



Minutes of the special meeting of the COMMUNITY LEARNING FAMILY OF CHAIRS held on THURSDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 1999 at 5.30pm in Meeting Room 2, Saxon Court

Present: Councillor Lloyd (Chair, Community Learning Committee)
Councillors Barton (Chair, Grant Aid Committee), Gibbs (Vice-Chair, Children's and Youth Committee), Gillingham (Vice-Chair Economy and Lifelong Learning Committee), Legg (Chair, Community Committee), Miles (Vice-Chair, Grant Aid and Community Learning Committees), Saunders (Chair, Education Committee), Turnbull (Chair, Children's and Youth Committee) and K Wilson (Leader of the Council)

Officers: J Stansfield (Strategic Director Learning and Development), V Gwynn (Head of Community and Economic Development), A Flack (Director of Education and Early Years Services), P Hymers (Acting Finance Manager Learning and Development), A Farr (Children's Services Manager (Children in Need) and S Parker (Committee Administrator)

Apologies: Councillor Woodcock (Vice-Chair, Education Committee) and P Sutton (Head of Children's Services)

ACTION

1.0 BUDGET ISSUES

CONSIDERED: A set of budget papers to form discussions at the meeting.

NOTED: That the Budget Papers at this time represented work in progress and no decisions had yet been made on any of the items included in them. They should also be treated as strictly confidential. The papers were identical to those being considered by the Leader and the Chief Executive in separate meetings with the Strategic Director and Heads of Service.

ALSO CONSIDERED: A briefing paper outlining the overall Council position on the budget including the large number of budget pressures; the savings items to address these for 1999/2000; and the position on balances.

STATED: By the Leader of the Council the following:

- (a) In looking at areas where savings could be made

officers would need to consider those savings which had not yet been identified as well as identifying areas where there could be a reduction in spending pressures.

- (b) The indicative budgets for Strategic Committees using the 1999/2000 original budget as a base allow for equal increases for each Committee apart from schools.
- (c) There is increasing concern about the reliability and robustness of SSA calculations.
- (d) Further budget pressures may be identified.
- (e) There will be a need to look at budget implications for the next three years. There are several areas which have not yet been looked at including the corporate centre. The Leader of the Council has requested the Treasurer to look at the surplus on the collection fund for next year.
- (f) Asset disposal would give potential for reducing debt charges and capitalising revenue expenditure which could add to the totality of a solution to the budget position.

There is a need therefore to begin a prioritisation process.

- (g) 40% of the capital realised from the sale of the Denbigh site would be releasable to the Capital Programme which would go some way to covering the capital needs of the Learning and Development Directorate.

2.0

EDUCATION SSA

NOTED:

The issue of the gap between SSA and total expenditure on education and the effect of a 7% and 5.8% increase for schools on this gap.

3.0

2000/2001 REVENUE BUDGET ACTION POINTS

ALSO NOTED:

The Learning and Development Directorate's summary three year budget projection providing details on the

original budget changes since Policy and Resources and how targets have now moved although they are not yet fixed.

CONSIDERED: Budget pressures and unavoidable growth as detailed in part D of the budget papers.

AGREED: That the following be deleted from part D of the budget documents.

D12: Library's Mobile Vehicle

D16: C and ED Vacancy Underachievement

NOTED: That VG was already looking at the issue of the Regeneration Officer.

ALSO NOTED: In relation to D26 Gatehouse Special School it was hoped that this would reduce as a budget pressure.

4.0 SAVINGS PROPOSALS

NOTED: The savings items outlined at Part G of the budget papers.

NOTED: That the two proposed library closures would be subsumed into the Library Service review overall target figure.

PROVIDED: By officers advice and clarification on savings proposals.

AGREED: By A Farr to investigate on behalf of Councillor Turnbull the effect of redeploying staff to and from the Tattenhoe Assessment Centre to existing services and feedback to Councillor Turnbull.

AFa

EXPLAINED: By VG for Councillor Miles the savings proposals at 14 - Reduction in the European Fund rollover and 16 - Arts and Museums - Business Links.

REPORTED: By VG the work she was carrying out following the budget interview with the Leader of the Council on the proposals for the Youth Service which would be reported back to the budget team and would presumably be considered by group.

NOTED: The proposals for property disposals which, although corporate issues being considered by the Estates

Department, would have implications for Community Learning Committees if rent income streams were affected!

NOTED: The proposed 10% reduction in the Community Learning Committee's grants administered by C/ED Department. This arose from the meeting with the Leader and the Chief Executive on the Community and Economic Development Department.

CIRCULATED: Details of grants provided by the Children's Services Division and the Education Division.

AGREED: That consideration be given to a similar reduction in the budget for external organisations grant aided by Children's Services and Education in line with those provided for by C/ED Department.

NOTED: Increasing pressures on the budget of the Council arising from government regulations, for example in the area of the School Organisation Committee now carried out by the Council but for which no funding was provided by the government.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING WITH OFFICERS AT 7.15 PM