

**Minutes of: MEETING OF THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
(CORPORATE) (BUDGET)**

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 5th February 2013

Present: Councillors; T Holt (Chair), P. Bury, I. Gartside, A. Isherwood.

Representing Unison

S Morton, M Fulham, R. Pakeman, P. Wilson, K. Mather, E. Entwistle.

In attendance:

M. Owen – Executive Director of Resources
S. Kenyon – Assistant Director Finance and Efficiency
M. Carriline – Executive Director Children’s Services
P. Jones Greenhaulgh – Executive Director Adult Services
G. Atkinson – Executive Director Environment and Development Services.
M. Kelly – Chief Executive
G. Berry – Assistant Director, Human Resources
J. Edwards – Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors; J. Smith, L. Fitzwalter, M. Connolly, J. Walton.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were addressed above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. BUDGET PROPOSALS

a) The Joint Committee considered a presentation from the Executive Director of Resources, with regards to the Council’s budget proposals, the presentation contained the following information:

There will be two major changes to the local government finance system taking effect on 1st April 2013:

- Localisation of Council Tax Support
- Localisation of Business Rates

In Plan for Change one, the budget forecast for 2013/15 would include a financial shortfall of £9.0m, various pressures emerged and the target increased for 2013/14 to £10.4m. Estimates of the impact of the Autumn Statement led to an increase in savings requirement for 2014/15 of £2.3m to £7.4m. Total savings consulted on were £17.8m.

The Executive Director of Resources reported that the final settlement figures would not be available until 13 February 2013, there would also be a new way of distributing resources. The Formula Grant would be replaced by the Revenue Support Grant.

The table below shows changes in Start Up Funding Allocation for 2013/14 for various authorities:

	2013/14
- Bury	-5.06%
- Met Districts	-3.28%
- London	-3.00%
- Greater Manchester	-3.62%
- All England	-3.93%

The Executive Director of Resources reported that the Council Tax would be frozen at £1259.75 but the Council would receive the grant equivalent to 1.0% from the Government (£0.6m).

b) The Corporate Joint Consultative Committee received a verbal presentation from the Executive Director of Adult Services, the Executive Director of Children's Services and the Executive Director of Environment and Development Services. The presentation contained the following information:

The Executive Director of Adult Services reported that the budget for Adults services for 2012/2013 is £50.8 million, and the department is expected to find savings of £2.791 million in 2013/14 & 2014/15, a 5.5% reduction.

The majority of the adult services budget is spent on Employee costs (35%) and Community Care (53%). The Community Care Act places statutory duties on Local authorities to provide services to vulnerable adults post 18.

The Executive Director of Adult services reported that the department would look to make savings by not filling posts, relocation and co-

location of staff and by developing a growth strategy. The department would develop new ways of working, as successfully piloted within the re-ablement team. Other projects would include further development of the personalisation agenda, the crisis response team and the future development of Connect and Direct.

The Executive Director of Adult Services reported that the department must manage the risk, while at the same time having to balance an increase in demand for the service with reduced resources, safeguarding will be a major focus.

The Executive Director of Children's Services reported that the department would have to make over 1 million pounds of saving in 2013/14 and 676 thousand pounds in 2014/15.

Proposed Savings have been identified in the following areas:

Denominational transport £276,000

Further home to school transport savings - £350,000

Relocation of services - £52,000

Changes in school funding arrangements - £350,000

Additional schools buy-back - £100,000

Early Years and Children's Centres reduced spending - £250,000

Social Care Division - £104,000

Short breaks for children with disabilities - £200,000

The Executive Director of Children's services reported that two of the three social worker post had been identified. The Council would re-tender the service to provide short breaks for children with disabilities, the youth service would provide some of this service as well as Action for Children.

The Executive Director of Environmental Development Services reported that the department had a net budget of £36 million and would be expected to find £2.4 million worth of savings.

The savings would be as a result of work within the following areas: highways, civic halls, parks and countryside, township based street cleansing teams, leisure, library services and cctv.

The Executive Director of Environment and Development Services reported that the department would look to develop additional income streams, in areas such as, the provision of CCTV/security for schools and also by producing an action plan for the promotion of civic halls.

Steve Morton, Unison, reported that it would be prudent for the trade union to voice concerns about the unions ability to engage with the plan for change agenda. The trade unions reported that their

engagement would be hindered by the lack of up to date facts about, job losses planned, budgets pre and post cuts.

Steve Morton, Unison reported that information contained within the 'Plan for change' document lacked clarity and does not lend itself to any in-depth financial scrutiny.

Steve Morton, Unison expressed concern that they had not been provided with information in relation to the total number of posts lost to the establishment, or been given a reliable forecasts, despite requesting a HR1 notice, on several occasions in 2012.

Steve Morton, Unison expressed concern with regards to the process that would see establishments cut as a result of a VER or VS. Subsequent to VER/VS decisions the trade union would be consulted with regards to the proposals, yet the restructure would be already moulded around those employees departing.

Steve Morton Unison, expressed concern that whilst voluntary severances mean fewer compulsory redundancies, they also add pressure to those staff who remain, which may impact on service delivery.

The Chief Executive reported that the HR1 form would be an unnecessary administration process, that would create uncertainty and would not add any value.

The Chair agreed to convene a 10 minute recess.

The Chair, Councillor T. Holt, invited questions, comments and representations from members present at the meeting. Questions were asked and comments made on the issues detailed below

- In response to a member's question, the Director of Adult services reported that a number of invest to save schemes would be developed. Work would be undertaken with the new CCG to look at jointly funding some projects. Strategic commissioning would be undertaken, as well as closer working with Public Health colleagues.
- In response to a member's question, the Executive Director of Children's Services reported that modelling would be undertaken to establish the exact number of posts to be lost within the school escort service. Children Services' staff currently located within St. Marys would be relocated and rental costs would be reduced at the offices at Broad street.

- The Executive Director of Children's Services reported that £400,000 of savings had already been identified from the children's centre budget this had been as a result of clustering arrangements.
- In response to a member's question, the Executive Director of Environmental Services reported that the exercise to replace the street lights with LED street lighting would in the long term, result in a reduced number of staff. The review of the library service would expect to generate savings of £810,000. The majority of the cost associated with Bury in Bloom, would be met by corporate sponsorship.
- In response to a question from the Chair, The Director of Children's Services reported that the changes proposed in relation to home to school transport service, would be for those children who are more independent and the focus of the proposals would be the model of service delivery.

It was agreed:

- 1. That minutes of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee held on the 5th February 2013 would be forwarded for consideration, by Elected Members, at the Budget Council meeting, due to be held on 20th February 2013.**
- 2. That the Executive Directors would meet with trade union representatives to discuss issues specific to each department.**

4. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business reported.

Chair Councillor Holt

The meeting started at 4pm and ended at 5.50pm