



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE  
SPECIAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**ON**

**THURSDAY 25 JUNE 2009**

**AT**

**THE CONCLUSION OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING**

**AGENDA**

**Civic Offices  
Shute End  
Wokingham  
Berkshire**

**Susan Law  
Chief Executive**



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **THE COUNCIL'S VALUES**

**In making a difference to other people's lives we are ...**

- **ONE Wokingham, ONE Borough – working in partnership**
- **FOCUSED on Customers and Community**
- **BOLD – innovative and flexible**
- **OPEN – integrity, trust and transparency**

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# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

**To: The Chairman and Members of the Special Council Executive Committee**

A Meeting of the **SPECIAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** will be held at the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham on **Thursday 25 June 2009** at the conclusion of the Executive meeting.

Susan Law  
Chief Executive  
17 June 2009

**Members:** Barrie Patman (Chairman), Dianne King (Vice Chairman), Prue Bray, David Lee, Rob Stanton and Simon Weeks

**Standing Deputies:**  
Stephen Conway and Chris Edmunds

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
5.00	None Specific	<b>MINUTES</b> To confirm the Minutes of the Meetings of the Committee held on 26 March 2009 and 14 May 2009	1
6.00	None Specific	<b>APOLOGIES</b> To receive any apologies for absence	
7.00		<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any declarations of interest.	
8.00		<b>PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b> To answer any public questions	

The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this Committee.

Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to [www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions)

Explanatory leaflets are also available in the Civic Offices and Libraries.

### **MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

**9.00**

To answer any member questions

**10.00**

None Specific

### **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2009/10**

**2-3**

Members are asked to consider a decrease in council house dwelling rents as a result of a Government announcement that council house rents would be capped at an average of 3.1%.

### **CONTACT OFFICERS**

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This is an agenda for a meeting of the Special Council Executive Committee

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
SPECIAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
HELD ON THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2009 FROM 8.50PM TO 9.05PM**

*Barrie Patman (Chairman), Prue Bray, Chris Edmunds, David Lee, Rob Stanton and Simon Weeks*

*Also present:- Councillor Dianne King*

**PART I**

**11. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 29 May 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**12. APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons.

**13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**14. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions received.

**15. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no member questions received.

**16. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT 2008-11 REFRESH DOCUMENT**

The Committee considered a recommendation from the Executive to accept and adopt the first annual refresh document of the Local Area Agreement 2008-11 containing refreshed targets which had been negotiated between Officers and/or lead agencies such as Thames Valley Police and Berkshire West Primary Care Trust and the Government Office of the South East.

Members noted that since the agenda had been printed further negotiations had taken place and feedback from Government Offices had been received and therefore a revised Appendix B, including amendments to certain targets, was tabled.

Councillor Bray queried which targets had changed from those that were agreed last May and was informed that a number had not been set last year because the data on which to establish baselines had been unavailable. The information was now available and therefore those targets could now be agreed.

**RESOLVED:** That the refreshed Local Area Agreement targets, as set out in the revised Appendix B to the report, be adopted for submission to the Government Office for the South East before the end of March 2009.

*These are the Minutes of a meeting of the Special Council Executive Committee  
If you need help in understanding this document or if you would like a copy of it in large print please contact one of our Team Support Officers.*

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Housing Revenue Account Budget 2009/10</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Special Council Executive Committee on 25 June 2009
<b>WARD</b>	None specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Stuart Rowbotham, General Manager Community Care
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Chris Edmunds, Executive Member for Social Care

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To reduce the housing rents agreed at Council on 19 February 2009.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee agree that Council House dwelling rents be decreased from an average of 6.35% (approved 19 February 2009) to an average of 3.24% effective from April 2009.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION****Housing Revenue Account 2009/10****Consultation**

In response to the economic downturn and after pressure from local councils, the Government announced that it would allow councils to reduce rent increases for 2009/10 without loss to their HRA. The amending determination (*for the purposes of calculating the subsidy payments*) has now been received.

The average actual rental increase per dwelling per week for Wokingham Borough Council tenants reduces to £2.56 (3.24%), from an increase of £5 (6.35%).

The total expected reduction in actual rental income to the 2009/10 HRA is £331K.

The guideline rent (*used to calculate housing subsidy*) decreases by £387K and therefore a reduction in the subsidy payment we make to the Government.

The cost of implementing the change can be met from the net benefit to the HRA.

WBC tenants will benefit as a result of lower rents from July 2009, backdated to April 2009. In addition Wokingham will not lose any funding available to carry out much needed repairs.

**Corporate Implications**

This exercise will be cost neutral with no additional cost to the general fund or HRA.

**Reasons for Decision.**

On 6 March 2009 Margaret Beckett suggested that council house rents could be halved from 6.2% to 3.1% due to the current economic climate. Wokingham Borough Council following consultation decided to take up the offer of additional financial support to

ensure WBC tenants receive the full benefit of a reduced rent. The Council's constitution requires the approval of the Housing Revenue Account budget by Council to enact the new Housing Subsidy arrangements for 2009/10.

**Alternative Options considered, if any**

None.

**List of Background Papers**

Background papers on budgetary implications and consultation with government held by Housing Accountant

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<b>Date:</b> 8 June 2009	<b>Version No.</b> 3