



## Rutland County Council

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Record of a **special** meeting of the **PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham at 7.30 pm on **Wednesday 16 January 2013**.

**PRESENT:** Miss G Waller (Chairman, in the Chair)  
Mr M E Baines  
Mrs C Cartwright  
Mr J M Lammie  
Mr M A Oxley  
Mrs L I Stephenson  
Mrs C Vernon  
Mr N M Wainwright  
Mr A S Walters

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:** Ms P Rubinstein (Secondary)

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Ms D Greaves Accountant (People)  
Mr M Naylor Assistant Director – Services for People  
Ms W Poynton Assistant Director – Services for People  
Ms L Tyers Democratic Services, Peterborough City Council

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr R B Begy Portfolio Holder for Museum & Castle Development and Housing  
Mr K Bool Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services  
Mr G Plews Portfolio Holder for Youth, Sport and Community Safety and Culture

**NON-PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr R J Gale  
Mr D Richardson

**APOLOGIES:** Mr Goringe, Ms Gullan-Whur.

### 619 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mrs Stephenson declared on the grounds of probity that she worked one

day a week at Leighfield Primary School.

## **620 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

No petitions, deputations or questions were received from members of the public.

## **621 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS**

No questions with notice were received from members.

## **SCRUTINY**

## **622 BUDGET 2013/14, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Report No. 5/2013 from the Strategic Director for Resources was received.

The Portfolio Holder for Museum & Castle Development and Housing, Mr Begy, introduced the report and distributed a list of assumptions, risks, savings and pressures and future potential savings that had been used to inform the budget figures for 2013/4 and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to 2018/19. The following points were highlighted:

- a) That there had been a 2.1% cut in funding;
- b) That the minimum reserve had been increased to £2m;
- c) That inflation had been assumed at 2% general and 8% for fuel;
- d) That the Council Tax Freeze grant would be applied for the next two years;
- e) That the Council Tax Base and New Homes Bonus were both assumed at 65% of new property approved;
- f) That the Council Tax collection rate had been reduced from 99% to 98.7%;
- g) That Public Health spending would be limited to the budget granted;
- h) That DILNOT had been assumed at £300k for 2015/16 and £100k in 2016/17 and 2017/18;
- i) That Fees and charges had been increased by 2.5% unless controlled by statute;
- j) That Business Rate retention could be affected if the Council lost a major appeal or a major business left Rutland;
- k) That savings and pressures had been on the basis of anything was on the table;
- l) That Northamptonshire had offered to provide a Call Connect service for Uppingham for £20k;
- m) That negotiations on any staff pay rise were still ongoing between

- the employers and unions;
- n) That Home to School Transport was an area which had to be looked at.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- (i) Youth Service – the savings would be about looking at the focus of the service. The savings were not being proposed for this budget and therefore could be a possible topic for this Panel to look at in a more focussed way. The youth service impacted on all areas including community safety and it was important to maximise the potential of the service;
- (ii) Potential Medium Term savings – Miss Waller advised that at the next meeting the Panel would look further at the potential savings to identify areas the Panel could look at in more depth;
- (iii) Integrated Youth, Housing and Community Safety – the proposed savings were about ensuring that resources were being allocated to those in need of assistance. Mr Begy committed to providing a written answer to Panel members about the specific areas to be considered;
- (iv) People Directorate – the impact of the reviews being undertaken in the People Directorate would be examined to identify efficiencies;
- (v) Live@ - the project had stimulated the market in Rutland with groups now appearing around the county and films being shown in villages. The Council was talking to organisations about how to take this work forward;
- (vi) Drug and Alcohol Project – the PCT had taken on some of the work and it had been identified that alcohol was the greater problem in Rutland. The Health and Wellbeing Board was comfortable with the proposed savings;
- (vii) Libraries – service delivery was one of the areas still to be looked at especially now the way people used libraries had changed, for example increased use of e-books;
- (viii) Home to School Transport – the Transport Task and Finish Group would be reporting shortly and making recommendations;
- (ix) Future Housing Developments – there were a number of housing developments in and around Oakham which could generate fairly large number of children and young people. This could result in pressure on school places in Oakham. The Authority had a responsibility to ensure adequate numbers of school places were available and work would be undertaken on ensuring school buildings were being used to full capacity. Mr Begy advised that a number of options would be looked at but he did not feel it needed to be included in the Medium Term Financial Plan at this

time. It was an important area which may need to come back to Scrutiny in the future;

- (x) Leisure and Recreation Facilities at the Hawksmead development – the Council was investigating what facilities were needed at the development and about whether some of the money could be used for sports projects;
- (xi) School funding – was the £350K for maintained school sufficient for the Council's needs? The funding was for central functions and was not separated from the People's budget. Mr Naylor undertook to provide a more detailed response;
- (xii) Family Intervention Service – Mr Naylor advised that this should read Family Information Service and not intervention and would be about reviewing how the Council met its statutory requirements;
- (xiii) Public Consultation – consultation was taking place with businesses, staff, Parish Councils and the public through on-line consultation, libraries, etc. A public facing meeting other than Scrutiny meetings, which the public could attend, were not being held as the Council Tax is not increasing and savings proposals had little public impact. Where they did, separate consultation would be held.

**AGREED:-**

That the contents of Report No. 5/2013 be noted.

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The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50 pm.

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