

MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP MEETING

HELD 17 OCTOBER 2011

Present: Cllrs: Ranson, Sherras, T Hill, Hirst, Knox, Thompson, Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Director of Community Services, Head of Financial Services.

1 Apologies

1.1 Cllr Rogerson

2 Minutes of Budget Working Group 19 September 2011

2.1 Members approved the minutes of the last meeting of the Budget Working Group.

2.2 Cllr Sherras made further reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). He expressed his concern at the shortage of resources to deal with putting in to place the Community Infrastructure Levy and highlighted that it was an integral part of the Core Strategy.

2.3 Cllr Ranson reiterated Cllr Sherras' concerns, and questioned whether consultants could possibly be used in the first instance, with Performance Reward Grant being a potential funding stream for the work. Cllr Ranson expressed the need for CIL to be looked at with some urgency.

3 Consultation Paper on Localising Support for Council Tax

3.1 The DoR explained to members that the response that had previously been circulated on the consultation paper had now been submitted. The DoR took members through the main points of the response.

4 Consultation Paper on Retention of Business Rates

4.1 The DoR circulated copies of the two joint responses to the consultation that the council were included within. One was District Council Network and the other was a Lancashire Wide response, coordinated by Lancashire County Council.

4.2 It was explained that the council would also be submitting its own response which would in essence restate some of the most salient points from the two previously referred to joint responses.

4.3 The DoR highlighted the reference to Transition Grant which had now been made in the Lancashire Wide response to the consultation.

5 Council Restructuring

5.1 The proposals for the council restructuring that had been put before CMT by the council's heads of service were presented by CMT to members.

5.2 All agreed that the set of proposals should be recommended to Policy and Finance Committee

6 Any Other Business

Review of Treasury Management Arrangements

6.1 The DoR presented a report to members on the current Treasury Management Arrangements. The report included a proposal to increase the investment limits for the Debt Management Office from £2.5m to £5m.

6.2 Members approved the proposals, which would be reported to the next meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee.

7 Date and Time of Next Meeting

7.1 Date and time of next meeting was agreed as **Wednesday 16 November 2011 at 4.30pm in Members Room.**

7.2 Other future planned meeting dates are:

Monday 19 December 2011 at 4.00 in CR1

Monday 16 January 2012 at 4.30 in CR1

MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP MEETING

HELD 15 NOVEMBER 2011

Present: Cllrs: Ranson, T Hill, Hirst, Rogerson, Thompson, Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Director of Community Services, Head of Financial Services.

1 Apologies

1.1 Cllrs: Sherras and Knox

2 Minutes of Budget Working Group 17 October 2011

2.1 Members approved the minutes of the last meeting of the Budget Working Group.

3 Overall Budget Monitoring 2011/12

3.1 A revenue monitoring report was presented to members. The report focused on the areas of Employee Costs, Income from Fees and Charges and Interest Income.

3.2 The report showed that up to the end of October there were savings of £172K on employee costs, a shortfall of income of £15K and a shortfall on investment income of £4K.

3.3 It was highlighted to members that the level of savings shown on employee costs was as anticipated and was at a level previously forecast to members. There was now a large number of post vacancies with the council, which accounted for the savings shown.

3.4 The impact on income was particularly from Building Regulations, which showed a shortfall in income of £42,000. A discussion took place around the building control service and members expressed their concern about the financial position of the service.

4 Progress with the Revenue and Capital Budgets 2012/13

4.1 An update was provided on the progress made with the revenue and capital budgets for 2012/13. Members were pleased with the progress made to date.

5 Council Taxbase and Related Issues

5.1 The DoR reported to members on the Council Taxbase including second homes. A discussion took place around second homes and the council tax charge levied. This was particularly in the context of the LSP.

5.2 As part of the report, the DoR updated members on the level of New Homes Bonus that the council may receive in 2012/13. Based upon the New Homes Bonus calculator on the DCLG website the Council could receive approximately £127,000 annually for the period 2012/18. This was in addition to the £62,046 that is being received annually for the period 2011/17. At a meeting of the Capital working Group it was agreed that a proportion of the New Homes Bonus would be set aside to fund 'Economic Growth and Prosperity' capital projects.

5.3 The DoR informed members of a current consultation paper on technical reforms of council tax. The changes being considered were discussed by members with particular reference made to the second homes levy.

5.4 Information was provided to members on the Council Tax Freeze grant that had been announced by the government as a one off grant for 2012/13. This was estimated at £78,736 for 2012/13. A discussion took place on the potential level of council tax for 2012/13.

6 Council Restructuring

- 6.1 A verbal update on the council restructuring was given by the CE. A report was to be presented to Policy and Finance committee for consideration on 22 November 2011.

7 Any Other Business

Queen's Diamond Jubilee

- 7.1 A discussion took place on events that were being planned in the borough for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The potential for grant support was discussed.

8 Date and Time of Next Meeting

- 8.1 Date and time of next meeting was agreed as **Monday 19 December 2011 at 4.00pm in Committee Room 1.**

- 8.2 Other future planned meeting dates are:

Monday 16 January 2012 at 4.30 in CR1