

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 7 October 2014 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Melanie Magee
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Barry Richards
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members: Councillor Rose Stratford (In place of Councillor Nigel Randall)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Nigel Randall

Officers: Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement
Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager
Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer

32 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

33 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

34 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 September 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

36

Budget Strategy 2015 to 2016 and Beyond

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources which detailed the budget process and strategy for the 2015-16 financial year. The report also gave an update on the Medium Term Revenue Plan, the Council Tax reduction scheme and the approach to Business Rates pooling.

The report was presented to the Committee for information, following consideration and approval by the Executive at its meeting on 6 October 2014.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement explained the Business Rates pooling system, and added that the Council had until 31 October to notify the Government of its intentions for the 2015-16 financial year.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

37

Capital Programme - Use of Contingency

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Resources which outlined how a Capital Contingency budget could be operated if the decision was made to create one.

The Interim Head of Finance and Procurement explained that in the event a contingency budget wasn't set up, it would still be possible to access funds in the event of an emergency. It was possible for Capital bids to be submitted at any point during the financial year, and in the event of extreme urgency a retrospective bid could be submitted.

Following discussions the Committee agreed that no recommendations needed to be made regarding creation of a central contingency budget.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted
- (2) That no recommendations be made regarding a central contingency budget

38

Business Support Unit

The Interim Head of Finance and Procurement updated the Committee on progress with the Business Support Unit.

The Personnel Committee had approved the creation of the unit in July 2014. Job descriptions were currently being prepared for the three posts, and it was hoped that they would be filled as soon as possible.

In response to questions the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement explained that once established the posts would pick up work such as Council Tax banding queries with the Valuation Office and Business Rates charging.

Resolved

(1) That the update be received.

39 **Work Programme 2014 - 15**

The Committee considered the draft Work Programme for 2014/15

Resolved

(1) That the work programme be noted.

40 **Fees and Charges Review 2015-16**

The Committee considered the report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement, which detailed fees and charges being considered for the 2015-16 revenue budget.

In response to questions from the Committee, it was agreed that further information would be requested from the Head of Environmental Services relating to the costs of Commercial collections, in particular the difference in costs between refuse collections and Schedule II collections.

The Committee also asked if it would be possible for Planning Application fees to be included for information in future.

Resolved

(1) That the report be noted.

41 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

Resolved

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

Fees and Charges Review 2015-16 - Exempt Appendix

The Committee considered the exempt appendix to the Fees and Charges Review 2015-16.

Resolved

- (1) That the exempt appendix be noted

The meeting ended at 7.47 pm

Chairman:

Date: