

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

INFORMAL MEMBER GROUP ON BUDGETARY ISSUES

MINUTES of a meeting of the Informal Member Group on Budgetary Issues held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 6 January 2011.

PRESENT: Mrs T Dean (Chairman), Mr L Christie and Mr R F Manning

ALSO PRESENT: Miss S J Carey and Mr J D Simmonds

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Wood (Acting Director of Finance), Mr D Shipton (Finance Strategy Manager), Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership) and Mr A Webb (Research Officer to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

18. Notes of Previous Meeting on 26 November 2010 (attached for approval)
(Item 1)

RESOLVED that the notes of the Informal Member Group on Budgetary Issues held on 26 November 2010 be agreed as a correct record.

19. Informal discussion on the Budget

(1) There was an informal discussion on the impending Budget announcement for 2011/12.

Mr Simmonds, Miss Carey, Mr Wood and Mr Shipton left the meeting at 10.00am

20. Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Exception Report (Cabinet report attached)
(Item 2)

(1) The Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance, the Acting Director of Finance and the Finance Strategy Manager had to leave the meeting to attend the launch of the Budget. In their absence, the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen identified a number of items in the report which they wanted further clarification of.

REVENUE

Children, Families & Education portfolio:

(2) In paragraph 2.6.7 on Asylum, Members asked why there was a pressure and whether this was due to the fact that the Government had agreed that they would fund up to £150 per week for each asylum seeker and the Council was spending more than this.

Environment, Highways & Waste portfolio:

(3) In paragraph 2.8.2 on Waste Management, Members sought clarification of whether the increase in recycling income had resulted from a higher price for the product or whether there had been another income source.

(4) In paragraph 2.8.4 on the Member Highway Fund, Members wanted confirmation that unspent balances would rollover into the following financial year. Where the pilot was being extended into 2011-12, clarity was sought as to whether this was to enable Members to use unspent balances only or whether there would be a further £25,000 for each County Councillor.

Communities portfolio:

(5) In paragraph 2.9.3 on Youth, Members sought clarification of which apprenticeship project was being referred to and whether the funds allocated to the project were being protected since the report suggested that they were being diverted to other projects.

CAPITAL

Capital Project Re-phasing:

(6) In paragraph 3.8, Members felt the first and second sentences were contradictory, and sought clarity about whether or not re-phasing greater than £0.100m would be reported or whether a cash limit change was being recommended.

21. LG Finance Settlement (verbal report)

(Item 3)

Officers had left the meeting for the launch of the Budget, so this item was not considered specifically, although it had been referred to as part of the informal discussion at the start of the meeting.