

Dear Councillor,

CABINET - THURSDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2012

I am now able to enclose for consideration at the above meeting the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

**Agenda Item
No.**

4. UPDATE 2013/14 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN (Pages 1 - 2)

To consider a report by the Head of Financial Services.

A copy of the report – Controllable Budgets by Budget Holder has been circulated separately to the Agenda.

5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE (Pages 3 - 4)

To consider a report by the Head of Financial Services reviewing the performance for the period 1st April to 30th September 2012.

9. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FROM 1ST APRIL 2013 (Pages 5 - 6)

To receive a report from the Head of Customer Services on Council Tax Support from 1st April 2013.

14. DISPOSAL OF LAND, ST. MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON (Pages 7 - 8)

To consider a report by the Head of Environmental Management.

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**UPDATE - 2013/14 BUDGET AND MTP
(Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being))**

1. INTRODUCTION


- 1.1 At its meeting held on 6th December 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) considered a report by the Head of Financial Services providing an update on the 2013/14 Budget and MTP. This report summarises the Panel's discussions on the matter.

2. THE PANEL'S DISCUSSIONS

- 2.1 The Panel has previously held informal discussions on the Council's financial position. The Chairman has informed Members that he has advised the Cabinet of the options considered and recommendations that have been made. The Panel is reassured that the Cabinet is developing its own range of options for savings, many of which are similar to those identified by the Panel. The Panel looks forward to reviewing the Cabinet's plans in due course and to discussing the way information is presented.
- 2.2 The Panel has discussed the report by the Head of Financial Services in detail. Members are generally of the view that the Council should seek to effect what savings it can make rather than run down reserves. In order to establish a complete picture, information on the savings that have been achieved to date has been requested. It is further felt that Members should be provided with ongoing monitoring data on progress against savings targets. At the same time, it is stressed that there is a need to protect services to customers.
- 2.3 The Panel has discussed the consequences of not pooling business rates. Further work is to be undertaken before a decision is taken for next year. If it is decided not to proceed, it will be possible to pool business rates in future years.
- 2.4 Members have discussed predictions for future housing completions, the procurement of energy and projected borrowing trends. A Working Group currently is looking at the Council's policies and approach to the latter. Particular emphasis has been placed on the assumptions made for the pay award and performance pay. While the view has been expressed that performance pay should only be awarded for better than expected performance and that no provision should be made for it in the budget, the Executive Councillor for Resources has indicated that there should be a performance related element in employees' pay.
- 2.5 Attention is drawn to Annex B, which identifies the increase in income as a result of the rise in the population level of the District.
- 2.6 At the conclusion of its deliberations the Panel has resolved to ask the Cabinet to examine what additional savings can be made bearing in mind the need to maintain those services that impact on the community whilst preserving if possible the Council's reserves.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Cabinet is requested to take into consideration the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) as set out above when considering this item.

Contact Officer: A Roberts, Scrutiny and Review Manager
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CABINET

13 DECEMBER 2012

**TREASURY MANAGEMENT
REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE: 6 MONTHLY REVIEW
(Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being))**

1. TREASURY MANAGEMENT - 6 MONTHLY REVIEW

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has considered the mid-year report by the Head of Financial Services on Treasury Management performance and reviewing the Treasury Management strategy at its meeting held on 6th December 2012. The Panel is of the view that the Cabinet should recommend the Council to note the contents of the report and to approve the revised targets in paragraph 6.2.

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CABINET

13TH DECEMBER 2012

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT FROM 1ST APRIL 2013 (Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being))

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 4th December 2012, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) considered a report by the Head of Customer Services seeking the Panel's endorsement of a new local Council Tax Support scheme for the District.
- 1.2 The Executive Councillor for Customer Services and the Head of Customer Services were in attendance at the meeting. This report summarises the Panel's discussions.

2. THE PANEL'S DISCUSSIONS

- 2.1 In introducing the report, the Executive Councillor for Customer Services reported that the new scheme will supersede the current national Council Tax Benefit scheme on 1st April 2013. The Panel's attention has been drawn to the financial impact of the proposals, with particular reference being made to the impact on the collection fund of both the proposed local scheme and the government's transitional scheme. He then went on to report that the draft scheme has been subject to consultation in late summer, which had resulted in changes being made to the backdating of payments made under the current Council Tax Benefit scheme and the capital limit which will remain at the existing Council Tax Benefit level of £16,000. These changes are now incorporated within the new scheme.
- 2.2 The Panel has discussed at some length the impact of the proposals upon Town and Parish precepts. Members appreciate the difficulties faced by the Head of Customer Services in providing accurate estimates on Council Tax calculations for each of the District's Parishes as this largely depends on a Government announcement, which is expected on 13th December 2012. Town and Parish Councils are advised by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils to defer agreeing their precepts until this announcement has been made and the impact on their Council Tax calculations known. Owing to concerns with the lack of time available, given that the Council is required to have a scheme in place by 31st January 2013, the Panel has requested sight of a report outlining the impact of the Town and Parish Council precepting process to be made available to them in February 2013.
- 2.3 Referring to residents protected under the proposed new scheme, some concerns have been expressed that some of those who previously were protected under the current national Council Tax Benefit scheme will be required to pay Council Tax under the new local scheme. Of particular concern to Members are those in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance.
- 2.4 Reference has also been made to the recommendation arising within the Equality Impact Assessment relating to the definition of vulnerable groups. The Head of Customer Services has confirmed that she will be seeking expert legal opinion on the Council's position. Given this undertaking, the Panel recommends the Cabinet to approve the Proposed Council Tax Support Scheme and, in accordance with Section 10 and Schedule 4 of the Local Government Finance

Act 2012, authorise the Head of Customer Services to administer the Council Tax Support Scheme.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The Cabinet is invited to take into account the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) as part of its deliberations on the report by the Head of Customer Services.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Minutes and Reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) held on 4th December 2012.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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