

COUNCIL

20 February 2014

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE (10 FEBRUARY 2014)
AND CABINET (12 FEBRUARY 2014)

REPORT OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Appendix A to this report sets out minute extracts for the consideration of Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council considers the matters set out in the minute extracts.

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 10 February 2014**1. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS PROCESS – REVISED
ARRANGEMENTS AND GUIDANCE**
(Report ST106 refers)

The Chief Operating Officer reminded the meeting of the processes operated by the Council prior to the Localism Act 2011. The above document had been drafted having regard to the new legislation. It was more flexible and less bureaucratic, but where possible had retained the best features of the previous scheme.

The Committee noted how the system would now operate in practice and, in particular, welcomed the retention of the provision which allowed complainants to have the assessment decision on their complaint reviewed by a different group of Members.

RECOMMENDED:

1. THAT, FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 28 OF THE LOCALISM ACT 2011, THE REVISED ARRANGEMENTS IN APPENDICES 1 AND 2 OF THE ABOVE REPORT FOR THE CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE BE APPROVED.

2. THAT THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE BE UPDATED TO ALLOW FUTURE REVIEWS TO BE UNDERTAKEN UNDER THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL DELEGATED POWER IN RESPECT OF BOTH THE DISTRICT AND PARISH COUNCILS:-

“ TO REVIEW AND DETERMINE THE COUNCIL’S ARRANGEMENTS FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 28 OF THE LOCALISM ACT 2011”

EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF CABINET – 12 February 2014

2. BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX 2014/15

(Report CAB2555 refers)

Councillor Godfrey reported that despite reduced grant income, the proposed budget maintained the Council's position with regard to services, froze Council Tax at 2010/11 levels and maintained existing Car Parking charges.

In an amendment to the Report as published, Councillor Godfrey proposed to provide a supplementary budget of £100,000 for flood defences. This would be by way of one-off provision in 2013/14, reducing the underspend and it could be carried forward in the normal way if not granted this year.

Cabinet welcomed the proposal as a recommendation to Council and therefore agreed that Recommendation 1 of the Report be amended accordingly.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

1. THAT THE REVISED ESTIMATE FOR 2013/14 AS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 2 BE NOTED, AND THAT THIS BE ADJUSTED TO INCLUDE A SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE OF £100,000 ONE-OFF GRANT EXPENDITURE TO PROVIDE FUNDING TOWARDS FLOOD DEFENCE SCHEMES, AT PLACES SUCH AS HAMBLEDON, SUBJECT TO SUITABLE PROPOSALS COMING FORWARD.

2. THAT MEMBERS CONSIDER THE LEVEL OF GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR 2014/15 AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING:

	2014/15 £
GENERAL FUND COST OF SERVICES	17,389,033
(SURPLUS) / DEFICIT ON TRADING ACCOUNTS	426,000
OTHER OPERATING INCOME & EXPENDITURE (LOCAL PRECEPTS)	2,272,657
FINANCING & INVESTMENT INCOME & EXPENDITURE	(2,336,458)
ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS & FUNDING BASIS UNDER REGULATIONS	(2,022,043)
APPROPRIATIONS TO (+) / FROM (-) OTHER EARMARKED FINANCIAL RESERVES	497,168
COLLECTION FUND DEFICIT (+) / SURPLUS (-)	(34,664)
COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT TO PARISHES	150,000

NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT (INCL. LOCAL PRECEPTS)	16,341,693
LESS NON-RING FENCED GOVERNMENT GRANTS	(7,495,411)
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT (INCL. LOCAL PRECEPTS)	8,846,282
COMPRISING:	
AGGREGATE OF SPECIAL EXPENSES (WINCHESTER TOWN)	795,261
WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL – GENERAL EXPENSES	5,778,364
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT FOR BILLING AUTHORITY	6,573,625
AGGREGATE OF LOCAL PRECEPTS	2,272,657
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT (INCL. LOCAL PRECEPTS)	8,846,282

3. THAT THE CHANGES PROPOSED TO THE BUDGET AS SET OUT IN APPENDICES D AND E BE APPROVED.

4. THAT THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND FINANCING FOR 2013/14 TO 2018/19 AS SET OUT IN APPENDICES F AND G BE APPROVED.

5. THAT THE POLICY AS PREVIOUSLY AGREED BY THE COUNCIL ON 14 JULY 1999 (MIN 186 REFERS) IS CONFIRMED TO TREAT ALL EXPENSES OF THE COUNCIL AS GENERAL EXPENSES OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED AND ITEMISED IN THE WINCHESTER TOWN ACCOUNT. IN CONSEQUENCE OF WHICH THE SUM OF £795,261 BE TREATED AS SPECIAL EXPENSES UNDER SECTION 35 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1992 IN RESPECT OF THE WINCHESTER TOWN AREA, APPENDIX J.

6. THAT THE COUNCIL TAX FOR THE SPECIAL EXPENSES IN THE WINCHESTER TOWN AREA AT BAND D FOR 2014/15 TO BE FROZEN AT 2010/11 LEVELS; £61.32.

7. THAT THE BALANCE ON THE COLLECTION FUND CALCULATED AT 15 JANUARY 2014 OF £34,664 FOR COUNCIL TAX, BE APPROVED.

8. THAT THE LEVEL OF COUNCIL TAX AT BAND D FOR CITY COUNCIL SERVICES FOR 2014/15 TO BE FROZEN AT 2010/11 LEVELS; £126.27.

9. THAT PARISH COUNCIL TAXES BE NOTED AS IN APPENDIX K.

10. THAT THE GENERAL INFLATION INDEX IN THE MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME BE NOT APPLIED FOR 2014/15.

11. THAT THE INFLATION INDEX FOR 2014/15 FOR COUNCILLOR MILEAGE RATES BE APPLIED, SO AS TO CONTINUE THE LINK TO HMRC MILEAGE RATES, SHOULD HMRC MAKE ANY ADJUSTMENTS TO THOSE RATES.

3. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

(Report CAB2554 refers)

Cabinet noted that the Report had not been made available for publication within the statutory deadline. The Chairman agreed to accept the item onto the agenda as a matter requiring urgent consideration, to allow Cabinet to comment on the proposals before its consideration at Council.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

1. THAT THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (TMS) 2014/15 BE APPROVED AS SET OUT IN REPORT CAB2554 AND ALSO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL ITEMS AS INCLUDED IN THE TMS:

- TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT (SEE PARAGRAPH 2);
- MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP) POLICY STATEMENT (SEE PARAGRAPH 3);
- ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2014/15 (SEE PARAGRAPH 11);
- PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2014/15 TO 2016/17 (SEE APPENDIX C).

2. THAT IT BE NOTED THAT THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY BE KEPT UNDER REGULAR REVIEW TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF ANY CHANGES IN THE CURRENT GLOBAL ECONOMIC SITUATION.

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET 2014/15 AND BUSINESS PLAN 2014/15-2043/44

(Report CAB2548 (HSG) refers)

Councillor Coates introduced the Report and drew Cabinet's attention to the key budget items outlined in the Report.

The Chairman reported that identifying sufficient funding for an on going repairs programme was likely to be a priority for the future.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

- 1. THAT THE HRA REVISED BUDGET FOR 2013/14 AND THE BUDGET FOR 2014/15 AS SET OUT IN THE APPENDICES 1 AND 2 BE APPROVED.**
- 2. THAT THE HRA BUSINESS PLAN AS SET OUT IN APPENDICES 3 AND 4 BE APPROVED.**
- 3. THAT THE HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 5 BE APPROVED.**
- 4. THAT THE 2014/15 MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 5 AND 9 BE APPROVED.**
- 5. THAT AUTHORITY BE GIVEN TO INCUR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE OF £7.176M FOR THE MAINTENANCE, IMPROVEMENT AND RENEWAL PROGRAMME AS OUTLINED IN THIS REPORT AND IN APPENDIX 9, IN ACCORDANCE WITH FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULE 6.4.**
- 6. THAT THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CHIEF HOUSING OFFICER), FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER, BE GIVEN DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS WITHIN THE OVERALL MAINTENANCE, IMPROVEMENT AND RENEWAL PROGRAMME AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 5 AND 9, INCLUDING THE FLEXIBILITY TO SUBSTITUTE PROJECTS AND RE-BALANCE EXPENDITURE WITHIN AND BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS/SCHEMES IN ORDER TO MEET OPERATIONAL NEEDS, CHANGING PRIORITIES AND COMMITMENT TARGETS, WITH ANY CHANGES BEING REPORTED TO THE COMMITTEE AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY.**
- 7. THAT THE TREATMENT OF SURPLUSES AND DEBT AS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 3 BE NOTED AND THE FORECAST AMOUNT OF DEBT REDUCTION AT 31 MARCH 2014 BE APPROVED AT £3M.**
- 8. THAT THE BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE REPORT AND THE KEY SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2014/15 AS DETAILED IN APPENDIX 6 BE APPROVED.**

5. **WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2014/15**
(Report CAB2552 refers)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Pines welcomed the Council's policy for it to pay its staff the 'Living Wage'. He queried whether this policy may be applied further to include the Council's contractors and sub-contractors? Furthermore, he reported that the Winchester BID had indicated that it may be supportive of consideration of Winchester becoming a 'Living Wage' city.

In response, Councillor Humby advised that he would raise the 'Living Wage' city suggestion at the next Winchester BID Board meeting.

The Chief Executive advised that a financial appraisal would need to be undertaken before any further consideration of extending the Living Wage policy to the Council's contractors and sub-contractors.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out above and outlined in the Report.

RECOMMENDED:

1. **THAT THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT (APPENDIX 1 OF REPORT CAB2552) BE APPROVED**
2. **THAT FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF A WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL PAY AND REWARD POLICY BE AGREED.**