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CABINET

Meeting - 10 February 2014

Present: Mr Reed, Mrs Cranmer, Mr Naylor, Mr D Smith and Mrs Woolveridge

Also Present: Ms Hazell

Apologies for absence: Mr Busby

35. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19 November 2013 were confirmed and signed by the Deputy Leader.

36. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Cabinet received a copy of the 28 day Notice prepared in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 setting out the key (and non-key) decisions the Cabinet was intending to make at public and private meetings.

The Cabinet also received a copy of the 28 day Notice setting out the key (and non-key) decisions the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee were intending to make at public and private meetings.

RESOLVED that the 28 day Notices be noted.

37. BUDGET AND COUNCIL TAX REPORT

The Cabinet considered a report of the Leader of the Council which brought together the information affecting the Council's revenue budget for 2014/15 in order for recommendations to be made to the Council on 25 February regarding the Council's budget and council tax for 2014/15.

The report was divided into 5 Sections as follows:

- Section A - Financial Context and Base Budget Position
- Section B - Investment Income & Grants
- Section C - Budget Requirement and Council Tax Issues
- Section D - Medium Term Financial Strategy Update
- Section E - Advice of Director of Resources

The following appendices were also attached to the report:

- Appendix A - Financial Forecast
- Appendix B - Chief Financial Officer
- Appendix C - Farnham Park Trust Budgets.

Section A of the report reminded the Cabinet of the approach they had agreed to budget making in the light of the funding position facing the Council in the coming years. The following table in this section showed the key figures for 2014/15:

	2013/14	2014/15
	£k	£k
Business Rate Baseline	11,477	11,701
Business Rate Tariff	-10,511	-10,716
Baseline Need	966	985

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Revenue Support Grant	1,452	1,161
Settlement Funding Assessment	2,418	2,146
Year on Year Change (£k)		-272
Year on Year Change (%)		-11%

Section B explained that the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/15 made provision for planned investment income of £550k which is £225K less than the budget for the current year, reflecting the views that low level of interest rates will continue in 2014/15. The report also went on to explain that if the district element of the Council Tax was frozen in 2014/15 it would receive a grant of £47k which is equivalent to a 1% increase in Council Tax. To achieve a freeze the Council's budget requirement would need to be £8,068K.

A table in Section C of the report provided a summary of the build-up of the budget including the use of reserves as follows:

- Local Development Document Reserve £30k
- Transformation Reserve for support of services reviews £62K.

The budget also allowed for the addition to general reserves of £141K.

In connection with Section D the Cabinet's attention was drawn to:

- The key principles of the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- The main financial risks the Council was likely to face in the coming year; and
- The main financial risks in the medium term

The Deputy Leader was pleased to announce a nil increase in the council tax for the District, made possible by savings including those achieved by joint working.

The Cabinet's attention was drawn to the comments made on the Budget Proposals by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 February 2014 as set out in an extract from the minutes.

After considering the advice of the Director of Resources as set out in detail in Section E the Cabinet:

RECOMMENDED to Council

1. That the Revenue Budget for 2014/15 as set out in the table in paragraph 3.10 of the report be approved.
2. That the following use of reserves for 2014/15 be agreed:
 - Local Development Plan - £30k
 - Transformation Reserve - £62k
3. That a budget requirement of £8,068k be approved resulting in a District council tax of £143.00 for a Band D property.
4. That the level of fees and charges for 2014/15 already considered by Portfolio Holders as part of the information underpinning the budget work be confirmed.
5. That the comments on the Medium Term Financial Strategy as detailed in the report be noted.
6. That the revenue and capital budgets for 2013/14 for Farnham Park Trust as summarised in Appendix C be approved.
7. That the Members' Allowances Scheme be updated in line with any decision on officer pay for 2014/15.

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RESOLVED that the report of the Leader of the Council be made available to all Members of the Council in advance of the Council Tax setting meeting on 25 February 2014 and a final report be produced for the Council meeting incorporating the information from preceptors, and the final decisions of the Cabinet on the budget.

38. CAPITAL BUDGET

The Cabinet considered a report inviting it to review the Capital Expenditure Programme for the period 2014/15 - 2017/18.

The report set out

- the capital evaluation system agreed at the Resources PAG on 5 December 2006;
- the current capital programme;
- ICT budgets;
- Other capital works;
- environmental improvements;
- capital receipts programme; and
- effect on revenue budget.

The report also set out the following bids for additional capital expenditure:

Scheme	Growth Requested £	Description
Other Capital Works Planned Maintenance	50,000	One off funding to meet the planned maintenance programme identified for 2014/15
Stoke Poges Memorial Gardens Colonnade Works	60,000	One off funding to replace rotten timbers which are endangering the structure.

After reviewing the capital programme and indicating its support for the bids the Cabinet:

RECOMMENDED to Council that the growth bids set out above be agreed and added to the Capital Programme 2014/15 - 2017/18.

39. COMMUNITY

The Cabinet received the minutes of the Community Policy Advisory Group held on 3 December 2013 and the following was the subject of a recommendation from the Portfolio Holder:

Minute 35 - Community Development & Village Hall Grant

The PAG had considered and supported the two requests for Capital Grants from Dorney Village Hall and Gerrards Cross Fun Run for 2014.

Members asked that when informing organisations of their applications for grant they should be advised not to be over reliant on receiving support from the Council in future years as the grants budget is heavily oversubscribed.

After considering the advice of the Portfolio Holder the Cabinet:

RESOLVED that

1. Dorney Village Hall to be allocated £5580 to support the removal of asbestos as part of a larger refurbishment and replacement of roof electrics and drainage.
2. Gerrards Cross fun Run to be allocated £1000 as a contribution towards the purchase of medals and trophies.
3. the minutes of the Community Policy Advisory Group held on 3 December 2013 be noted.

40. **ENVIRONMENT**

The Cabinet received the Part I minutes of the Environment Policy Advisory Group held on 4 December 2013 and the following was the subject of a recommendation from the Portfolio Holder:

Minute 24 - Car Parking Charges

The PAG had considered the results of the consultation that had been recently undertaken in relation to proposed charges at the Council's pay and display car parks for 2014/15.

The proposed increase would generate additional income of £65,500, thus removing any shortfall. The increase was the first for a number of years.

After considering the advice of the Portfolio Holder the Cabinet:

RESOLVED that the

1. proposed increases in charges and season tickets at the Council's pay and display car parks 2014/15 as detailed in Appendix A of the report be agreed and implemented.
2. minutes of the Environment Policy Advisory Group held on 4 December 2013 be noted.

41. **RESOURCES**

The Cabinet received the Part I minutes of the Resources Advisory Group held on 12 December 2013 and the following were the subject of recommendations from the Portfolio Holder:

Minute 36 - Joint Procurement Strategy

The PAG supported the proposal for a joint procurement strategy with CDC in order to help achieve operational effectiveness in the context of joint service delivery.

RESOLVED that the Joint CDC/SBDC Procurement Strategy be approved.

Minute 37 - Bells Hill, Stoke Poges

The PAG supported proposals to transfer the management of land at Bells Hill in Stoke Poges to Stoke Poges Parish Council.

RESOLVED that

1. the responsibility for the maintenance of the amenity space be undertaken by Stoke Poges Parish Council.
2. the commuted sum of £70,000 be passed to the Parish Council for the maintenance of the land.
3. authority be delegated to the Head of Environment in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and the Resources Portfolio Holder to agree the exact legal mechanisms to ensure amongst other things that the money being passed to the Parish Council is used solely for the purpose of maintaining the land.

Minute 38 - Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15

The PAG received a report recommending the adoption of the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2014/2015.

The report also contained a proposal to undertake a joint tender exercise for banking services with Chiltern District Council in 2014.

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Reference was made to the minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 3 February, an example of car parking had been given as an opportunity for the Council to increase income by expanding service volumes, The Portfolio Holder for Environment clarified that this suggestion was to increase capacity of car parking spaces and not in relation to car parking charges.

The strategy set a target for investment returns for 2014/15 of £550,000 a reduction of £225,000 compared to last year's.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Treasury Management Strategy for 2014/15 be submitted to Council for approval to include

1. approving the Appendices to the Strategy covering:
 - a. the Annual Investment Strategy
 - b. prudential Indicators, including the borrowing limits
 - c. Minimum Revenue Provision
2. confirming that the authority will continue to remain debt free.

RESOLVED that

1. the authority undertakes a joint tender exercise for banking services with Chiltern District Council in 2014, the details of the procurement exercise being delegated to the Director of Resources to approve in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder.
2. the minutes of Resources Advisory Group held on 12 December 2013 be noted.

42. HEALTH AND HOUSING

The Cabinet received the minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Advisory Group held on 21 November 2013 and the following were the subject of recommendations from the Portfolio Holder:

Minute 29 - Update on Acquisition Scheme

The PAG considered a report setting out options for updating the Acquisition Scheme approved in February 2012. The PAG indicated support for option 2 subject to certain conditions.

After considering the advice of the Portfolio Holder the Cabinet:

RESOLVED that

1. in recognition that market conditions have increased the cost of purchasing property on the open market the Council's contribution to the Acquisition Scheme be increased to a maximum of £80,000 per property and that the total available funding for the Acquisition Scheme be increased to £1,545,000.
2. Arising from the above
 - on case by case assessment the Acquisition Scheme be broadened to enable London and Quadrant to purchase properties outside the district in less expensive areas to maximise the delivery of affordable housing units.
 - officers be requested to explore similar Acquisition Schemes with alternative Registered Providers operating outside the district and report back to Health and Housing PAG the result of any negotiations.

Minute 30- - Bucks Home Choice - Update

The PAG received the final version of revised policy in respect of Bucks Home Choice.

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Head of Health and Housing, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Housing, to make any necessary amendments to the draft Bucks Home Choice Allocations Policy prior to adoption, having regard to the final statutory guidance

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referred to in the DCLG consultation paper and subject to Aylesbury Vale, South Bucks, Chiltern and Wycombe District Councils also agreeing to these necessary amendments.

After considering the advice of the Portfolio Holder the Cabinet:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Advisory Group held on 21 November 2013 be noted.

43. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Cabinet received the minutes of the Sustainable Policy Advisory Group held on 17 December 2013 and 22 January 2014 and the following were the subject of recommendations from the Portfolio Holder:

Minute 20 - HS2: Update and Possible Petitioning Issues

The PAG received an update report on the High Speed Rail Project including details of the outcome of the HS2 legal challenge. The report also went to discuss potential petitioning points against the High Speed Rail.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the responses prepared by officers and experts to the formal Environmental statement on behalf of the Council be noted
- 2) the issues raised in the report as matters of concern for the Council be noted and accepted as reflecting current thinking which will be developed by the officers/experts in the lead-up to the submission of the Petition to the Select Committee in April/May 2014.
- 3) **RECOMMENDED** to Council that
 - a) it is expedient for the Council to oppose the High Speed rail (London-West Midlands) Bill introduced in the Session of parliament 2013-14.
 - b) the Common seal of the Council be affixed to any necessary documents and that confirmation be given that Sharpe Pritchard (Parliamentary Agents) be authorised to sign the Petition of the Council against the Bill.
 - c) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Sustainable Development, to take all necessary steps to finalise the matters of concern and carry the Resolution referred to above into effect.
 - d) a sum of up to £25,000 be allocated for the purpose of presenting evidence to Parliament.

Minute 21 - A Shared Framework for the Buckinghamshire Councils on Duty to Co-operate and the Alignment of the Local Plan Timetables and Shared Evidence Based

The PAG received a report outlining the vision for a Shared Framework for the Buckinghamshire Councils to Co-operate and the Alignment of the Local Plan Timetables and Shared Evidence Based.

The PAG supported signing of the shared framework agreement.

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Head of Sustainable Development and the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development, to agree the final wording and sign the Shared Framework Agreement for the Buckinghamshire Councils on the Duty to Co-operate and the Alignment of the Local Plan Timetables and Shared Evidence Base.

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After considering the advice of the Portfolio Holder the Cabinet:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Sustainable Policy Advisory Group held on 17 December 2013 and 22 January 2014 be noted.

44. CHILTERN AND SOUTH BUCKS JOINT COMMITTEE

The Cabinet received for information the minutes of the meeting of the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee held on 9 December 2013.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee held on 9 December 2013 be noted.

45. PENSION FUND TRIENNIAL REVALUATION

The Cabinet received a report providing details of the outcome of the Triennial Revaluation of the Bucks Pension Fund and the implications for the Council.

RESOLVED that

1. The employers contribution be increased by £140K p.a. (3.2% of payroll) with effect from 2014/15 and the budget be adjusted accordingly
2. The savings target for years after 2014/15 be increased by an equivalent amount to fund the on-going additional costs.

46. BANKING, INSURANCE AND PAYROLL CONTRACTS

The banking, insurance and payroll contracts are due to come to an end and the Cabinet received a report proposing that delegated authority be given to the Director of Resources to award joint contracts for both CDC and SBDC.

The report focused on the banking services contract, as this was the most pressing, as CDC wished to move their banking arrangements from the Co-op as soon as practical. The report detailed the tendering process which included credit rating criteria, evaluation criteria and a scoring scheme.

The Cabinet supported the proposals and accordingly

RESOLVED that

1. authority be delegated to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Leader, to award a new joint contract for Banking service.
2. authority be delegated to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder, to award new joint contracts for Insurance and Payroll.

47. SERVICE PLAN SUMMARIES

The Cabinet received a report providing a summary of each of the service plans produced by service areas in the Council.

The Chief Executive encouraged Cabinet Members to discuss the service plans with the relevant Heads of Service.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

48. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT QUARTERLY REPORT QUARTER 3

The Cabinet considered a report showing the performance of Council services against performance indicators during the period October - December 2013 and in particular performance in relation to:

- Priority Performance Indicators;
- Performance and Service objectives across the Council;
- The Leader's Portfolio and the Portfolios of other Cabinet Members; and
- Key operational risks and controls put in place to mitigate risks

The following appendices were attached to the report:

- Appendix A - Providing an overview of priority monthly indicators;
- Appendix B - Quarterly corporate performance Indicator report;
- Appendix C - Service actions report - providing an overview of the service areas' progress towards completing actions and projects - to be found on the intranet underneath Performance Reports on the A-Z.

Of the 16 priority indicators 8 were on target, 3 had just missed its target and 5 were off target as at the end of December 2013. The Cabinet's attention was particularly drawn to the reasons for the targets being missed as set out in paragraph 4.2.

RESOLVED that the Performance Management Quarterly Report for the period October - December 2013 be noted.

49. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

“that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1974 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act “

Paragraph 1 - information relating to any individual.

50. PART II CABINET MINUTES

(Paragraph 1)

The part II minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 19 November 2013 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

51. RESOURCES

The Cabinet received the minutes of the Resources Policy Advisory Group held on 12 December 2013 and the following was the subject of a recommendation from the Portfolio Holder:

Minute 44 - Application for Hardship Relief
(paragraph 1)

The PAG had considered a request for rate relief, and supported the application for the reasons giving in the report, subject to certain conditions.

RESOLVED that following the advice of the Portfolio Holder the Cabinet agreed the application for rate relief subject to conditions as set out in the minute.

The meeting terminated at 7.00 pm