

AT A MEETING of the CABINET of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle on 24 September 2012.

**Chairman:**  
**p Councillor T. K. Thornber, CBE**

Councillors:

p K. Chapman	p M.J. Kendal
p C. Davidovitz	p K. Mans
p Dr. R. J. Ellis	p R. Perry
p Felicity Hindson, MBE	p S. Reid

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Councillors R. Bolton, G. Burgess, C. Carter, P. Edgar and K. Evans.

**368. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor M. Tucker.

**369. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

**370. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2012 were confirmed as a correct record.

**371. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**372. UPDATES ON THE PUSH AND TFSH BUSINESS PLANS (2011 -2013)**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment (Item 5 in the Minute Book) on updates to, and seeking approval of, the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) and Transport for South Hampshire (TfSH) Business Plans.

In considering the report, the Cabinet expressed concern at the proposed number of dwellings required across the PUSH area, which were at risk of not being supported by improved infrastructure, and sought clarification on the connection with projected employment levels. The Cabinet felt that growth should be focussed on the inner city areas which is where it was most needed, rather than on greenfield sites, and that PUSH should be urged not to allow the outward growth of Southampton and Portsmouth.

The Business Plan showed that PUSH was contracting and focussing on fewer key areas. The Cabinet was concerned about PUSH's funding and the future of its role compared to that of the developing Local Enterprise Partnerships. Cabinet asked for a copy of PUSH's budget and its annual accounts.

The Cabinet adopted the recommendations set out in the report, with the addition of a recommendation to request an update on PUSH's financial arrangements and to ask PUSH to prioritise the regeneration of the two cities in its Business Plan. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 1.

### **373. OPEN FOR BUSINESS: QUARTER ONE UPDATE**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Policy and Governance (Item 6 in the Minute Book) on performance against the Open for Business Plan during the first quarter.

The Cabinet welcomed the report, was pleased to note the performance and the range of activities that support that improvement and was grateful to officers for the improvements in the County Council's performance. In respect of areas for improvement, the Cabinet asked for a separate briefing on staff sickness absence and placement stability for children in care.

For future reporting, the Cabinet suggested the inclusion of achievements in respect of the work undertaken on community covenants and the offer made to potential and serving reservists. The Cabinet would also welcome the opportunity to reduce the number of non-statutory targets included in the Open for Business Plan and potentially remove some of those against which the County Council regularly achieves or exceeds.

The Cabinet adopted the recommendations set out in the report. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 2.

### **374. QUARTER ONE BUDGET MONITORING – 2012/13**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources (Item 7 in the Minute Book) outlining the key issues arising from the budget monitoring over the first quarter.

The Cabinet welcomed the changes to the reporting process and noted that care package costs were continuing to put pressure on the budget. However, data captured around care package changes was much stronger

which put the Council in a better position to quickly respond to budget challenges.

The Cabinet adopted the recommendations set out in the report. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 3.

**375. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME – RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources (Item 8 in the Minute Book) on the proposed County Council response to Billing Authorities proposals for a new council tax benefit from April 2013.

In considering the proposed consultation response, the Cabinet asked whether billing authorities were looking at their overheads to see if savings could be achieved from overheads to help fund the gap. In response, the Director explained that a working group of Chief Finance Officers from across the District Councils was exploring many avenues to reduce the funding gap. The Director also advised that, on the basis of this current information from billing authorities, it was likely that the funding gap would be closed without any impact on the County Council.

The Cabinet also suggested that the report be shared with local MPs once District Council's had published their consultations.

The Cabinet adopted the recommendations set out in the report. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 4.

**376. BUSINESS RATES RETENTION CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources (Item 9 in the Minute Book) on the proposed County Council response to the Government's latest consultation on the business rates retention scheme.

The Cabinet approved the proposed consultation response and agreed that a covering letter be prepared which would emphasise the County Council's view that the proposals create a level of complexity that is difficult to understand and increases bureaucracy.

The Cabinet adopted the recommendations set out in the report. The decision record is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 5.