

MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP MEETING

HELD 16 JANUARY 2012

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

1 Apologies

1 Cllr: Knox

2 Minutes of Budget Working Group 19 December 2011

2.1 The Director of Resources made reference to the successful appeal on the impact of property re-bandings on the New Homes Bonus

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

3 Capital Programme 2012/15

3.1 The Director of Resources presented a report to members on the proposed capital programme for the 2012/15 period. It was highlighted that CMT had met to discuss the bids that had previously been put forward.

3.2 Of the bids put forward four of the schemes had been removed from the programme, as they were either below the de minimis for capitalisation or required further investigation. Additionally the Disabled Facilities Grants and Landlord Tenants Grants had been reduced due to the level of budget that was to be moved from the 2011/12 programme to the 2012/13 programme and the difficulties experienced in expending the schemes.

3.3 Budget Working Group agreed with the proposed reduced capital programme and the proposals for financing the programme and also agreed that earmarked reserves should be reviewed in order to identify any balances that may be transferred to the capital reserve.

4 Revenue Budget Update

4.1 The Director of Resources took members through the latest position for the 2012/13 revenue budget. A number of proposals had been made within the report for members to consider for inclusion. A discussion took place on the proposals that were shown within the report together with other suggestions and it was agreed that a proposed budget for Special Policy and Finance Committee include amongst other items

- Council Tax Freeze
- Town centre car park charges freeze (up to 2 hours)
- The release of £36K post LSVT reserve (pension costs) in 2012/13 followed by the release of the remainder over the following 11 years
- Top the planning reserve back up to £150K
- Replenish capital fund to minimum level of £300K

5 Consultation with Representatives of Business Ratepayers

5.1 Consultation with ratepayers was discussed and it was agreed to arrange the meeting in the same format as previous years.

6 Any Other Business

- 6.1 Members were informed that consultation papers on the County budget had been received. It was agreed that these would be circulated by email for members to feedback any comments back to the Director of Resources for a Council response.

7 Date and Time of Next Meeting

- 7.1 No further meeting dates were agreed. It was decided that should a further meeting be needed prior to the Special Policy and Finance Committee meeting, this would be arranged by the Director of Resources and Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.

MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP MEETING

HELD 19 JUNE 2012

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

1 Apologies

1 Cllr: Rogerson

2 Minutes of Budget Working Group 16 January 2012

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

3 Business Rates Issues

3.1 The Director of Resources presented a report to members on the current difficulties that the council was facing with regard to Business Rates administration and collection, and the impact this could have on Council finances with the proposals regarding the local retention of Business Rates.

3.2 The business rates pooling arrangements were outlined and also current issues around specific property types were discussed. Issues around empty properties were discussed and it was suggested that this should be raised with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the District Council Network (DCN).

3.3 Cllr Ranson asked the Director of Resources to prepare a number of questions that he and the Chief Executive could raise at the forthcoming LGA conference on any issues that the council had in this area.

3.4 The bad debts liability was discussed together with pooling arrangements and it was agreed that the council was not in a position where it wished to enter into any pooling arrangement.

4 Localisation of Council Tax Support

4.1 The Director of Resources took members through a report on the next steps to be taken on the forthcoming changes to council tax support, some of the issues of which had previously been reported to Policy and Finance Committee.

4.2 The Director of Resources highlighted that a steer from members was needed on the vulnerable groups that they wished to protect under any new arrangements. A discussion took place on the various groups that could be impacted upon and the issues that they may face. Members requested further information of the impact on each group.

4.3 Consultation arrangements were outlined to members and it was explained that precepting bodies had to be consulted prior to the general public. The timetable for the consultation was also discussed. It was agreed that scheme proposals would be brought to the next meeting of the budget working group.

5 Revenue Outturn 2011/12

- 5.1 The Director of Resources presented a report on the revenue outturn for the year ending 31 March 2012. It was outlined that the Statement of Accounts would be presented in the coming weeks to the Accounts and Audit Committee.
- 5.2 The main high level variations across all committees were highlighted and it was explained that more detailed reports would be sent to service committee in the next cycle of meetings.
- 5.3 The impact of the outturn on the general fund balance was discussed, with £168,000 being added to general fund balances. Earmarked reserves were also discussed. The deficit on the collection fund was also discussed together with the mechanics of the collection fund itself.

6 Overall Capital Outturn 2011/12

- 6.1 A report was presented to members on the outturn on the capital programme for 2011/12, which outlined the summary position for all committees and the position on individual schemes.
- 6.2 Slippage on schemes was discussed, which would be sent to service committees for approval in the next cycle of meetings.
- 6.3 A summary of the capital resources at the end of the financial year was reviewed and discussed.

7 Any Other Business

- 7.1 There were no additional items of business

8 Date and Time of Next Meeting

- 8.1 The next meeting was agreed as Monday 16 July 2012 at 4pm