

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 10 December 2015.

PRESENT: Councillor J D Ablewhite – Chairman.
Councillors R B Howe, R C Carter, S Cawley, D B Dew, J A Gray and D M Tysoe.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor R Harrison.

57. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19th November 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

58. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary or other interests received at the meeting.

59. PROCUREMENT POLICY

By way of a report from the Procurement Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), and having considered the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being), the Cabinet received the Procurement Policy and recommended it to Council for approval.

The Procurement Policy outlined how the procurement function supported the Corporate Plan and Council's objectives, whilst minimising risks and seeking value for money.

The Policy described how the Council would manage procurement risk, the overarching EU principles, the Council's approach to delivering value for money, helping local businesses compete for public spend and the performance and governance of procurement.

The Policy provided the structure and organisation of procurement and created a foundation to develop detailed plans and objectives for procurement.

Following discussions by the Cabinet it was explained that financial thresholds determined the process of procurement. A value of £5,000 was able to be directly awarded whereas a value over £25,000 involved a formal process.

The Cabinet expressed preference for procuring from local businesses to assist the local economy. It was explained that the Council had to be impartial. However, local businesses were provided with information regarding how the Council advertised in

order that they could identify and bid for contracts and business opportunities. Whereupon, the Cabinet

RECOMMENDED

that the Council approve the Procurement Policy attached as Appendix 1 to the Officer's report.

60. CORPORATE FRAUD WORKPLAN AND PROSECUTION POLICY

The Cabinet received a report from the Benefits Manager, which was presented by the Head of Customer Service (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the Workplan for the Corporate Fraud Team following the transfer of Housing Benefit fraud investigations to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

In May 2015 the responsibility for investigating allegations of Housing Benefit fraud transferred to the DWP. Three Investigating Officers transferred to the DWP and the in-house team now consisted of a Team Leader, one Investigating Officer and an Intelligence Officer.

Since then the Team had been completing the remaining residual work following the DWP transfer, including the preparation of a number of Housing Benefit cases for prosecution. The Workplan had been developed around the types of fraud that currently formed the majority of the work for the Team, as well as new and emerging threats, including Council Tax Support fraud; Council Tax discount fraud; Housing Tenancy fraud and Business Rates fraud.

Regarding the productivity of the Team it was explained that between April and October 2015 over 400 referrals were received and a significant value of fraud identified including the recovery of six social housing properties that had been re-allocated to families in genuine need. The value of the fraud identified outweighed the staffing costs of the Fraud Team and the related software costs. Having a Corporate Fraud Team was considered valuable in the deterrent against fraud.

In responding to questions regarding the success at recovering fraud once identified it was explained that Housing Benefit fraud was difficult to recover. However, responsibility for this had now transferred to the DWP. The Council was able to issue £70 penalty notices for Council Tax Discount Fraud. Although the Team no longer investigated Housing Benefit fraud, discrepancies identified whilst investigating Council Tax Support/Council Tax Discount fraud often resulted in the overpayment of Housing Benefit.

With different types of fraud being investigated, it had required the Fraud Prosecution Policy to be amended including reference to the legislation used in prosecuting these new areas. The Cabinet had approved the revised Fraud Prosecution Policy that established the legislation and process that Investigating Officers had to adhere to when considering the action to take following fraud investigation.

Having considered the comments of the Corporate Governance Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to

- i. approve the Corporate Fraud Team Workplan 2015/17, attached as Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.
- ii. approve the revised Fraud Prosecution Policy, attached as Appendix 2 of the Officer's report.
- iii. endorse that monitoring the delivery of the Workplan be overseen by the Executive Councillor for Customer Service alongside Annual Reports to the Corporate Governance Panel.

61. CAMBS HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY (CHIA) SHARED SERVICE REVIEW AND DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT BUDGET

The Cabinet received a progress review report by the Housing Strategy Manager on the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (CHIA) shared service following three years of operation (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which was presented by the Head of Development.

The CHIA shared service, developed in partnership with Cambridge City Council (CCC) and South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), went 'live' on 1st April 2012. Staff were employed by CCC with the main office located within SCDC.

It was reported that the shared Home Improvement Agency (HIA) service had been successful in meeting its initial aims and objectives and had the potential to achieve further efficiencies both internally and externally in the future. The performance data indicated high volumes of work for the three years the shared HIA had been in operation and that 2014/15 performance targets had been achieved.

The CHIA previously agreed in principle to include East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) in the shared service, subject to a detailed Business Case being developed. However, having been appraised of the Business Case for service expansion, ECDC had decided not to join the shared service as they were content that their in-house service was fit for purpose and they did not foresee significant benefits from disrupting their current arrangement.

It had been noted that performance in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2015/16 had decreased for a number of reasons including an increase in volumes of work, loss of a surveyor and the necessary introduction of new procedures to ensure regulatory compliance. Reasons for this and potential options were being explored by the CHIA Management Board.

The original three-year CHIA Agreement was extended in 2014 and expired in March 2016. The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Head of Development in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing to sign a new Partnership Agreement for a further two years with provision for an extension for a further three years by agreement.

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) were part funded through the

Council's Capital fund and the remainder was Government funded via the Better Care Fund. Officers continued to influence the strategic direction of the Better Care Fund towards preventative services, demonstrating the value of the DFG programme to the health and social care agenda.

The maximum DFG that was able to be awarded was £30,000 and DFGs for adults were subject to a means test. It was suggested that in the current economic climate and when other budgets were being reduced, if possible the maximum amount awarded should be reduced, particularly if the applicant had assets available to fund the adaptations.

Having considered the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to

- i. note the position following three years of the shared Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency service; and
- i. agree to delegate authority to the Head of Development in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing to sign a new Partnership Agreement for a further two years with provision for an extension for a further three years by agreement.

At the conclusion of the above item, at 7.35pm, Councillor D Dew left the meeting.

62. CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY

By way of a report from the Head of Customer Service (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet recommended the revised Customer Service Strategy to Council for approval.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Cabinet had previously reviewed and commented on a summary 'on a page' document. In light of Member feedback, the summary document had been developed into a wider and more comprehensive document, taking the foundation of the previous Strategy and updating the content to reflect other Council Strategies and Policies. The document also took into account customer feedback and had passed through a number of Officer groups.

The Customer Service Strategy included a section of how the Council would measure the outcomes the Strategy was expected to deliver. It was noted that a number of measures included targets with 'TBA' and it was explained that as these were new measures targets were still being established.

At 7.37pm Councillor D Dew returned to the meeting.

The Strategy was a document that was intended to be owned by all Officers and linked through the Corporate Plan, Service Plans and to individual key performance indicators. The Cabinet was informed that

there were various events scheduled to promote the Strategy to Officers starting with the imminent 'Meet Senior Management Team' meetings.

During discussions it was requested that the Cabinet be presented with a future report that contained an overall summary of how Service Plans were being monitored and contributing to the Customer Service Strategy.

The Cabinet was informed that to be able to effectively measure and compare customer satisfaction a series of consistent questions were being introduced and that it was intended to refresh the Customer Feedback Policy.

The Cabinet agreed with the comment made by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel that a facility should be introduced on the Council's website to enable a resident to search for their local Councillor by postcode. It was further noted that the customer experience within this area of the Council's website was noticeably different to that on the main website.

The Cabinet was informed that once 'TBA' targets had been replaced with numerical targets, the Strategy would be refreshed on the Council's website.

The Cabinet expressed appreciation to the Head of Customer Service and Executive Councillor for Customer Services as having produced a summary of the new Strategy the revised Customer Service Strategy was now complete and the Cabinet

RECOMMENDED

that the Council approve the revised Customer Service Strategy attached as Appendix 1 to the Officer's report.

63. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Development (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding a revised governance structure for the management and operation of the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy and the continued Community Infrastructure Levy funding towards the costs of the Huntingdon West Link Road.

The Cabinet approved a funding profile for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) expenditure relating to the Huntingdon West Link Road (Edison Bell Way) to enable the regeneration and development of that area. The Link Road was currently the only CIL funded project that had been approved by the Cabinet.

As it was important that CIL funding was invested wisely to ensure the timely delivery of community infrastructure projects that supported the Council's development and growth agenda, the scale of CIL funding that would be generated in future years, and the need to prioritise the investment of CIL funds to key projects, it was necessary to review the governance arrangements for the investment of CIL funds.

The initial CIL governance structure was approved by the Cabinet in October 2012. However, the partnership between the Growth and Infrastructure Group and the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership had not worked as effectively as initially envisaged. To work effectively the Growth and Infrastructure Group needed to meet regularly to make progress with its business and to contribute appropriate management information to the Council. Reporting to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Board, which met infrequently, hindered the level of progress and action that was likely to be required as the CIL fund increased in line with the amount of new development in future years.

The Cabinet agreed that the Growth and Infrastructure Group would continue subject to three key changes:

- i. that the membership be strengthened to enable the Group to have more direct input from elected Members from both the District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council.
- ii. the Officer membership and representation from infrastructure related bodies, in particular the importance of the representation from the Local Enterprise Partnership, should remain and be strengthened.
- iii. that the Group would not be linked to the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership and would report via the Overview and Scrutiny process and to the Cabinet.

Having considered the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) the Cabinet appointed the following District Councillors to the Growth and Infrastructure Group:

- Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing (Chairman);
- Chairman of the Development Management Panel;
- Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being); and
- Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being)

The Cabinet requested that Town and Parish Councils be reminded of the reporting requirements if awarded CIL funding. Whereupon the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to

- i. approve the revised Community Infrastructure Levy governance structure and the revised Terms and Conditions and Membership of the Growth and Infrastructure Group.
- ii. that the following District Councillors be appointed to serve on the Growth and Infrastructure Group for the remainder of the Municipal Year:

- Executive Councillor for Strategic Planning and Housing (Chairman);
 - Chairman of the Development Management Panel;
 - Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being); and
 - Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being)
- iii. approve the further investment of Community Infrastructure Levy towards the Huntingdon West Link Road.

64. HUNTINGDONSHIRE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING UPDATE

The Cabinet received an update report by the Head of Development (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) as to the current position with infrastructure planning across the Council.

Given the importance of the issue, it was intended that further update reports would be presented to the Cabinet in June and December of each year to keep Members fully informed of progress with emerging infrastructure strategies, projects and delivery mechanisms.

There was a significant amount of Member and Officer activity on a range of different types of infrastructure planning and the report specifically summarised the following areas of current work:

Infrastructure Delivery Plan; Highways and Transport Infrastructure Projects; A14 Trunk Road; A428; A1; Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and East West Rail; A141 Huntingdon/St Ives; Rail investment; County-wide Infrastructure Planning; Growth and Infrastructure Group; District and County Council Working relationship; District and Local Enterprise Partnership working relationship; Potential opportunities from Government initiatives; and Community Infrastructure Levy.

Having considered the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to note the update on the current position with infrastructure planning in Huntingdonshire and that future update reports be presented annually in June and December.

65. NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY PLANNING GUIDE

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Development (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding approval of a Neighbourhood and Community Planning Guide document which clarified how the Council would interact with local communities and Town and Parish Councils if they wished to pursue community planning initiatives.

The purpose of the 'Neighbourhood and Community Planning Guide' was to manage the expectations of local communities and to enable the Council to offer a consistent and deliverable level of service to

those local communities.

A number of local communities within Huntingdonshire had commenced the development of Neighbourhood Plans. These included St Neots Town Council, Godmanchester Town Council, Huntingdon Town Council, Bury Parish Council and Houghton and Wyton Parish Council.

Following a local referendum and once approved a Neighbourhood Plan formed part of the statutory Development Plan for the District, meaning that it was a material consideration with significant weight in the decision making process for planning applications.

It was explained to the Cabinet that the Guide was an evolving document that mainly focused on the Neighbourhood Plan process, as this was the area where most local communities currently wished to engage with the Council. However, the guide would be amended as required to identify how the Council engaged with local communities on other community planning initiatives and with regard to any future changes in the regulatory framework.

Other options were available to local communities seeking to achieve different community planning objectives. These included the ability to promote local affordable housing projects through the 'rural exceptions' process; a range of community facilities and amenities (for example, new village halls and playing fields) through the 'enabled exceptions' process; and more general Community Action Plans or Parish Plans that focused on specific community needs identified by the communities themselves.

The Cabinet agreed that Neighbourhood Plans were not appropriate to all Towns and Parish Councils and that other community planning initiatives might be more suitable. It was important for the Council to enable and provide advice to those local communities that wished to proceed with a community planning initiative. However, the Council was not responsible for undertaking the work as there should be local ownership.

In response to concerns expressed, it was explained that the level of interest at any one time from local communities wishing to proceed with a community planning initiative would determine whether the Council had sufficient resource to offer the support.

The Cabinet was reminded that the Department for Communities and Local Government had made grants of up to £30,000 available to local planning authorities for each Neighbourhood Plan.

Having considered the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) the Cabinet agreed that the Guide needed to clarify that the relevant Town or Parish Council was responsible for producing a clean copy of a Neighbourhood Plan following receipt of the Examiner's report. Whereupon the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to approve the Neighbourhood and Community Planning Guide document attached as Appendix A of the Officer's report.

66. RESERVES REVIEW

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the Reserves Strategy. The main purpose of the Reserves Strategy was to provide a framework through which the Council was able to effectively manage and govern its use of Reserves.

In January 2015 the Cabinet agreed that the minimum level of General Fund Reserves would be £3m. However, as the Council was expecting to have a reducing, or near static, Net Expenditure over the forthcoming years it was preferable to have a level of reserves that was a percentage of any years' Net Expenditure. For 2015/16 the £3m equated to marginally over 15% of the Net Expenditure and it was therefore agreed that 15% was set as the minimum level of reserves.

The Council would receive capital receipts as a consequence of the sale of capital assets that supported either general service activity or the Commercial Investment Strategy. As assets that support general service activity had primarily been financed without external borrowing, in the interests of equity, such assets would finance either new future capital spend of a similar nature or reduce the Council's internal debt burden.

Those assets that had been acquired as part of the Commercial Investment Strategy would have been financed from a mix of either direct revenue financing or external borrowing. It was therefore considered that when assets were sold that the associated capital receipt were ringfenced. If a capital receipt resulted from the sale of an asset from:

- general service activity the related capital receipt would be applied to acquire/enhance other general service activity assets or pay down related debt; or from
- the Commercial Investment Strategy the related capital receipt would be applied to acquire/enhance other CIS assets or pay down CIS related debt.

If it was considered that capital receipts were exempt from being ringfenced, this would only occur if approved by the Cabinet.

It was emphasised to the Cabinet that the minimum level of reserves of 15% referred only to the General Fund Balance. Whereupon the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to approve the Reserves Strategy, as attached as Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, specifically endorsing:

- i. a minimum level of Reserves at 15% of the Council's 'Net Expenditure'; and
- ii. the governance arrangements pertaining to each Reserve, specifically the ring-fencing of capital receipts that are generated

from either 'general service activity' or from the Commercial Investment Strategy.

67. COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY: BUSINESS PLAN

By way of a report from the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet noted and recommended the Minimum Revenue Provisions (MRP) Policy for the Commercial Investment Strategy (CIS) to Council for approval.

The capital propositions included within the Business Plan that were to be financed from external borrowing were modelled on being financed by repayment loans. Consequently the annual principal repayment would equate to the MRP requirement. As this was a new approach to MRP a new Policy was required to be approved by Council.

It was noted that through the operation of the CIS, there might be occasions when investment assets were sold. Within the Reserve Review Report, Minute No. 66 of these Minutes refer, the Cabinet approved that such capital receipts would be ringfenced for future CIS reinvestment in line with the Reserves Strategy.

The CIS was approved in October 2015 and the Cabinet had now needed to approve the CIS Business Plan. Although the CIS covered a 9 year period with three distinct phases of development, the approved Business Plan related to Phase 1 and the period from now until the 31st March 2019.

The Council currently had existing investment assets (property) totalling £20.9m and it was proposed to invest a further £50m in commercial assets. The primary aim of the CIS was to generate a future income stream with a secondary objective of capital growth. After the payment of £2.2m in asset completion costs, the Councils total commercial asset portfolio at the end of the Business Plan period would be £68.7m, divided as follows:

Type 1: Existing Assets:

£20.9m

Type 2 and 3: Investment Fund and Property Shares:

£14.7m

Type 4: Direct Assets (Local Acquisitions):

£18.9m

Type 4: Direct Assets (National Acquisitions):

£14.2m

Regarding investments up to the end of the current financial year, it was proposed that these should not be financed from external borrowing. Therefore the Cabinet approved the transfer of £6.8m from the Council's General Fund to the Capital Investment Earmarked Reserve. By making investments directly from in-house resources meant that the Council could maximise returns and would not need to set-aside revenue funding in respect of the Minimum Revenue Provision.

In subsequent years the Council intended to borrow externally and the Cabinet approved the potential to borrow up to £35m from

2016/17 onwards to support the CIS. However, there would be 'head-room' to borrow a further £25m if commercial opportunities arose.

It was noted that local government was only permitted to invest in one revenue property investment fund. This was operated by CCLA Investment Management Limited and the CIS Business Plan included the investment of a total of £4.7m by the end of 2016/17.

The intention of the Council was to reduce reliance on Central Government funding and to create a sustainable financial platform. This would negate the need for discussions about funding the Council was likely to obtain and the resulting impact on the Budget and its services. In order for the Council to produce a yield at the earliest opportunity, to achieve its aspirations, the Cabinet agreed to instruct Officers as follows:

- that the revenue investment of £2.5m, detailed in the Investment Schedule (attached as Appendix 3 of the Officer's Report) for Quarter 3 of 2015/16 Financial Year, be invested without delay;
- that the capital investment of £5m in respect of capital property shares and/or Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITS), subject to relevant due diligence, be invested without delay;
- that an Action Plan be developed to ensure that the capital investments of £5m in respect of Direct Assets (Local Area) are acquired by the end of Quarter 4, 2015/16;
- that Table 1, as contained within the Officer's Report titled 'Estimated Revenue Returns from the Commercial Investment Strategy', be included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy; and
- that, without delay, to complete a review of the Estates Service to enable the requirements of the Commercial Investment Strategy to be achieved.

The Cabinet was mindful of wanting to provide the best service for the residents of the District whilst at the same time mitigating risks in investing Council Tax money. The Cabinet was informed that borrowing was expected to be from the Public Works Loans Board and the investments within the CIS Business Plan repayment loans were expected to be the preferred form of loan finance. If loan rates were found to be cheaper at other financial institutions the Council would take appropriate advantage, providing that the institutions were included within the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. It was noted that investments had been developed around a medium term financial return.

Having expressed appreciation to the Executive Councillor for Resources, Corporate Director (Services) and Head of Resources, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

to approve the:

- i. Commercial Investment Strategy Business Plan attached as Appendix 2 of the Officer's Report;
- ii. transfer of £6.8m from the Council's General Fund balance to the Capital Investment Earmarked Reserve;

- iii. potential to borrow up to £35m from 2016/17 onwards to support the Commercial Investment Strategy. However, there will be 'head-room' to borrow a further £25m if commercial opportunities arise; and
- iv. That the Cabinet notes the Minimum Revenue Provisions Policy.

The Cabinet further instructed Officers as follows:

- that the revenue investment of £2.5m, detailed in the Investment Schedule (attached as Appendix 3 of the Officer's Report) for Quarter 3 of 2015/16 Financial Year, be invested without delay;
- that the capital investment of £5m in respect of capital property shares and/or Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITS), subject to relevant due diligence, be invested without delay;
- that an Action Plan be developed to ensure that the capital investments of £5m in respect of Direct Assets (Local Area) are acquired by the end of Quarter 4, 2015/16;
- that Table 1, as contained within the Officer's Report titled 'Estimated Revenue Returns from the Commercial Investment Strategy', be included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy; and
- that, without delay, to complete a review of the Estates Service to enable the requirements of the Commercial Investment Strategy to be achieved.

The Cabinet also RECOMMENDED

that Council approve the Minimum Revenue Provisions Policy for the Commercial Investment Strategy as detailed below:

'For each capital investment undertaken under the requirements of the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision will be made that is equal to the principal repayment for any loan finance supporting the investment'.

68. ZERO BASED BUDGETING UPDATE: PREPARATION FOR THE 2016/17 BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Resources (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) regarding the Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB) exercise and the inclusion of the Tranche 3 savings proposals in the forthcoming 2016/17 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

As part of the budget setting cycle for 2016/17, the Council was continuing the Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB) exercise that started during the last financial year in preparation for the 2015/16 budget. The ZBB process was divided into a number of Tranches, with Tranche 1 having been undertaken during Autumn 2014 (in which £1.8m was removed from the Council's 2015/16 budget) and Tranches 2 and 3 being undertaken during 2015/16.

In preparation for 2016/17 budget setting, Tranche 2 commenced in April 2015 and concluded with a Cabinet led Star Chamber in mid-July 2015 that was reported to the Cabinet in September 2015. Tranche 3 commenced in August 2015 and concluded with a Cabinet

led Star Chamber in late November 2015; the estimated savings totalled in excess of £2.6m.

The services that had been subject to a 'heavy' review during Tranche 3 were:

- Community: CCTV
- Customer Services: Local Taxation and Benefits
- Operations: all services
- Leisure & Health: Sports and Active Lifestyle Team
- Corporate Team and Directors

In addition to the savings identified, the CCTV and Sports and Active Lifestyle Teams had been requested to investigate a number of additional opportunities for savings. If any additional savings were identified as a result of this further work it would be reported as part of the overall Budget Setting 2016/17 report.

In February 2016 the Council would be presented with the proposed Budget for 2016/17 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and would set the Council Tax for the forthcoming year. During discussions the Cabinet indicated a preference for a further freeze on Council Tax for 2016/17.

The Cabinet commended all those involved in the ZBB process. The Cabinet has accepted that some of the savings identified via the Facing the Future programme had been included in the ZBB process. However, in order to identify further savings the Cabinet requested that those proposals not included in the ZBB process should be progressed.

Having considered the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- i. to note the progress of the Zero Based Budgeting exercise to date; and
- ii. agree the Tranche 3 savings proposals, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, for inclusion in the forthcoming 2016/17 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Chairman