Finance Portfolio Holder formally presented to Council the Executive's proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/12 to 2014/15. The Portfolio Holder on behalf of Cabinet indicated appreciation for the support received from Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee during the budget process. The final proposals from Cabinet were set out in the report for Council's consideration.

The Portfolio Holder advised Council that earlier today the Council had received a letter from the Department for Communities and Local Government advising councils that capping criteria for 2011/12 had been set. The letter stated that any Council Tax increase above 3.5% would be capped.

The Portfolio Holder commended the budget proposals to Council.

Amendment moved and seconded –

"That any under-spend on the Transitional Grant not needed to meet redundancy costs or to replace the proposed saving on the Early Intervention Grant Children's Fund scheme be transferred to the General Fund to support future budget spending."

Amendment put and carried.

Motion Moved and seconded

"That a recorded vote be taken."

Motion carried.

The motion put to a recorded vote "That the detailed recommendations set out within the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/12 to 2014/15, as amended, be approved".

Those in favour: Councillors C Akers-Belcher, S Akers-Belcher, Atkinson, Barclay, Barker, Brash, Cook, Cranney, Fleet, Fleming, Gibbon, Griffin, Hall, Hargreaves, Hill, James, Laffey, Lauderdale, Lawton, G Lilley, London, Maness, A Marshall, McKenna, Dr. Morris, Payne, Preece, Shaw, Simmons, Thomas, H Thompson, P Thompson, Turner, Wells, Worthy and Wright.

There were no votes against and no abstentions.

Motion carried.

RESOLVED as follows: -

(All paragraph and appendices references below relate to the Supporting Documentation Booklet submitted to Council as part of the agenda papers.)

2011/12 Revenue Budget

1. Approve the proposed corporate permanent and temporary reductions detailed in Appendix A, totalling £4.1m which partly mitigate the 2011/12 budget deficit.
2. Approve the proposed net pressures detailed in Appendix B, totalling £1.066m.
3. Approve the proposed saving of £75,000 from removing the Cabinet Contingency and Project budgets.
4. Approve the proposed savings detailed in Appendix C and the following amendments to these proposals, which will commit £105,000 of the uncommitted resources of £114,000 detailed in the main Cabinet report (gross uncommitted resources of £119,000 net of the £5,000 reduction in the actual 2011/12 Formula Grant allocation), leaving £9,000 to support the proposal detailed at 6 below:

	<u>Savings</u> <u>Increase/</u> (decrease)
	<u>£'000</u>
Proposed Saving detailed in Appendix C	5,471
<u>Additional savings identified</u>	
Additional savings from the UNITE service	11
<u>Proposed saving which will not be implemented</u>	
Reduction in proposed Community and Voluntary Sector Grants budget for £134,000(a 30% cut) to £50,000 (a 10% Cut)	(84)
Implement an alternative Democratic Services saving of £26,000 to largely replace the proposed Scrutiny saving of £34,000	(8)
Delay closure of West View Library for 9 months (or an earlier date if practical and achievable)	(24)
Net Savings	<u>5,366</u>

5. Approve the proposed funding allocations for services transferred into the core Formula Grant from specific grants or the Area Based Grant, totalling £6.626m as detailed in Appendix D.
6. Approve the proposed funding allocations for services transferred into the Early Intervention Grant from specific grants or the Area Based Grant, totalling £6.935m as detailed in Appendix E, excluding the reduction in the

Children's Fund of £77,000. The cost pressure from not funding this proposed reduction will be partly funded from the net uncommitted resources of £9,000, detailed in 4 above, and the remaining balance from the Transitional Grant.

7. Approve the proposal to fund 2011/12 redundancy costs of £1.6m from the Transitional Grant.
8. Approve the proposal to earmark the additional income from the increased Council Tax base of £250,000 for projects agreed on by Cabinet approving individual business cases (such as leisure trust, asset backed vehicle) which may require investigation to ascertain if they provide any future benefits. Cabinet noted that establishing an asset backed vehicle could cost in the region of £500,000 if the business case demonstrates this option will have future budget benefits.
9. Approve a Council Tax freeze for 2011/12 in order to secure the payment of the Council Tax freeze grant of £0.991m for 2011/12 and the following 3 years.
10. Approve the proposal to reallocate the reserve for replacing the Mayoral Chains of £46,000 to fund the running costs of the 3 Community Centres identified for closure for up to 9 months (or an earlier date if practical and achievable) to provide an opportunity to transfers these assets to community organisations.
11. Approve the proposal to reallocate the Seaton Carew Management Committee Reserve of £108,000 towards projects arising from the Seaton Carew master plan.
12. Note the budget risks, mitigation strategy and robustness of the budget forecasts advice (sections 11 and 12).
13. Approve the proposal to undertake an audit of the Councils artefacts and report back the finding as part of the 2012/13 budget process.

2012/13 to 2014/15 Revenue Budget

14. Approve the proposal to partly mitigate the risk of achieving the annual £0.5m revenue savings by capitalising expenditure (i.e. transferring revenue expenditure to capital and funding from prudential borrowing) by reducing this amount to £0.25m per year and funding the reduction from the increase in the Council Tax base.
15. Approve indicative annual Council Tax increases of 2.5% for 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Capital Programme 2011/12

16. Approve the proposal to passport Government capital allocations.

17. Approve the proposal to use Prudential Borrowing of £1.2m to establish a 'Council Capital Fund' and the detailed proposals for using this fund as detailed in Appendix J.

2010/11 Outturn Strategy

18. Approve the proposal to allocate the one off rates refund of £0.2m to meet the 2011/12 Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) liability.
19. Approve the proposal to fund financial liabilities identified in paragraph 17.4 from the resources identified in the same paragraph and to carry forward the residual uncommitted resources of £46,000 to assist the 2012/13 budget.

Supporting Statutory Resolutions

20. Approve the following supporting amounts which must be calculated by the Council for 2011/2012 in accordance with Section 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and relevant regulations:

- (i) Approve the net budget requirement of £91,886,857 for the purposes of Section 32(2), (3) and (4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the following amounts be approved: -

	£
Aggregate Expenditure	284,570,643
Aggregate Income	(192,683,786)
Budget Requirement (inc Parish Precepts)	91,886,857

- (ii) Being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be payable into the General Fund in respect of Revenue Support grant £12,280,418 and redistributed Business Rate Grant £39,729,223, increased by the amount the Council estimates will be transferred from the Collection Fund to the General Fund as its surplus in respect of Council Tax as at 31st March, 2011, £208,268 in accordance with Section 97 (3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and the Local Government Changes for England (Collection Fund Surpluses and Deficits) Regulations 1995 as amended.
- (iii) Being the amount calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 33 of the Act, as the basic amount of Council Tax for the year of £1,419.62.
- (iv) Approve the contributions made towards the expenses of Dalton Piercy, Elwick Greatham and Hart Parish Councils to enable them to carry out the associated concurrent functions; and formally accept the Precepts in relation to non concurrent functions and approve the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act as set below:-

<u>Concurrent Functions</u>	<u>Precepts</u>	
£	£	
Dalton Piercy	2,839	5,813
Elwick	6,043	5,152
Greatham	1,385	3,201
Hart	3,060	3,250
Headland	0	8,000
Newton Bewley	0	244
Total Concurrent functions	13,327	
Aggregate Amount (Section 34 (i))		25,660

- (v) Being the basic Council Tax for 2011/2012 calculated in accordance with Section 34(2) for dwellings in those areas that have no parish precepts or other special items of £1,418.70.
- (vi) The basic Council Tax for 2011/2012 calculated in accordance with Section 34(3) for dwellings in those areas that have parish precepts be as set out in Appendix 2, Table 1 (to this report).
- (vii) The amounts of Council Tax at items (iv) and (v) multiplied by the proportions applicable to each category of dwelling in its area, in accordance with Section 36 of the Act be as set out in Appendix 2, Table 2 (to this report).

21. Approve indicative Council Tax increases for 2012/2013 and 2014/2015 of 2.5%.

(b) Proposal for Departure from the Budget and Policy Framework

None.

122. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

None.

123. HARTLEPOOL CREDIT UNION

The Chief Executive reported that at the Council meeting on 9 December 2010 (minute no. 104 refers) Members nominated four Councillors to act as council representatives on the Board of the Hartlepool Credit Union; Councillors C Akers-Belcher, Hargreaves, James and Wells.

Councillor Wells has subsequently indicated that he no longer wished to have his name forwarded as a nominee to the Board and Council was therefore requested to nominate an alternative Member. Council was reminded each Councillor appointed to the Board is subject to Financial Services Authority

Regulations.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Hall be nominated to the Board of the Hartlepool Credit Union.

124. APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES - NORTH EASTERN INSHORE FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

The Chief Executive reported that an Order, made under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, established the North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation district and corresponding Authority (NEIFCA). The Authority is one of ten similar Authorities that are responsible for the English Coast, its estuaries and six nautical miles off shore. NEIFCA comprises thirty members including the following “relevant Councils”, fifteen general members (appointed by the Marine Management Organisation) and two additional members (one from the Environment Agency and one from Natural England)–

Durham County Council – 1 Member
East Riding of Yorkshire Council – 2 Members
Hartlepool Borough Council – 1 Member
Hull City Council – 1 Member
North Yorkshire County Council – 2 Members
North East Lincolnshire Council – 1 Member
North Lincolnshire Council – 1 Member
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council – 1 Member
South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council – 1 Member
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council – 1 Member
Sunderland City Council – 1 Member

Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) will operate with limited powers and duties in parallel with Sea Fisheries Committees (SFCs) until April 2011; SFCs will continue their role in the day-to-day management of inshore fisheries so the IFCAs can concentrate on annual and financial planning. A further commencement Order will also abolish SFCs.

Political Groups have been advised of the changes to the organisation and requested to nominate a Member to be appointed to the new body to represent the Council. Two nominations have been received; Councillor Geoff Lilley (AIC) and Councillor Stephen Thomas (Labour).

Concern was expressed by a Member that the independent Members of the authority had not also been approached in relation to this appointment.

RESOLVED –

1. That Councillor Thomas be appointed to the North Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority.

2. That the Constitution Committee considers how independent members are informed of nominations to outside bodies etc. outside the annual 'round table' process.

125. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Chief Executive reported on the Authority's Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/2012, which included Prudential Indicators for 2011/2012 – 2013/2014.

In accordance with best practice guidelines the proposed Strategy was considered by the Audit Committee on 3 December 2010. The Audit Committee endorsed the proposed Strategy and approved that it should be referred to Council for consideration and approval. The Committee noted that owing to the timing of Government announcements it was not possible to calculate a number of technical prudential indicators. These were, however, now included in the report to Council.

As proposed in the budget report the authority plans to finance local investment not deemed to be a priority by the Government using unsupported prudential borrowing. This included the proposed 'Council Capital Fund.' Provision for the revenue costs of using unsupported prudential borrowing had been included in the revenue budget for 2011/12 considered earlier by Council.

The Authority's Borrowing Strategy is driven by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and the Authority's view of interest rates. In the short term it was proposed that the Authority would continue with the existing strategy and maximise the use of its balance sheet resources to finance 'Under Borrowing'. This reduced investment counterparty risk and sheltered against the estimated low level of investments returns. The ability to do this was limited by the level of these resources which were temporary in nature and this position would continue to be monitored closely during the year.

The primary objectives of the Authority's investment strategy in order of importance were safeguarding the Council's investments, ensuring adequate liquidity and investment return. Owing to the current economic climate, there was one over-riding risk consideration for investments, counterparty security risk. This was the risk that the party we are investing with defaults. As a result of these underlying concerns officers were implementing an operational investment strategy which nets down investments and borrowing. It also tightens the controls already in place in the approved investment strategy. This strategy restricts both the institutions the authority would invest in and the period of investment. It was recommended that the authority continued to invest on a short-term basis and restricts counterparties to the current investment list as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED – That

1. The Prudential Indicators and Limits relating to Capital Expenditure for 2011/2012 to 2013/2014 as detailed in section 2.4 of the report be approved.

2. The Borrowing Strategy for 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 and related Treasury Prudential Indicators including the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement in section 2.5 of the report be approved.
3. The Investment Strategy for 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 and related Treasury Prudential Indicators in section 2.6 of the report be approved.
4. The Investment Strategy Counterparty Criteria contained in section 2.6 of the report be approved.

126. TALL SHIPS – ADDITIONAL EVALUATION

The Chief Executive reported that on 28 October 2010, Council considered a report referring to the financial outturn for the Tall Ships event. Council resolved that:

A report be submitted to a future meeting of Council detailing:

- (i) The reasons why the car parking and associated income were over-estimated;
- (ii) What further steps could have been taken to maximise entrepreneurial advantage for people in the town.

Spirul Ltd, the company which undertook the original analysis and evaluation of the overall event, has been commissioned to carry out the additional analysis, at the same rates as charged for the overall evaluation. They expect to have their report prepared by the end of February 2011. The cost of this work is £6,500. The Chief Executive indicated that Council needed to identify from where this cost would be met.

Members considered that further discussions on this matter were needed with the Chief Executive prior to resolving this matter.

RESOLVED – That the matter be deferred pending further discussions between the Chief Executive and members.

The meeting concluded at 9.25 p.m.

CHAIR

COUNCIL REPORT

24th February, 2011



Report of: Chief Executive

Subject: FORMAL COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2011/2012 –
INCORPORATION OF FIRE AND POLICE
AUTHORITY PRECEPTS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To enable Council to set the overall level of Council Tax following the notification by the Police and Fire Authority of their Council Tax levels for 2011/2012.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At your meeting on 10th February, 2011, Members considered and approved the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy and this Authority's own 2011/2012 Council Tax level, including Parish Council Tax levels where applicable.
- 2.2 In accordance with statutory requirements the Council then needs to approve the overall Council Tax, inclusive of the Police and Fire Authority precepts.
- 2.3 Both the Fire and Police authorities are eligible to receive the Council Tax freeze grant if they determined to maintain their individual Council Taxes at the levels set in the current year. The Fire Authority set its precept and agreed to freeze its Council Tax on 4th February, 2011.
- 2.4 The Police Authority is scheduled to set its precept and Council Tax on the morning of 24th February 2011. It is currently anticipated that the Police Authority will also freeze its Council Tax.

3. DETERMINATION OF OVERALL COUNCIL TAX LEVELS

- 3.1 The determination of the overall Council Tax level is a statutory function, which brings together the individual Council Tax levels determined by this Council, Cleveland Fire Authority, Cleveland Police Authority and where applicable Parish Councils.
- 3.2 A detailed schedule of the statutory Council Tax calculation incorporating the Fire and Police Authority Council Tax levels for 2011/2012 is attached. This schedule assumes the Police Authority will freeze Council Tax. A revised schedule will be circulated at your meeting on 24th February, 2011 if the Police Authority approves an alternative Council Tax.

4. PROPOSAL

4.1 Council is requested to approve the following proposal: -

- i) The amount of Council Tax including the Cleveland Police Authority and Cleveland Fire Authority precepts, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the relevant inclusion of amounts of Council Tax for each category of dwelling in accordance with Sections 43 to 47 of the Act, as set out in Appendix A, Table 4.

APPENDIX A

SCHEDULE OF DETAILED COUNCIL TAX CALCULATIONS

Table 1 - Council Tax for Areas without a Parish Council 2011/2012

	Council Tax Bands							
	A £ p	B £ p	C £ p	D £ p	E £ p	F £ p	G £ p	H £ p
Hartlepool Borough Council Basic Amount without parishes or special items	945.80	1,103.43	1,261.07	1,418.70	1,733.97	2,049.23	2,364.50	2,837.40
Police Authority	125.23	146.10	166.97	187.84	229.58	271.32	313.06	375.68
Fire Authority	42.65	49.75	56.86	63.97	78.19	92.40	106.62	127.94
Areas without a Parish Council	1,113.68	1,299.28	1,484.90	1,670.51	2,041.74	2,412.95	2,784.18	3,341.02

TABLE 2 - Council Tax For Parish Councils 2011/2012 (as approved by Council 10.02.11)

	Precept (1)	Parish Tax Base (2)	Parish Council Tax (3) [=(1)/(2)]	Basic Council Tax (4)	Billing Authority's Council Tax (5) [=(3)+(4)]
Parishes	£ p		£ p	£ p	£ p
Dalton Piercy	5,813	103.7	56.06	1,418.70	1,474.76
Elwick	5,152	435.8	11.82	1,418.70	1,430.52
Greatham	3,201	667.7	4.79	1,418.70	1,423.49
Hart	3,250	304.7	10.67	1,418.70	1,429.37
Headland	8,000	983.7	8.13	1,418.70	1,426.83
Newton Bewley	244	33.1	7.37	1,418.70	1,426.07

TABLE 3 - Council Taxes For Each Property Band 2011/2012 (as approved by Council 10.02.11)
(Including Parish Precepts, and Excluding Police Authority & Fire Authority)

	Council Tax Bands							
	A £ p	B £ p	C £ p	D £ p	E £ p	F £ p	G £ p	H £ p
<u>Parishes</u>								
Dalton Piercy	983.17	1,147.03	1,310.89	1,474.76	1,802.48	2,130.20	2,457.93	2,949.51
Elwick	953.68	1,112.63	1,271.58	1,430.52	1,748.42	2,066.31	2,384.20	2,861.04
Greatham	949.00	1,107.16	1,265.33	1,423.49	1,739.83	2,056.16	2,372.49	2,846.99
Hart	952.91	1,111.73	1,270.55	1,429.37	1,747.00	2,064.64	2,382.28	2,858.73
Headland	951.22	1,109.76	1,268.30	1,426.83	1,743.91	2,060.98	2,378.05	2,853.67
Newton Bewley	950.71	1,109.17	1,267.62	1,426.07	1,742.98	2,059.88	2,376.79	2,852.14
Areas without a Parish Council	945.80	1,103.43	1,261.07	1,418.70	1,733.97	2,049.23	2,364.50	2,837.40

TABLE 4 - Council Taxes For Each Property Band 2011/2012
(Including Parish Precepts, Police Authority & Fire Authority)

	Council Tax Bands							
	A £ p	B £ p	C £ p	D £ p	E £ p	F £ p	G £ p	H £ p
<u>Parishes</u>								
Dalton Piercy	1,151.05	1,342.88	1,534.72	1,726.57	2,110.25	2,493.92	2,877.61	3,453.13
Elwick	1,121.56	1,308.48	1,495.41	1,682.33	2,056.19	2,430.03	2,803.88	3,364.66
Greatham	1,116.88	1,303.01	1,489.16	1,675.30	2,047.60	2,419.88	2,792.17	3,350.61
Hart	1,120.79	1,307.58	1,494.38	1,681.18	2,054.77	2,428.36	2,801.96	3,362.35
Headland	1,119.10	1,305.61	1,492.13	1,678.64	2,051.68	2,424.70	2,797.73	3,357.29
Newton Bewley	1,118.59	1,305.02	1,491.45	1,677.88	2,050.75	2,423.60	2,796.47	3,355.76
Areas without a Parish Council	1,113.68	1,299.28	1,484.90	1,670.51	2,041.74	2,412.95	2,784.18	3,341.02

COUNCIL
24th February 2011



Report of: The Executive, to be presented by the Community
Safety & Housing Portfolio Holder

Subject: Safer Hartlepool Partnership's crime, disorder,
substance misuse and reducing re-offending strategy
2011-2014

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Council endorsement of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership's crime, disorder, substance misuse and reducing re-offending strategy 2011-2014.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 established a statutory duty for the Local Authority and Police to form a partnership and produce a 3 year strategy, based on a review of crime and disorder which occurred in the previous 3 years. The Police Reform Act 2002 extended this duty to include the Primary Care Trust, Police Authority and Fire Authority. The Policing and Crime Act 2009 also extended this duty to include the local Probation Trust from 1st April 2010. Collectively these 6 bodies are known as Responsible Authorities for the purposes of the partnership provisions in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.
- 2.2 Following a review of the partnership provisions in the 1998 Act, the Police and Justice Act 2006 amended the Act, so that new regulations could be introduced, which would extend the statutory duty placed collectively on the Responsible Authorities.
- 2.3 The Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) Regulations 2007 came into force on 1st August 2007 and set out minimum standards on how the Safer Hartlepool Partnership (SHP) should function in formulating and implementing strategies to tackle crime, disorder and substance misuse in Hartlepool. This duty was

extended by the Policing and Crime Act 2009, to cover reducing re-offending.

- 2.4 One requirement of the Regulations is that the SHP must produce an annual strategic assessment, instead of reviewing crime and disorder which occurred in the previous 3 years.
- 2.5 The purpose of the strategic assessment is to provide knowledge and understanding of community safety problems that will inform and enable the partners to:
- Understand the patterns, trends and shifts relating to crime and disorder and substance misuse;
 - Set clear and robust priorities of their partnership;
 - Develop activity that is driven by reliable intelligence and meets the needs of the local community;
 - Deploy resources effectively and present value for money;
 - Undertake annual reviews and plan activity based on a clear understanding of the issues and priorities.
- 2.6 Following consideration of the strategic assessment findings, the SHP must produce a Partnership Plan by 1st April. The Plan must:
- Include a strategy for tackling crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), for reducing re-offending and for combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in the area, over the subsequent 3 years;
 - Be revised at least annually;
 - Contain the priorities identified through the strategic assessment;
 - Contain information about the role of each partner in supporting the delivery of the priorities and how this will be resourced;
 - Contain information about the way the partnership will engage with the community.

The Partnership Plan therefore comprises a 3 year strategy (to tackle crime, disorder, substance misuse and reducing re-offending) and an annual action plan to address the annual priorities.

- 2.7 A summary of the Partnership Plan must be published by 1st April 2011.

3. DECISION MAKING ROUTE FOR THE CRIME, DISORDER, SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND REDUCING RE-OFFENDING 2011-2014

3.1 This strategy is part of the Budget & Policy framework for the Authority. The process has been fulfilled as follows:

1. An initial draft of the strategy was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 10th January 2011 and approved for consultation.
2. The draft strategy was considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 21st January 2011. The views and comments from the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee were incorporated into an updated draft strategy.
3. The final draft strategy was considered by Cabinet on 7th February 2011 and recommended for endorsement by Council.

3.2 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership Executive Group and the Partnership's Business Group have overseen the development of the draft strategy.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SAFER HARTLEPOOL PARTNERSHIP'S CRIME, DISORDER, SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND REDUCING RE-OFFENDING STRATEGY 2011-2014 AND ANNUAL ACTION PLANS FOR 2011/12

4.1 The SHP has reviewed its four strategic objectives contained in the strategy for 2008-2011 and adjusted their focus slightly for 2011 – 2014:

Current Objective 2008-2011

New Objective 2011-2014

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Reduce crime | 1. Reduce crime and repeat victimisation |
| 2. Reduce the harm caused by illegal drugs and alcohol | 2. Reduce the harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse |
| 3. Improve neighbourhood safety and increase public confidence, leading to a reduced fear of crime and anti-social behaviour | 3. Create confident, cohesive and safe communities |
| 4. Reduce offending and re-offending | 4. Reduce offending and re-offending |

4.2 The annual priorities for 2011/12, which have been established from the strategic assessment conducted in December 2010, have been agreed as:

- Acquisitive crime – specifically domestic burglary and theft
- Violent crime – including domestic violence and abuse
- Alcohol treatment, delivery of alcohol strategy and drug dealing and supply
- Anti-social behaviour – including links to private rented properties and alcohol related youth ASB
- Criminal damage – specifically damage to dwellings
- Confidence and cohesion
- Prevent and reduce offending, re-offending and the risk of offending

An action plan for 2011/12 will now be established to identify how these priorities will be tackled.

- 4.3 In addition, the SHP has agreed that it must continue to provide drug treatment – which has a planning process previously prescribed by Government for both adults and young people. The National Treatment Agency (NTA), which is a special health authority, and will become part of Public Health England in future, has encouraged Partnerships to continue to use its planning process, although this is not essential now.
- 4.4 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership Executive Group considered the draft strategy at its meeting on 26th January 2011.
- 4.5 The Safer Hartlepool Partnership Executive Group will consider a final version of the Strategy, together with annual action plans for 2011/12 at its meeting on 9th March 2011.
- 4.6 A summary of the Partnership Plan (i.e. Strategy and action plans) will be published by 1st April 2011.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Council endorses the Safer Hartlepool's Partnership's crime, disorder, substance misuse and reducing re-offending strategy 2011-2014.

Contact officer: Alison Mawson
Assistant Director of Community Safety & Protection

Background Papers

Report to Safer Hartlepool Partnership Executive Group on 8th October 2010, 26th January 2011.

Safer Hartlepool Partnership strategic assessment 2010

COUNCIL
24th February 2011



Report of: Chief Executive

Subject: BUSINESS REPORT

1. APPOINTMENT OF RETURNING OFFICER AND COUNTING OFFICER

- 1.1 It is the duty of the Council to appoint a Returning Officer and Counting Officer under the Registration of the Peoples Act 1983.
- 1.2 Under the Proper Officer functions as set out in the Constitution, Part 3 (D), the Chief Solicitor is appointed at the Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer under S35 and S8 of the Act.
- 1.3 In the continued absence of the Chief Solicitor, due to ill health, Council is requested to delegate the appropriate proper officer functions to the Legal Services Manager as an interim measure.

COUNCIL
24th February 2011



Report of: Chief Executive

Subject: BUSINESS REPORT

2. TALL SHIPS – ADDITIONAL EVALUATION

- 2.1 On 28 October 2010, Council considered a report referring to the financial outturn for the Tall Ships event. Council resolved that:
A report be submitted to a future meeting of Council detailing:
(i) The reasons why the car parking and associated income were over-estimated;
(ii) What further steps could have been taken to maximise entrepreneurial advantage for people in the town.
- 2.2 Spirul Ltd, the company which undertook the original analysis and evaluation of the overall event, has been commissioned to carry out the additional analysis, at the same rates as charged for the overall evaluation. They expect to have their report prepared by the end of February 2011. The cost of this work is £6,500.
- 2.3 Members will recall that this item was included in my Business Report, considered at meeting on 10 February 2011 but was deferred to allow for further discussions between Members and I.
- 2.4 Recommended that:
Council identifies from where this cost will be met.