

Executive Committee

21st February 2011

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), Councillor Michael Braley (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Malcolm Hall, Gay Hopkins, Jinny Pearce and Debbie Taylor

Also Present:

Councillors Peter Anderson, Kath Banks, Andrew Brazier, Michael Chalk, Simon Chalk, Anita Clayton, Jack Cookson, Andy Fry, Adam Griffin, Bill Hartnett, Nigel Hicks, Roger Hill, Robin King, Wanda King, William Norton, Brenda Quinney, Mark Shurmer, Derek Taylor, Diane Thomas and Graham Vickery and M Collins (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee).

Officers:

R Bamford, H Bennett, T Buckley, K Dicks, C Felton, J Godwin, S Hanley, T Kristunas, A Marklew, P Mills, J Pickering, D Poole, S Skinner and C Walker

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

181. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

183. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair advised that she had accepted the following matters as Urgent Business as they were not on the Forward Plan for this meeting:

Item 4 – Initial Estimates 2011/12; and

Item 5 – Fees and Charges 2011/12.

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Chair

The Chair also advised that she had accepted late circulation of the following papers:

Item 6 – the updated appendices to the Council Tax report.

184. FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW 2011/12

The Committee considered the proposed Fees and Charges for 2011/12 for the Council's chargeable services. Officers tabled an amended version of page 17 of the report to the Executive Committee in respect of certain charges under the Leisure and Arts heading.

Members commented on a number of the proposed increases where the rise had been significantly at a variance with the 3 – 5% increase generally applied or where a new charge had been applied. With regard to leisure services, it was noted that income was continuing to increase while customer satisfaction was being maintained. The Council was informed that Officers took account of the charges levied both in neighbouring authorities and among the Council's family group of authorities to ensure that such charges were appropriate.

Officers undertook to clarify for future years those charges upon which VAT was applicable.

RECOMMENDED that

the Fees and Charges for 2011/12 as set out in Appendices A-H, as amended, be approved;

other than in cases where:-

- a) fees and charges are statutory;**
- b) fees and charges are set externally; or**
- c) fees and charges are established under separate processes, for example Taxi fares.**

(This report had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business – not on the Forward Plan for this meeting – and was considered at the meeting as such, with the approval of the Chair, in accordance with the Council's constitutional rules and the powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Section 100 (B) (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to agree to matters of urgency being discussed by reason of special circumstances.

In this case the special circumstances were the need to agree the levels of fees and charges for chargeable services prior to the setting of the Council Tax.)

185. INITIAL ESTIMATES 2011/12 AND FORECASTS FOR 2012/13 AND 2013/14

The Council considered a report that set out the estimated budget requirements for each service, as well as the proposed high priority revenue and capital bids, unavoidable financial pressures and proposed savings for the coming three year period.

The considerable consultation that had taken place, both with Members through the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committees and with the public through the Budget Jury was highlighted.

The emphasis in the coming financial years on further shared services and business transformation was noted, with the significant savings achieved through these means thus far being brought to Members' attention. The means for covering the outstanding shortfall were briefly discussed, including the proposal to use around £1/2 Million from balances. It was proposed to retain £1.157 Million in balances in recognition of the uncertain financial situation. The changes in terms and conditions of employment of staff, together with measures such as active vacancy management was projected to further increase savings in the coming years.

The regaining of money from central Government for the Dial-a-Ride service and concessionary fares was welcomed. However, it was noted that the sum provided diminished significantly over time and would be far short of that needed to maintain both the Dial-a-Ride service and pre-9.30am concessionary fares without considerable additional investment from the Council. It was therefore proposed that pre-9.30am concessionary fares be discontinued, although options for these services would be discussed with Members in the new financial year.

A number of alternative proposals were discussed, including a renewal of no-cost swimming to under-16s and over-60s, retention of the pre-9.30am bus pass and the reintroduction of concessionary Reddicard rates before the motion was put to the vote and it was

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the unavoidable pressures as identified in Appendix A to the report be approved:**

2011/12	£498,000
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| | 2012/13 | £408,000 |
| | 2013/14 | £408,000; |
- 2) the high bids as identified in Appendix B to the report be approved:
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| | 2011/12 | £232,000 |
| | 2012/13 | £232,000 |
| | 2013/14 | £232,000; |
- 3) the savings as identified in Appendix C to the report be approved:
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| | 2011/12 | £1,802,000 |
| | 2012/13 | £3,444,000 |
| | 2013/14 | £3,071,000; |
- 4) the high capital bids as detailed in Appendix D to the report be approved:
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| | 2011/12 | £867,000 (General Fund) |
| | | £120,000 (Housing Revenue Account) |
| | 2012/13 | £11,000 (General Fund) |
| | 2013/14 | £10,000 (General Fund); and |
- 5) the use of balances totalling £515,000 be approved.

(This report had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business – not on the Forward Plan for this meeting – and was considered at the meeting as such, with the approval of the Chair, in accordance with the Council’s constitutional rules and the powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Section 100 (B) (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to agree to matters of urgency being discussed by reason of special circumstances.

In this case the special circumstances were the need to agree the Initial Estimates prior to the setting of the Council Tax.)

186. COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2011/12

Members considered a report which proposed a level of Council Tax to be levied in 2011/12. The Committee was informed that the report was essentially a formal, statute driven summary arising from the matters recommended earlier in the meeting.

RECOMMENDED that

the recommendations set out in Appendix ‘Part C’ of the report be approved.

(The appendices to this report had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business – not meeting the publication deadline for this meeting – and were considered at the meeting as such, with the approval of the Chair, in accordance with the Council's constitutional rules and the powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Section 100 (B) (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to agree to matters of urgency being discussed by reason of special circumstances.

In this case the special circumstances were the need to set the amount of Council Tax for Redditch by 11th March 2011.)

The Meeting commenced at 7.31 pm
and closed at 8.40 pm

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Chair