

MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP MEETING

HELD 24 SEPTEMBER 2012

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

1 Apologies

Cllrs: Thompson, Knox and Lawson Oddie

2 Minutes of Budget Working Group 16 July and 9 August 2012

The minutes of the previous meetings were agreed as a correct record.

3 Land for Industrial Development

CEO introduced his report on the possibility of acquiring land for industrial development. He went on to mention three sites that were on the market for sale and explained two approaches that could be followed.

Members discussed the issue and were very supportive in pursuing an option to acquire land for industrial development subject to agreement at Policy and Finance Committee.

4 Fees and Charges

Members considered the report on Fees and Charges which recommended a minimum increase of 2.5% in fees and charges but asked the BWG if there were any areas where charges shouldn't be recommended for increase.

Members recommended an across the board increase of 2.5% with the exception of car park charges which they felt should be frozen in the current economic climate. This advice would be included in Service Committee Fees and Charges reports in November.

5 PWLB

The DoR introduced this item and explained the background to the PWLB certainty rate which was set at 0.2% below normal PWLB rates. BWG agreed to apply for the discounted rate.

6 Localisation of Council Tax Support

The DoR updated the group with the latest position with our consultation on localisation of council tax benefit. Questionnaires have now been sent out to working age claimants and a sample of residents.

The DoR asked if any members of the Budget Working Group would be on hand to attend the drop in session on Wednesday 3 October, at which residents and groups could come along and ask questions about council tax support.

7 Response to Technical Consultation

The DoR took Members through the report on Business Rate Retention and explained briefly how it was proposed the scheme would operate. The DoR stressed that changes to Rural Services indicators which would help the Council to the tune of £470,000+ however, after damping would only receive 30% of this.

8 Update on the release of Census 2011 data

The CE took members through a brief analysis of census 2011 data; a number of comments were made.

9 AOB

None

10 Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 20 November 2012 at 4pm in Committee Room 1.

MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKING GROUP MEETING

HELD 20 NOVEMBER 2012

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

1 Apologies

1 None

2 Minutes of Budget Working Group 24 September 2012

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

3 Council Tax Support

3a *Presentation of outcome of Consultation*

3.1 The Director of Resources presented details of the outcome of the consultation process that had been undertaken on the council's proposed scheme. Members were taken through a pack of slides that had been prepared by Kris Barker from CRACS, and which was to be presented to members at Policy and Finance Committee.

3.2 Members discussed the outcomes of the consultation and commented about the representation of all parish areas. The various groups that had been consulted were also discussed.

3.3 Members were supportive of the outcome of the consultation and were pleased with the support that had been shown for the proposed scheme.

3.4 The announcement of the governments offer of transitional grant was also discussed, as was the impact on for this council. The proposed scheme that had been consulted upon would see working age claimants charged 12% council tax, however the government had offered grant to those council's capping such a charge to 8.5%.

3.5 Support was given by members at the meeting towards the 8.5% scheme, with a decision to be reached at Policy and Finance Committee

3.6 Members stated that a presentation on the mechanics of the Collection Fund and the calculation of the taxbase would be welcomed for a future meeting.

3b *Responses from major precepting authorities*

3.7 The letters that had been received from the major precepting bodies with regard to the proposed Council Tax Support scheme were discussed by members.

4 Revenue Budget - discussion

- 4.1 The Director of Resources took members through the latest position on the work that was underway on the budget. The high level of uncertainty due to the unknown level of government funding that the Council was to receive for 2013/14 was commented upon. It was mentioned that the latest anticipated date for the announcement of this funding was 20 December 2012.

5 Any Other Business

- 5.1 The Chief Executive updated members on a recent communication that had been received with regard to Municipal Mutual. He highlighted that a solvent run-off could no longer be achieved for the company and that there was potential for some local authorities to incur a charge as a result, dependant on any large scale claims that had been settled in the past.
- 5.2 A proposal for free parking in Clitheroe and Longridge town centres in December was discussed. It was agreed that free parking be offered for the three Saturdays before Christmas (the proposal was originally for the four Saturdays before Christmas).

6 Date and Time of Next Meeting

- 6.1 The next meeting was agreed as Wednesday 16 January 2012 at 4pm. Cllr J Rogerson gave his apologies in advance.