

The Council at its meeting on Monday 28th February agreed the budget for 2011-15 this has resulted in 12 posts being made redundant, so senior management are trying to ensure this decision is effected with the minimum of disruption to the Council.

The opportunity has been given for staff to apply for voluntary redundancy.

The position will be a clearer in the next two to three weeks, but during 2010/11 and as part of the budget for 2011/12 **44.5 posts have been lost.**

Posts At Risk of Redundancy as part of Budget Decision- February 2011 - Total 13

Redundant Posts 2010-2011 – Total 11.6

Frozen and Vacant Posts 2010-11 to be deleted as part of budget 2011/12 – Total 19.9

The average Band D figure for the Stratford on Avon District Council households for the 2011/12 financial year remains at £129.34, the lowest in Warwickshire.

This means that all the services provided by the council costs £2.49 per week for a Band D household.

Final Council Tax Valuation Bands 2011/12 (WCC / SDC / Warwickshire Police / Parish)

Parish	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Bidford	1040.02	1213.37	1386.71	1560.05	1906.71	2253.39	2600.07	3120.08
Salford	1029.52	1201.12	1372.71	1544.30	1887.46	2230.64	2573.82	3088.58
Wixford	1019.11	1188.97	1358.82	1528.68	1868.37	2208.08	2547.79	3057.34

The Council also agreed a number of other matters including the following: -

- A new corporate strategy;
- A financial strategy;
- A budget to help with technical assessments for the Council's response to the High Speed Rail link (HS2)- the consultation on the route has been launched, with responses to be made by July.

The Cabinet has also considered several items including: -

1. Fees and charges- the bulk of the items were deferred for further consideration at the April meeting;
2. Capital and revenue budget monitoring- officers were asked to prepare a report on the capital budget to consider the medium and longer term position;
3. The budget for the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework- even if the Localism Bill receives Royal Assent, the Council will still be required to produce its local development framework;
4. Future Provision of Temporary Accommodation for housing.

Localism Bill

A Members' Seminar/ Workshop on the Localism Bill will be held and the Council's way of implementing the Big Society. This will take place in April and inform a cabinet report later in the year.

It is important this approach is member led, and it will be interesting to see if it is viewed there should be different approaches in different parts of the District.

Meetings on the Web

Following a successful webcast of Planning Committee (West), the Chief Executive is keen to webcast future key council meetings.

Webcasts are considered an excellent way to give the wider community an insight into local democracy and will provide everyone with an opportunity to view local decision making affecting their community.

The District Council is working with our partners at Stratford College to make use of technology.

This will enable as many people as possible to view the proceedings live or at a time that suits them, from their workplace, home or any other place with access to the Internet.

Planning in General

Several contentious planning issues have been the subject of much public interest of late. These include: -

- Application for housing development at the Cattle market site, Henley in Arden- this was approved by the Planning Committee (West).
- Cank Farm, Tanworth- A prosecution against the owners for breach of planning regulations was unsuccessful due to a technicality. Local ward members have been briefed and a new prosecution is to be launched, while progress is being made with implementing the stop notice;
- Kipling Road, Stratford- The decision to not oppose an appeal due to a change in the prevailing situation for housing developments has resulted in the developer deciding not to seek damages from the Council which would have been in the region of six figures.
- Gypsy & Traveller site at Temple Grafton refused planning permission by Planning Committee (West)

Moor Hall Farm Wixford

For information Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service's Archaeology Unit have been instructed to undertake investigative archaeological works at Moor Hall Farm.

The investigation will entail the excavation of trial trenches in the open field to the east of buildings.

It is not yet known when the archaeologists will visit the site, but this will entail the use of JCB type machinery in the field.

Community Forum News

Budget Briefings were given to the Community Forum.

Warwickshire County Council

The County Council approved its 2011/12 budget on the 15th February 2011.

Key Headlines

- No increase in council tax in 2011/12
- £15.5 million of new investment in services to meet rising costs and increased demand
- £32.9 million of savings over the following two years
- Estimated job losses of up to 1,855 over the next three years
- Property stock to be reduced by 30%

The County Council has set aside £10 million to meet the estimated costs of redundancy

Capital Programme

The focus of the capital programme is to only fund the minimum level of capital maintenance over the period of the Comprehensive Spending Review to reduce the pressure on the revenue budget.

New schemes investing £44 million in 2011/12 have been approved:

- £17.5 million to maintain school buildings and provide additional space where needed.
- £10.3 million for road maintenance
- £6.8 million for the maintenance and safe operation of existing county buildings
- £1.0 million for replacement fire engines, associated equipment and command & control systems.

Warwickshire Police Authority

On 23rd February the Police Authority met and agreed the budget for 2011/2012 together with the level of council tax. Members approved a budget of £97.188 million which is £3.581 million less than 2010/2011.

This budget will be supported by £2.970 million of reserves and will also rely on the delivery of £3.6 million of savings during the year.

Council tax has not been increased for 2011/2012. For Band D properties it will remain at £174.10 p.a.

Instead the Police Authority will receive government grant of £0.9 million which equates to 2.5% of council tax.

This grant is a one-off initiative by central government to encourage authorities to not increase council tax in 2011/2012.

NHS Warwickshire

NHS Warwickshire spends £820 million each year and is predicting a break even budget for the end of the 2011/12 financial year.

Next year they are facing a significant gap in their budget allocation, which has seen a 2.2% increase, and the cost of healthcare that providers in Warwickshire are predicting.

NHS Warwickshire will be working to narrow the deficit gap by working with clinicians to look at more efficient ways of referring patients for surgical procedures.

Other Forum News

The forum set the following three Local Policing targets for the next three months.

- Anti social behaviour in Alcester & Bidford on Avon
- Speed Enforcement – School Road Salford Priors
- Acquisitive Crime (Burglary, Car Thefts etc)

The future of the Library Service in Warwickshire

A special forum meeting has been called to discuss the future of the Warwickshire County Council Library Service and especially the library at Bidford.

The forum will be attended by senior officers and councillors of Warwickshire County Council to address this matter.

The meeting will be held at the Crawford Memorial Hall Bidford on Avon on:

Monday 9th May 2011 at 7:00pm

Local Development Framework – The Core Strategy

Through the news-update sheet, I will provide a current update on the LDF process.

LDF Workshops for Parish Councils

- Thursday 24 March **6:30-8:30pm** – Studley Village Hall
- Friday 1 April 2011 **6:30-8:30 pm** – Harbury Village Hall

The key issues identified to date are

- Flood risk – Biodiversity – Heritage - Design and distinctiveness
- Landscape and countryside - Housing needs including affordable housing
- Local services provision and improvement - Transport and accessibility
- Public confidence and safety - Leisure and culture - Investment
- Retail and commerce – Tourism- Lifelong learning and skills

Objectives identified in Consultation Core Strategy (February 2010)

The following objectives (set out in no particular order of priority), seek to encapsulate the future needs of the District and provide an overarching framework to ensure that subsequent policies and proposals will help to deliver the overall vision.

Planning to provide for housing needs

1. To make sure there are enough extra new homes provided to satisfy the targets set out for the District in the Regional Spatial Strategy, including that for affordable housing.
2. To make provision for the required number of new homes in locations and in forms that meet the needs of existing local residents and communities and of people moving into the District, including those whose needs are best addressed by means of specialized accommodation.
3. To assist the specific provision of sufficient affordable housing throughout the District to meet the needs of those who cannot afford property on the open market.

Planning to promote and diversify the local economy

4. To have sufficient employment land available in the District throughout the plan period to meet the requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy, in order to provide scope for businesses to set up, expand and move into the District.
5. To ensure a diverse local economy and a wide range of business and employment opportunities, with a particular focus on attracting technology and knowledge-based jobs into the District, and providing greater scope for people to work close to where they live.
6. To promote tourism across the District in order to spread its benefits over a wider area, and to enhance the internationally important tourism and cultural centre of Stratford-upon-Avon.

Planning to support the main commercial centres

7. To ensure that Stratford-upon-Avon retains its position as a strategic town centre in accordance with the Regional Spatial Strategy.
8. To maintain the role of the larger rural settlements as providers of a wide range of shops and services for their local areas.

Planning to protect the character of settlements and the countryside

9. To preserve the open and tranquil nature of the countryside, while providing scope for rural recreation.
10. To maintain the District's character as a predominantly rural area with attractive and distinctive small market towns and villages.
11. To make sure that development is located where it will have least impact on the attractive nature and setting of towns and villages.

Planning to meet the need for improved infrastructure and services

12. To ensure development takes place where there is sufficient infrastructure capacity or that necessary improvements to infrastructure are made in tandem with new development.

13. To provide for the land use needs of education, health, water, transport, leisure and other infrastructure providers.

Planning to increase the use of sustainable transport

14. To make the District increasingly pedestrian and cycle friendly in urban and rural areas and to provide scope for increasing the share of trips by public transport, particularly by improving services for rural settlements.

15. To locate most development in a manner that does not require journeys to be made by private car for a range of purposes.

Planning to meet the challenges of climate change

16. To meet necessary standards for greenhouse gas reduction and to locate and design development to minimise energy use.

17. To locate and design development so that it manages water effectively and will not worsen flood risk.

Planning to protect the District's heritage and distinctiveness

18. To preserve and enhance the important built heritage, habitat, biodiversity and geodiversity features in the District.

19. To protect the character of the District's varied and historic landscapes, in particular the quality and setting of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

20. To promote distinctive, high quality design that enhances the appearance and image of the District.

Display Energy Certificates (DEC's) - the main council buildings

DEC certification indicates how much energy is being used to operate the building each year. Detailed below are the bandings for the leisure centres and Elizabeth House, a rating of A-D is above threshold of performing well, a rating of E-G is below the threshold.

Southam Leisure Centre	Studley Leisure Centre	Shipston Leisure Centre	Stratford Leisure Centre	Elizabeth House
Band C (53)	Band C (75)	Band D (95)	Band C (75)	Band D (84)

A score of 100 and Band D rating would be typical for a leisure centre or a building the size of Elizabeth House.

Meeting Diary

Date:	Meetings Attended
16-02-11	Chairman's Briefing – Planning Committee (West)
16-02-11	Planning Committee (West)
22-02-11	Local Development Framework Working Group
24-02-11	Planning Site Visit – Maudsley Park Great Alne Care Home Retirement Village
24-02-11	Planning Site Visit – 50,000 Green Burial site
24-02-11	LDF Core Strategy Members Workshop
01-03-11	Facilitator – Planning Enforcement Ward Issues
03-03-11	Planning Appeal Case Conference – Counsel – Solicitor – Planning Officers
08-03-11	Alcester & Bidford Community Forum
09-03-11	Chairman's Briefing – Planning Committee (West)
09-03-11	Planning Committee (West)
	Future Meetings Diary
15-03-11	Meeting with County Council Area Support Manager / Forum Issues
15-03-11	Wixford Parish Council
16-03-11	Equality Impact Assessments – Member Champion
17-03-11	Green Belt – Planning Issues – Members Group
24-03-11	Audit & Regulation Planning
28-03-11	Bidford on Avon Parish Council
29-03-11	Local Development Framework Working Group
30-03-11	Chairman's Briefing – Planning Committee (West)
30-03-11	Planning Committee (West)

Councillor: Kim James

12th March 2011