

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on  
Wednesday, 16 December 2009 at 6.00 p.m.

Portfolio Holder: Simon Edwards

### **Councillors in attendance:**

Scrutiny and Overview Committee monitors: Mervyn Loynes

Opposition spokesmen: Richard Summerfield

### **Officers:**

Patrick Adams	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Adrian Burns	Head of Accountancy
Alex Colyer	Executive Director, Corporate Services
Susan Gardner Craig	Human Resources Manager
Peter Harris	Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing)

## **27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Simon Edwards, Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder, declared a personal interest in item 3: Capital and Revenue Estimates for Staffing and Central Overhead Accounts, as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## **28. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder stated that the Executive Director Corporate Services' Supplementary report of the Outline Business Case should have been attached to the minutes. The Senior Democratic Services Officer agreed to ensure that this report was easily accessible on the website for those viewing the minutes.

## **29. CAPITAL AND REVENUE ESTIMATES FOR STAFFING AND CENTRAL OVERHEAD ACCOUNTS**

The Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing) presented this report which sought approval for the Revenue Estimates up to 2010/11 for the Staffing and Central Overhead Accounts. He explained that the section of the report on the Capital Programme up to the year 2012/13 had been withdrawn and was being examined by Senior Management Team.

### **Amendments to the report**

In the first sentence of paragraph 30 the word "increase" was amended to "decrease" and in the last sentence of paragraph 32 the figure "-£341K" was amended to "+£341K".

The Principal Accountant (General Fund and Costing) explained that £58,000 extra savings would have to be identified.

It was noted that, in some cases, the exact areas where reductions would be made to the staffing costs had not yet been identified in detail. The specific amendments would be made by virement in the working budget in due course. Also, the possible effects of the impending grading review was excluded, but overall provisions would be made on the

General Fund and Housing Revenue Account estimate summaries.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder

**AGREED** to approve the revenue estimates and recharges as presented and shown in appendices A & B of the report.

**30. PROVISIONAL LOCAL AUTHORITY FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2010/11**

The Head of Accountancy introduced this report on the Council's draft response to the provisional local authority finance settlement. He explained that if the authority were to appeal against its settlement it would be in a stronger position if it had responded to the Government's consultation exercise.

In response to questioning the Head of Accountancy stated that it was likely that a council tax increase above 3% would be subject to capping. The Executive Director Corporate Services agreed to ascertain what the cost of rebilling would be if the authority were capped.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder

**AGREED** to the wording in the draft letter in Appendix A of the report, with an amendment to the first sentence of the final paragraph on the first page of the letter to "... the tax base for 2010/11 is estimated to be 59,135 ..."

**31. INTEGRATED BUSINESS MONITORING REPORT (APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2009)**

The Head of Accountancy introduced this report, which enabled the Portfolio Holder to consider the current financial position (General Fund, HRA and Capital Expenditure) in the integrated format with the current performance of the measures from the 2009/10 Corporate Plan. He explained that the figures in the report were from September, but SMT had just received October's figures. These showed that the projected overspend on the General Fund had decreased from 3.08% to 3.05%

It was understood that the Development Control Income was lower than expected due to the economic downturn and the interest on balances was also lower than expected due to the low interest rates.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder **NOTED** the report.

**32. EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2009**

The Human Resources Manager introduced this report which informed the Portfolio Holder of the key findings from the Employee Survey 2009. She explained that the return rate was 72%, which according to IpsosMORI was far higher than the national average of 45-50%. It was noted that IpsosMORI's survey questions allowed national comparisons to be made.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder welcomed the results, which were very positive for the authority in a time of upheaval. The Human Resources Manager explained that a focus group would be set up to address the areas where the authority were scoring lower than the national average.

The Human Resources Manager recommended that the next staff satisfaction survey should take place in two year's time to allow for the results of the 2009 Survey to be

analysed and acted on before the next survey is undertaken.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder

**AGREED** that the next staff satisfaction survey should be undertaken in two year's time.

**33. FORWARD PLAN**

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder **agreed** to add a quarterly update on the Treasury Management Strategy for the meetings on 20 January 2010 and 14 April 2010.

**34. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 20 January 2010 at 6pm in the Monkfield Room.

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**The Meeting ended at 6.45 p.m.**

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