

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BABERGH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, CORKS LANE, HADLEIGH ON MONDAY 27 JANUARY 2014

PRESENT:

Mrs J Antill – Chairman

Mr B D Hurren

Mr J A B Long

Mr F R Lawrenson

Mr M Newman

The following Members were unable to be present:-

Mr N MacMaster, Mrs A M Norman and Mr D L Wood.

1 SUBSTITUTES

There were no substitutes present.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None declared.

3 PETITIONS

None received.

4 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

5 FINANCIAL OUTLOOK INCLUDING THE 2014/15 DRAFT GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGETS AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Corporate Manager - Finance and the Corporate Manager – Housing Revenue Account introduced [Paper N98](#) setting out key information on the Council's financial plans, investment strategy and the strategic context which summarises the key financial drivers for the 2014/15 Budget.

The report also outlined key information on the financial challenges facing the Council in the short and medium/long term and the Council's new strategic approach and desired outcomes following the Transformation Enquiry Group (TEG) process.

The Corporate Manager - Finance also introduced an additional item (Paper N98A), outlining the overall summary of the financial picture for council tax income and grants comparing 2014/15 with 2013/14. He set out how the Council intends to use its available resources to achieve the strategic priority outcomes and realign resources to a programme of transformational activities and projects.

The Corporate Manager – Housing Revenue Account set out to Members the changes that the Government had introduced around the Housing Revenue Account and the New Homes Bonus scheme and how this impacts on the future budgets of the Council.

RESOLVED

That the information and recommendations contained in [Paper N98](#) and additional recommendations be noted.

RECOMMENDED TO STRATEGY COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL

- (1) That in view of increasing financial risks and uncertainties, consideration be given to having a higher General Fund working balance/reserve and a clear policy in relation to this.**
- (2) That the community grants budget be increased in 2014/15 to reflect the fact that this has not been increased over recent years.**

It was noted that the recommendations contained in [Paper N98](#) are subject to a final determination by Strategy Committee and Council in February 2013.

The business of the meeting was concluded at 10.55 a.m.

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Chairman