

AT A MEETING of the CABINET of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle on 28 November, 2011

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

Councillors:

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

Also present: Councillors B. D. Dash, P. Edgar, K. Evans, C. Leversha and M. Tucker.

**281 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Ray Ellis.

**282 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a personal or prejudicial interest in any matter considered at the meeting declared that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the County Council's Code of Conduct, considered whether to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with paragraph 12 of the code.

**283 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 October, 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

**284 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**285 ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2010/11**

The Cabinet considered the Annual Audit Letter received from the Audit Commission (Item 5 in the Minute Book) in respect of its audit of Hampshire County Council for 2010/11. The Independent auditors had found that during a time of unprecedented financial challenge, that the County Council was providing top quality services, at a lower cost than other county councils in England. In the Annual Audit Letter, the District Auditor has endorsed the County Council's approach to the challenges set by the Government's reduction in public spending and outlined how

priority service areas continued to show improvement, despite financial constraints. The Auditor was therefore able to give an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. Stating that the Council was well positioned to prepare compliant financial statements and had made proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

In particular, the audit letter referred to the County Council's approach to using its reserves to ease the pressure on services and the council taxpayer. The District Auditor stated that the level of reserves in 2010/11, at £235 million, along with the medium financial strategy - provided a stable financial position for the Council. Further adding that the County Council was using its one-off reserves to fund initiatives that will help secure significant long term and continuing cost reductions.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the Chairman on the Audit Committee addressed the Cabinet. He advised that the Audit Committee had considered and noted the Annual Audit Letter and had welcomed its positive content, which was a real endorsement for the Council.

The Cabinet welcomed the report and thanked the District Auditor and all members of staff involved in the Audit process. The Decision Record is attached to these Minutes at Appendix 1.

286 **HAMPSHIRE WORKSTYLE PROGRAMME – PROCUREMENT OF HUB OFFICES AND CAPITAL AND ASSETS PATHFINDER**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services (Item 6 in the Minute Book) providing an update on progress with the Hampshire Workstyle Programme and seeking approval in principle to acquiring property interests in three specific locations across the County.

The Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services reminded members of the principle components of the Workstyle Strategy: development of major hubs supported where appropriate by satellite or drop in points and shared services arrangement with district councils and other partners.

The Cabinet endorsed the acquisition and provision of hub offices in Basingstoke and Farnborough. However in relation to the proposals in Totton, the Cabinet instructed officers to review these in light of recent announcements made by Test Valley Borough Council about office accommodation. Furthermore, the Cabinet instructed officers to explore when looking at hub offices all alternative premises in the vicinity.

The report also provided an update on the County Council's capital and asset pathfinder. In particular the report explained the vision of a 'one public estate' where through collaboration between the public sector partners in a place, all publicly owned assets are considered as a single

portfolio to meet the requirements of the local community to make better use of existing public buildings, and land. In order to explore opportunities further Cabinet endorsed the use of £150,000 of one off additional resources being made available in 2011/12, to be funded from the Corporate Efficiency Reserve. Furthermore, the Cabinet requested that the proposals be taken to the Hampshire Senate to seek formal commitment to the approach and exploration of potential governance arrangements. It was suggested that the Ringwood Gateway and Havant Public Services Plaza projects be used as examples of public sector partnering and effective consultation strategies.

The amended decision record is attached to these minutes at Appendix 2.

## 287 **IMPLEMENTING THE LOCALISM BILL**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive (Item 7 in the Minute Book) setting out the work that had been conducted jointly across the County Council as the Localism Bill progressed through Parliament and finally received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011.

The report highlighted the provisions which required the County Council to respond to directly, namely;

- Changes to Members Standards regime and Code of conduct
- Pay statements
- Repeal of Petitions Duty and introduction of referenda on local issues
- Council Tax Referendum
- Community Right to challenge
- Assets of Community Value
- Planning reform

The decision record is attached to these minutes at Appendix 3.

## 288 **CORPORATE GRANTS EFFICIENCY WORKSTREAM – MOVING FORWARD**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive (Item 8 in the Minute Book) providing an update on the Corporate Efficiency Workstream outcome, specifically the automated grant system for all grant streams including a uniform and streamlined e-application process.

The Cabinet warmly welcomed the proposals set out in the report and in particular the enhanced reporting arrangements that would allow improved and timely management information to be available and accessible to all Members. The Cabinet thanked all officers involved in the work stream and suggested that Councillor Mans champion this area and review the finer detail of the application forms and other processes.

The decision record is attached to these minutes at Appendix 4.

**289 QUARTER 2 BUDGET MONITORING**

The Cabinet considered a report of the County Treasurer (Item 9 in the Minute Book) outlining the key issues arising from budget monitoring and the second quarter 2011/12.

The Cabinet noted that the overall forecast position for the revenue budget remained a strong one at the end of the second quarter with an under spend predicted by the end of the year. Furthermore, the Cabinet endorsed the release of funding from central contingencies to Adult Services which would mean the department could concentrate on keeping within it's bottom line budget for the remainder of the year. The Cabinet noted that some risks remained with two savings proposals in respect of Learning Disability clients and the introduction of the Electronic Domiciliary Care Management (EDCM) system.

The decision record is attached to these minutes at Appendix 5.

**290 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The press and public were excluded from the meeting during the following items as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and further that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemptions outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information for the reasons set out in the report.

**291 EFFICIENCY EXPENDITURE REDUCTION AND TRANSFORMATION;  
2012/13 – PHASE 4 WORKSTREAM PROPOSALS PROGRESS –  
REPORT NO. 2**

The Cabinet considered an exempt report of the Chief Executive (Item 11 in the Minute Book) providing an update on the emerging 2012/13 Phase 4 Corporate Efficiency Workstream savings plan. [SUMMARY OF AN EXEMPT ITEM].

The decision record is attached to these minutes at Appendix 6.

**292 HAMPSHIRE WORKSTYLE PROGRAMME – PROCUREMENT OF HUB  
OFFICES AND CAPITAL AND ASSETS PATHFINDER – EXEMPT  
APPENDIX**

The Cabinet considered an exempt appendix relating to Minute No. 286.