

## **COUNTY COUNCIL (RECONVENED MEETING): MINUTES**

**Date:** Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2004  
(Reconvened from 10<sup>th</sup> February 2004)

**Time:** 10.30 a.m. – 1.25 p.m.

**Place:** Shire Hall, Cambridge

**Present:** Councillor: R Driver (Chairman)

Councillors: C M Ballard, I C Bates, T J Bear, B S Bhalla, A J Bowen, S V Brinton, J Broadway, R L Clarke, P J Downes, J A P Eddy, M Farrar, H J Fitch, J L Gluza, P D Gooden, A Hansard, B Hardy, G F Harper, W G M Hensley, J L Huppert, S F Johnstone, J D Jones, I C Kidman, S J Kime, S J E King, V H Lucas, A R Mair, R B Martlew, L W McGuire, A K Melton, A S Milton, S B Normington, M K Ogden, L J Oliver, A G Orgee, D R Pegram, J A Powley, P A E Read, J E Reynolds, C E Shaw, P W Silby, R C Speechley, A B Stenner, P L Stroude, J M Tuck, J K Walters, R Wilkinson and F H Yeulett

**Apologies:** Councillors P D Bailey, C Carter, J E Coston, S A Giles, V A Hearne-Casapieri, G J Heathcock, A C Kent, M L Leeke and A A Reid

### **189. RECONVENED MEETING**

The Chairman explained that this was a reconvening of the meeting of Council adjourned on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2004. The purpose of the reconvened meeting was to consider a single deferred item, the County Council's Budget 2004/05, including the reports from the Council's Scrutiny Committees.

### **190. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Relating to the earlier part of the meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2004, Councillor J D Jones clarified the nature of the personal interest she had declared under paragraph 8 of the Code of Conduct in item 8 under Minute 183a, stating that she was a member of the Shire Hall Club Management Committee and that a relative of hers was employed by the Club.

### **191. COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET 2004/05**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, drew attention to the following papers informing the Budget debate:

- The reports of the meetings of Cabinet on 27<sup>th</sup> January and 13<sup>th</sup> February 2004
- The reports of the Council's four Scrutiny Committees on the Budget proposals, including a second report from Policy Scrutiny and Audit Committee following its additional meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2004
- The Budget summary document
- Amended versions of page 4 of the Budget summary document (the summary in Table 1 of net revenue expenditure for 2004/05) and page 5 (the

Budget recommendations), which were tabled at the meeting.

It was moved by the Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor J E Reynolds, that the reports of the Cabinet meetings on 27<sup>th</sup> January and 13<sup>th</sup> February 2004 be received and the tabled recommendations adopted.

Councillors P J Downes, J L Gluza, L W McGuire and J M Tuck respectively moved the receipt of the reports of the Policy Scrutiny and Audit Committee (two meetings), the Education, Libraries and Heritage Scrutiny Committee, the Environment and Transport Scrutiny Committee and the Social Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Councillor J K Walters opened the Budget debate on behalf of the Cabinet. Councillors S V Brinton and J L Gluza responded on behalf of the Liberal Democrat and Labour groups respectively. All three speakers and the Chairman of Council thanked the Chief Executive, the Directors of Resources and Education, Libraries and Heritage and their staff and for their contributions to the recent negotiations with Government over the proposals and in compiling the Budget for 2004/05.

In each of the three main service areas, Education, Libraries and Heritage, Environment and Transport and Social Services, the report of the relevant Scrutiny Committee was presented by its Chairman. A Cabinet Member then spoke in support of the Cabinet's budget proposals prior to member discussion of the proposals: Councillor F H Yeulett for Education, Libraries and Heritage, Councillor L J Oliver for Environment and Transport and Councillor D R Pegram for Social Services. For each service, the lead Cabinet Member summed up the debate: Councillor R Wilkinson for Education, Libraries and Heritage, Councillor S F Johnstone for Environment and Transport and Councillor J A Powley for Social Services.

The following members asked questions to which the Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor J A Powley, agreed to send written responses:

- Councillor J L Huppert asked to be advised of increases to the Council's charges for domiciliary care over the past three years
- Councillor S V Brinton asked to be advised whether the Fostering Service's advertising budget would be increased by £10,000 to aid the recruitment of foster carers, as recommended by the Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel on Foster Care.

Councillor P J Downes spoke to the reports of the Policy Scrutiny and Audit Committee on the scrutiny of the overall budget proposals, including the consultation process, and the specific budget proposals relating to the Chief Executive's Department and Resources Directorate. The Deputy Leader of Council, Councillor J E Reynolds, spoke in support of the Cabinet's proposals.

Councillor J L Huppert proposed the following amendment, which was seconded by Councillor S V Brinton:

## Revenue Budget

- (i) To approve the Service Directorate cash limits set out in Table 1 on page 4 of the Budget summary report, as amended by the tabled paper;
- £
- (ii) To approve a County Budget requirement in respect of general expenses applicable to the whole County area: 465,949,635
- (iii) To approve a recommended County Precept for Council Tax from District Councils: 163,526,963
- (to be received in ten equal instalments in accordance with the 'fall-back' provisions of the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 1995);
- (iv) To approve a Council Tax for each Band of property, based on the number of 'Band D' equivalent properties notified to the County Council by the District Council (201,259):

| <b>Band</b> | <b>Council Tax</b> | <b>Band</b> | <b>Council Tax</b> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| A           | £541.68            | E           | £993.08            |
| B           | £631.96            | F           | £1,173.64          |
| C           | £722.24            | G           | £1,354.20          |
| D           | £812.52            | H           | £1,625.04          |

- (v) To approve the Prudential Indicators as set out on page 21 of the Budget summary document;
- (vi) To approve the Council's Treasury Management Strategy as set out on page 22 of the Budget summary document;
- (vii) To note the report of the Head of Finance on the levels of reserves and robustness of the estimates as set out on pages 22 to 25 of the Budget summary document;

## Capital Budget

- (viii) To approve Capital Payments in 2004/05 up to £79.8 million arising from:
- commitments from schemes already approved; and
  - the consequences of new starts (for the three years 2004/05 to 2006/07) listed in the Service Directors' reports contained in the Budget summary document,

subject to the receipt of appropriate capital resources, or when the Head of Finance is satisfied that sufficient funds have been secured.

It was noted that the amendment made use of an additional £710,000 Local Public Service Agreement reward grant in 2004/05 and 2005/06 to achieve full passporting to schools and a reduction of 0.1% in the Council Tax increase (and thereafter from the MTSP 'balance available' shown in Table 4 on page 10 of the Budget summary document).

On being put to the vote, Councillor Huppert's amendment was defeated.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrat group in favour, Conservative and Labour groups against.]

Councillor R L Clarke proposed the following amendment, which was seconded by Councillor A R Mair:

"To add the following to the Budget recommendations:

That arising from proposed savings in the Resources budget, a compulsory deduction of £6 per month be made from the members' allowances paid to each member to reflect the net cost of the lunch provided to members at County Council meetings."

On being put to the vote, Councillor Clarke's amendment was carried.

[Voting pattern: unanimous.]

The Leader of the Council, Councillor J K Walters, then summed up on behalf of the Cabinet. Council voted on the substantive motion, as amended, and it was resolved:

#### Revenue Budget

- (i) To approve the Service Directorate cash limits set out in Table 1 on page 4 of the Budget summary report, as amended by the tabled paper;
- (ii) To approve a County Budget requirement in respect of general expenses applicable to the whole County area:
- (iii) To approve a recommended County Precept for Council Tax from District Councils:

£

466,094,541

163,671,869

(to be received in ten equal instalments in accordance with the 'fall-back' provisions of the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 1995);

- (iv) To approve a Council Tax for each Band of property, based on the number of 'Band D' equivalent properties notified to the County Council by the District Council (201,259):

| <b>Band</b> | <b>Council Tax</b> | <b>Band</b> | <b>Council Tax</b> |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| A           | £542.16            | E           | £993.96            |
| B           | £632.52            | F           | £1,174.68          |
| C           | £722.88            | G           | £1,355.40          |
| D           | £813.24            | H           | £1,626.48          |

- (v) To approve the Prudential Indicators as set out on page 21 of the Budget summary document;

- (vi) To approve the Council's Treasury Management Strategy as set out on page 22 of the Budget summary document;
- (vii) To note the report of the Head of Finance on the levels of reserves and robustness of the estimates as set out on pages 22 to 25 of the Budget summary document;
- (viii) That arising from proposed savings in the Resources budget, a compulsory deduction of £6 per month be made from the members' allowances paid to each member to reflect the net cost of the lunch provided to members at County Council meetings.

#### Capital Budget

- (ix) To approve Capital Payments in 2004/05 up to £79.8 million arising from:
  - commitments from schemes already approved; and
  - the consequences of new starts (for the three years 2004/05 to 2006/07) listed in the Service Directors' reports contained in the Budget summary document,

subject to the receipt of appropriate capital resources, or when the Head of Finance is satisfied that sufficient funds have been secured.

The Leader of the Council advised Council that he had decided that the additional £250,000 savings be funded from the anticipated Local Public Service Agreement reward grant in 2004/05 and 2005/06 (and thereafter from the MTSP 'balance available' shown in Table 4 on page 10 of the Budget summary document).

[Voting pattern: Conservative and Labour groups in favour, Liberal Democrat group abstained.]

Chairman: