

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**COUNCIL**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 23rd March, 2022 at 4.30 pm in the Corn Exchange, Tuesday Market Place, King's Lynn

PRESENT: Councillor H Humphrey (Chair)
Councillors B Ayres, Miss L Bambridge, J Bhondi, R Blunt, C Bower, A Bubb, C J Crofts, S Dark, M de Whalley, I Devereux, A Dickinson, P Gidney, G Hipperson, A Holmes, M Howland, G Howman, C Hudson, B Jones, C Joyce, A Kemp, J Kirk, P Kunes, A Lawrence, B Lawton, B Long, J Lowe, C Manning, G Middleton, C Morley, E Nockolds, T Parish, C Rose, J Rust, C Sampson, Mrs V Spikings, S Squire, D Whitby and M Wilkinson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Beal, F Bone, A Bullen, Mrs J Collingham, J Collop, S Collop, Lord Howard, J Moriarty, S Nash, S Patel, J Ratcliffe, A Ryves, S Sandell, M Storey, A Tyler and D Tyler

C:87 **MINUTE'S SILENCE AS A MARK OF RESPECT FOR THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE**

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Council held a Minute's silence as a mark of respect for the people of Ukraine

C:88 **PRAYERS**

Prayers were led by Rev Canon Ling.

C:89 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

None

C:90 **MAYOR'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

C:91 **URGENT BUSINESS**

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The Mayor had agreed that in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the following matter should be considered as urgent business at the meeting:

Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor S Dark MBE, and seconded by Councillor Joyce:

"This Council as the representatives of the people of West Norfolk and on their behalf adds its support to the people of Ukraine and Russia who oppose a war initiated by a regime that is failing to recognise Ukraine is a sovereign state with a democratically elected government of its own choosing.

The Russian regime of President Putin has ignored international law and all diplomatic conventions in its invasion of Ukraine. There is absolutely no justification for the killing of thousands of ordinary people and for ruining the lives of millions more.

Along with all right thinking people around the world we state with no ambiguity this totally unjustifiable war must end immediately to give the international community the opportunity to assist in alleviating the grave humanitarian crisis of President Putin's regime's sole making".

Councillors spoke in support of the motion and against the abhorrent actions of Russia against Ukraine. On being put to the vote the Motion was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Motion be agreed.

C:92

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COUNCIL BODIES

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Cabinet: 15 March 2022 - Members Allowances Review

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Councillor Dickinson proposed the recommendations from Cabinet on 15 March 2022, these were seconded by Councillor Dark.

Councillor Joyce proposed that the increases in the basic and special responsibility allowances be transferred into a local fund to assist those coming here from the Ukraine.

The Monitoring Officer advised that it was not possible for the Council to take such a decision on behalf of all Councillors without all the individuals being present to approve it.

Councillor Parish in speaking on the recommendation proposed an amendment that the existing basic allowances be frozen until April 2023 and the finance not paid through the increases be paid into an account to help Ukrainians in the Borough needing assistance.

The Monitoring explained that the same advice applied as to not being able to take decisions on where the allowances of other members be channelled.

Councillor Rust proposed that the matter be deferred until a unanimous vote could be taken. This was seconded by Councillor de Whalley. On being put to the vote this was lost.

The Monitoring Officer further advised that if members individually wished to pay to a charity on a voluntary basis they could do so but the Council could not compel that.

Councillor Morley proposed an amendment that the funds go to the Ukrainian crisis, to which the Monitoring officer re-iterated her previous advice.

Councillor Hudson proposed that special responsibility allowance be frozen for the entirety of the scheme, but the basic allowances be increased by 2.5% recommended. This was seconded by Councillor Wilkinson. Councillor Dickinson did not accept the amendment, Councillor Long moved that the question be put. On being put to the vote the amendment was lost.

Councillor Morley suggested that Members register individually to donate their increases. It was noted that this would be a separate item, not for consideration at this meeting.

Councillor Long proposed that the question be put on the substantive motion.

The Monitoring Officer pointed out that on recommendation 4 from Cabinet because of the delay in considering the recommendations, it was not possible to pay within the current month, but that that the amount would be paid into the following financial year. Councillor Dickinson agreed this suggestion.

A debate ensued on the payment of allowances and individual choices.

Councillor Dark addressed Council on the recommendations as seconder.

Councillor Dickinson summed up the debate reminding members that the proposed increase was 2.5% and that the SRA payments were attributable to a position, not individual people.

Councillor Howman, with the required number of supporters requested a recorded vote on the matter.

For	Against	Abstain
B Ayres	J Bhondi	
L Bambridge	A Holmes	
R Blunt	G Howman	
C Bower	C Hudson	
A Bubb	B Jones	

C Crofts	C Joyce	
S Dark	B Lawton	
I Devereux	C Morley	
A Dickinson	T Parish	
P Gidney	J Rust	
G Hipperson	S Squire	
M Howland	M de Whalley	
H Humphrey	M Wilkinson	
J Kirk		
P Kunes		
A Lawrence		
B Long		
J Lowe		
C Manning		
G Middleton		
E Nockolds		
C Rose		
C Sampson		
V Spikings		
D Whitby		
25	13	0

The recommendations were agreed.

RESOLVED: 1) Having considered in detail the recommendations of the IRP, Council considers that there two issues for not making significant changes Members' Allowances for the year commencing 1 April 2021. Firstly, the current financial climate is not propitious for increasing the overall sum paid to Councillors, which is the effect of the IRP's review. Secondly, there have been significant changes to working practices as a result of the pandemic, with Councillors seeing a wholesale change of having to carry out all of their duties from home, with all meetings conducted via online means, i.e. Teams and Zoom. This has resulted in what might amount to permanent changes to working practices and therefore a review would be better conducted when those revisions have been fully evaluated.

2) That existing allowances be increased in line with the inflationary increase of the officers' pay award, effective from 1 April 2021.

3) That in accordance with the Regulations, for a maximum period of the next 3 years commencing 2022/23, allowances should continue to be indexed in line with the officers' pay award. This is in compliance with the Regulations. An IRP may be called at any time should the need arise or be otherwise appropriate but in any case will be called no later than autumn 2024 to conduct a further review and to report its findings in sufficient time to allow a revised scheme to be approved by

Council, in accordance with the regulations, to come into effect on 1 April 2025.

- 4) That the pecuniary implications be paid representing the current financial year.

The meeting closed at 5.38 pm