



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP
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Minutes of a meeting of the **SPECIAL RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, at 7.20 pm on Wednesday, 13 January 2016.

PRESENT: Mr A Walters -
Chairman (in the Chair)
Mr K Bool
Mr B Callaghan
Mr W J Cross
Mr O Hemsley
Mr J Lammie
Mrs D MacDuff
Mr A Stewart
Miss G Waller

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr T Mathias
Portfolio Holder for
Places (Environment,
Transport and
Community Safety)

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs H Briggs
Mrs D Mogg
Mr S Della Rocca
Mr A Merry
Miss C Snell
Mr A Nix
Miss S Croad
Chief Executive
Director for Resources
Assistant Director for Finance
Finance Manager - Technical
Head of Human Resources
Head of IT
Corporate Support Officer

APOLOGIES:

516 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made in respect of the items on the agenda for this meeting.

517 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No petitions, Deputations or Questions had been received from Members of the public.

518 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No questions had been received from members.

519 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information and information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority)).

520 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2016-17 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Report No. 19/2016 from the Director for Resources was received.

The Assistant Director for Finance made a short presentation, the purpose of which was to show Members an overview of the Council's current and future financial position.

Councillor Mathias made a short statement to the panel as a member of the Cabinet.

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7.40pm Mr Mathias left the meeting and did not return.

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The Director for Resources introduced the report with a brief introduction outlining the Resources Directorates Savings and Pressures.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. In reference to page 7, paragraph 2.8 Members did not want to see the borrowing of money increased. In response to Members concerns Mr S Della Rocca assured the panel that the Council would be borrowing money internally and that this was the preferred option as the cost of borrowing would be outweighed by revenue savings in due course. Mrs Briggs explained that the Council would be looking at further invest to save proposals in the future;
- ii. Members raised concerns about the current financial position of the Council and why this situation had arisen. Mrs Briggs stated that the Council had been planning ahead and looked at a 5-7 year window. Rutland County Council (RCC) were in a more positive position than some other Local Authorities because of the planning that had been undertaken. Mr Della Rocca explained that the funding methodology had changed from prior years;
- iii. If RCC did not raise Council Tax rates then the current predicted funding gap would increase;
- iv. Members requested that the public be notified why RCC are in this position and why we are having to raise Council Tax rates. Mrs Briggs informed the panel that a budget consultation was currently underway on the RCC website, displays had been placed in Customer Services and all RCC sites including libraries contained information on this;
- v. Members requested Officers to give consideration to setting up a Local Authority company. Mrs Briggs said that this would be considered but had to be the right opportunity for the Council going forward. Oakham Enterprise park was a good example of this;
- vi. Mrs Mogg explained to the panel that there was not a capital sum for IT equipment as provision was contained within the Revenue budget;

- vii. Members raised concerns in regards to the Pension provision. Mrs Mogg explained that RCC were part of the Local Government scheme and as such ad-hoc amendments could not be made;;
- viii. Members asked if RCC looked at sharing services and resources with other Local Authorities. Mrs Briggs assured the panel that this was continually being looked at across the Authority. The zero budget proposal for the Places Directorate would be able to look at this in more detail;
- ix. Members asked if any savings or reductions had been considered that were not included within the final report. Mrs Mogg stated that there was no savings or reductions that had not been built in within the report for the Resources Directorate and that various projects were ongoing including the Corporate admin review and Website project.

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8.40pm Meeting adjourned

8.45pm Meeting reconvened

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- x. RCC currently spend large amounts of money on interim staff and are hoping that the changes contained within this report will reduce this;
- xi. Pay grades over the PO5 threshold are local pay scales. These grades are decided by the Local Authority. The grades below the PO5 threshold are nationally negotiated;
- xii. The grades under review have not been reviewed or received any rewards for 5 years. Last year was the first increase in 5 years;
- xiii. Members requested an analysis of each post and the history of the recruitment to that post;
- xiv. All salaries above the PO5 threshold excluding the Chief Executive would be moved to incremental grades rather than the current situation which is a mix of incremental grades and spot salaries;
- xv. Mrs Briggs explained to the panel that some of the increases in grade being recommended were higher than others because some posts have never been evaluated;
- xvi. Where there was difficulty in recruiting to certain posts the salary offered for that post could be at the top of the grade. There would be no further increments after this;
- xvii. Members asked what RCC were doing in terms of promoting the Council to potential new members of staff. Mrs Briggs stated that we are already promoting to candidates including the option to work from home. A senior officer appointed in the last 12 months had relocated to Oakham which is a perfect example of the benefits of living in Rutland and what it has to offer;
- xviii. The likely impact of the proposals on reducing the need for interims and on increasing recruitment and retention was challenged. The appropriateness of implementing automatic salary increments at higher salary levels where these had not existed before was challenged. After debate and on putting to the vote 6 out of 9 members present agreed that the proposals are reasonably likely to have a successful impact in recruitment, and 6 out of 9 agreed that the automatic salary increments are appropriate;
- xix. Mrs Briggs explained that the current market for certain posts was challenging;
- xx. Mrs Mogg stated that all of these posts had to be evaluated for equality reasons. This was to protect the Authority from any equal pay claims.

AGREED:

- i. That the panel noted the contents of Report No. 19/2016.

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The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9.27pm

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