

**DRAFT BUDGET 2011/12 AND MTP - FEEDBACK
(Report of the Cabinet)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 18th November 2010, the Cabinet considered a report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on the draft budget 2011/2012 and the Medium Term Plan 2012/2016.

2. DELIBERATIONS

- 2.1 In recommending the draft budget and Medium Term Plan to Council as a basis for the development of the budget for 2011/2012 and the revised Medium Term Plan 2015/2016, the Cabinet has considered the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) thereon. In so doing, Members concurred with the Panel that investigations should take place until alternative delivery methods for services provided at the customer services centre. Initial discussions with Cambridgeshire County Council are currently underway with a view to working alongside their library service and further talks will be held with town and parish councils.
- 2.2 With regard to proposals to reduce the grants paid to voluntary organisations, Executive Councillors concurred with the Panel that these groups are likely to form an important part of the "localism" agenda and the public's demand on services that they provide may increase as a result of changes to the welfare system. The Cabinet concluded that these groups should be encouraged to explore a variety of alternative means of funding and revenue generation.
- 2.3 In discussing the Panel's views on the proposals for the CCTV service, the Cabinet's attention has been drawn to a number of options being investigated including the potential to enter into a joint arrangement with Cambridgeshire Constabulary, and/or town and parish councils.
- 2.4 With regard to the proposal to increase car parking charges from 2014, Members have emphasised the need to consider this carefully given the lack of adequate public transport, public opinion, ability of residents to pay and the implications of introducing civil parking enforcement.
- 2.5 Discussion has taken place on the options for the determination of levels of Council Tax for 2011/2012. Given the current economic climate, the impact on local residents and the Government proposed grant of 2.5% for councils that decide to freeze their council tax for the coming financial year, the Cabinet have recommended to Council that no increase in council tax for 2011/2012 be made.
- 2.6 Following further discussion on the Liberal Democrats proposals, the Cabinet has noted that a review of pay scales and allowances are currently underway along with the development of shared services initiatives and proposals to sub-let spare

office capacity. Areas identified as requiring further discussion included job-sharing, members allowances, the retention of the customer services centre and a reduction in the number of District Councillors. In that respect, the Cabinet expressed the view that any reduction in the number of District Councillors was unlikely to result in significant savings during the budget plan period.

- 2.7 The Cabinet has authorised Chief Officers Management Team, after consultation with the appropriate Executive Councillors, to prepare and implement plans for changes and reductions in services to achieve targeted saving plans for 2011/2012 and future years.

3. **CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel are invited to note the contents of this report.

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