

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

INFORMAL MEMBER GROUP ON BUDGETARY ISSUES

NOTES of a meeting of the Informal Member Group on Budgetary Issues held in Room 1.47 - Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 18 January 2012.

PRESENT: Mrs T Dean (Chairman), Mr G Cowan, Mr R J Lees and Mr R F Manning

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Wood (Corporate Director of Finance and Procurement), Mr D Shipton (Acting Head of Financial Strategy), Mrs C Head (Chief Accountant) and Mrs A Taylor (Research Officer to Cabinet Scrutiny Committee)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

64. Notes of Previous Meeting on 4 January 2012 (attached for approval)

(Item 1)

- (1) In response to a query about the calculation and recovery arrangements for the Academies Funding Transfer Mr Shipton offered to circulate KCC's response to the Government's consultation.
- (2) In relation to the KCC's future strategy to compensate for the loss of council tax freeze grant Mr Wood explained that the MTP showed a budget gap of £36million. Options would be set out to bridge this gap by making additional savings and/or increasing the council tax.

RESOLVED: that the notes of the Informal Member Group on Budgetary Issues held on Wednesday 4 January 2011 be approved as a correct record.

65. Revenue & Capital Budgets Monitoring Exception Report (Cabinet report attached)

(Item 2)

- (1) There had been an increase in the underspend on the Adult Social Care and Public Health portfolio.
- (2) Within the Environment, Highways and Waste portfolio the main areas of underspend had been the Concessionary Fares and the Freedom Pass. Members queried the effect of the mild winter and what would happen to any further underspend within the portfolio. Mr Wood explained that a decision would be made by Cabinet in June regarding any underspend.
- (3) In relation to the ownership of KCC's highways vehicles it was understood that these were owned or leased by Enterprise, this would be clarified with John Burr and reported back to members of the Budget IMG.

- (4) There continued to be pressure within the Specialist Children's Services portfolio, there were concerns over the cost of Asylum and discussions were continuing with the UK Border Agency about the removal of All Rights Exhausted clients and the legal duty to support such young people.
- (5) There was a street light replacement programme underway, and street lighting was the subject of a previous report to E, H & W POSC on 22 November 2011.
- (6) There was an underspend in Road Safety as a result of higher numbers of participants in speed awareness courses leading to additional income. Mrs Dean queried the additional income and whether this was solely from the courses, a response would be circulated to members of the Budget IMG after the meeting.
- (7) Mr Wood undertook to obtain further information on the issues delaying the plans for the Tunbridge Wells Library.

RESOLVED: that subject to the above information being provided, Members note the Revenue and Capital Budgets Monitoring Exception Report.

66. Medium Term Plan 2012 - 15 (incorporating the Budget and Council Tax setting for 2012/13) Update

(Item 3)

This report was not available in time for the meeting of the Budget IMG

67. Treasury Management Strategy

(Item 4)

- (1) Mr Simmonds introduced the Council's Treasury Strategy which was due to be submitted to the Cabinet meeting on 25 January 2012.

RESOLVED: that Members note the Treasury Strategy report.