

Minutes of the special meeting of **the Member Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee** on **31 January 2002**, when there were present:

Cllr Mrs J Helson (Chairman)

Cllr D R Helson  
Cllr R E Vingoe  
Cllr P F A Webster

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr G Fox.

### **SUBSTITUTES**

Cllr P D Stebbing.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

P Warren - Chief Executive  
R J Honey - Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration)  
R Crofts - Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)  
D Deeks - Head of Financial Services  
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

### **163 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2002 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

#### **Resolved**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

### **164 LEISURE CONTRACT AND BUDGET STRATEGY**

#### **(i) Recommendations of Contracts Sub-Committee on the Leisure Management contract**

The Sub-Committee considered the exempt report of the Head of Financial Services which addressed possible Budget and Council Tax

options should full Council agree to the recommendations of the meeting of the Contracts Sub-Committee held on 30 January 2002.

Responding to Member Questions, Offices outlined the Current Capital Programme overview position and the nature of the costings which could be associated with the bid from the Labour Group as they affect the General Fund revenue account, submitted to the last meeting of the Sub-Committee.

During debate it was noted that:

- The Government White Paper included reference to an expansion of powers in order to charge for services and retain fine income which may provide the Council with options to address problems such as dog fouling.
- In terms of programming, endeavours are made to identify when the outcomes of Best Value Reviews are likely to be available so that they can be allied to the budget cycle.
- Ditch clearance activity has been reactive in nature and officers will investigate whether the Council's Contractor can be utilised .
- The position relating to the disposal of fridges and abandoned cars is ongoing and kept under review.

The Head of Financial Services confirmed that Officers would recommend the Revenue Budget Strategy set out on the final page of the report (Option 5). This strategy effectively balanced the various aspects highlighted in the report

It was noted that, whilst the strategy would enable approval of the draft Revenue Budget and Committee supported bids, it did not include the corporate issue of recycling, the bid from the Labour Group or other Officer bids.

Responding to Member questions on the General Fund balance, the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) advised that it would be important to achieve a balanced budget as the first objective and then consider the General Fund balance at a later date.

## **(ii) Rayleigh Windmill**

The Chairman of the Windmill Working Group reported on advice which had now been received from the Council's consultants on costings associated with refurbishment of Rayleigh Windmill. The Sub-

Committee agreed that, once a final analysis of precise costings had been concluded, it would be appropriate for the figures to be submitted to a future meeting in order to determine the level of support required to submit a bid for lottery funding.

The Chief Executive confirmed that any essential safety work required at the Windmill would be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

**(iii) Fees and Charges**

The Sub-Committee endorsed the view of the Chairman that, given an earlier decision that consideration of charge levels for car parks, (with the exception of the Approach), cemeteries, church yards and Hackney Carriage licensing be referred to Overview and Scrutiny, there should be no proposed increases in these specific charges until the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has considered the matter.

**RECOMMENDED**

That, the charges around car parking (with the exception of the Approach Car Park), cemeteries and church yards, and Hackney Carriage Licensing be retained at their current price levels pending the review by the Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee for detailed consideration. (HFS)

The meeting closed at 6.44pm.

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_