

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
BUDGET WORKING GROUP
HELD AT NELSON TOWN HALL
ON 3rd SEPTEMBER, 2015**

PRESENT –

Councillor M. Iqbal (Chairman – in the Chair)

Councillors

*J. Cooney
A. R. Greaves
C. Wakeford
D. Whalley
D. M. Whipp
P. White*

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G. Roach).

Also in attendance

<i>Dean Langton</i>	<i>Strategic Director</i>
<i>Philip Mousdale</i>	<i>Corporate Director</i>
<i>Vince Green</i>	<i>Financial Services Manager</i>
<i>Jane Watson</i>	<i>Senior Committee Administrator</i>

7. MINUTES

AGREED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 30th July, 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF BUDGET SAVINGS IN 2015/16

The Financial Services Manager provided an update on the implementation status of agreed budget savings. With regards to the transfer of playgrounds/play areas and the repairs and the transfer of repairs and maintenance of passenger shelters compensating savings had been agreed and £40,000 had been withheld from the Area Committee funding in lieu of these savings not being achieved in this year. Three projects had, however, been identified as being 'off track'. These were CCTV, Outreach Workers and the Discover Centre. However, the latest budget forecast indicated that the non-achievement of these savings in year could be contained within the overall approved budget.

AGREED

That the report be noted.

9. DRAFT SAVINGS PROPOSALS FOR 2016/17

The Financial Services Manager submitted a report on savings proposals for the 2016/17 General Fund Revenue Budget.

The Working Group considered the following suggestions:

		Proposed Savings 2016/17 £	Agreed Action
	Growing		
	Pooling of Business Rates – Reduced Levy	300,000	
	Total Growing	300,000	
	Charging		
1.	Charging for bulky household waste	63,000	No support at this stage.
2.	Administrative charge for replacement wheeled bins	45,000	No support at this stage.
3.	Annual increase in fees and charges	90,380	Accepted. Report to Executive in September.
4.	Change in subscription charge for garden waste	36,550	Consider further in December.
	Total Charging	234,930	
	Saving		
	<i>Working with Town and Parish Councils</i>		
5.	No town and parish council grants	43,650	Accepted. Report to Executive in September.
6.	No LCTS grant to town and parish councils	34,730	As above.
7.	Changes to CCTV provision/funding arrangements	86,780	Awaiting discussions with town and parish councils.
8.	Cessation of funding for Fence Village Hall and Library	15,240	No support at this stage.
	Organisation		
9.	Staffing – vacancy management and DFG Agency fee adjustment	100,000	Agreed
	Strategic Review of Leisure, Culture and Arts Services		
10.	Pendle Leisure Trust – Reduction in Grant Relocation of PLT HQ to Elliott House, Nelson; and Review of ACE Centre/Marsden Park Golf Course/Fees etc.	318,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requested a breakdown of the Leisure Trust's budgets for the next meeting. Request meeting with Leisure Trust's Board Members to discuss budgets over the next three year period and possible relocation to Elliott House. Following discussions a report be submitted to the Executive.

(At this point the Chairman, Councillor M. Iqbal and Councillors J. Cooney and C. Wakeford retired from the meeting.)

Councillor A. R. Greaves (Vice-Chairman – in the Chair)

		Proposed Savings 2016/17 £	Agreed Action
	Contract/Procurement Reviews		
11.	Grounds Maintenance – change in specification	25,000	Further discussions requested.
12.	Waste Management Service delivery savings	89,800	A report be submitted to the Executive on proposed savings.
	Miscellaneous Changes		
13.	Reduction in the cost of Homelessness Provision	5,000	No support at this stage. Request a meeting with Open Door to discuss impact of any reductions.
14.	Reducing the cost of Tourism	3,000	Requested further information in relation to the number of requests ie email/post.
15.	Deletion of budget for Community Safety Initiatives	8,000	Noted at this stage – possible reduction to £4,000 may be considered.
16.	Reduction in repairs and maintenance expenditure in town centres	10,000	Noted at this stage – need more information.
17.	Delete Economic Development Promotions Budget	19,350	Noted at this stage. Reduction of £15,000 could be considered.
18.	Cessation of Talented Athletes Grants	3,000	Noted at this stage.
19.	Reduction in funding for Land Drainage	10,320	Noted at this stage. It was suggested that funding be reduced over a period of time.
	Total Savings	771,870	
	Total of above Proposals	1,306,800	
	Initial Target for Savings in 2016/19 per MTFP	1,470,380	
	Balance to be identified	(163,580)	

AGREED

That the actions referred to above be agreed.

10. INCOME REVIEW 2016/17

The Financial Services Manager submitted a report on the Council's Income Review for 2016/17. It was noted that the proposals were draft subject to a review by Management Team. Subject to

agreement by the Executive fees and charges would also be increased from 1st October, unless otherwise stated.

AGREED

That the proposals set out in the report be submitted to the Executive in September, excluding the proposed increase in the garden waste subscription charge, which was not supported at this time.

11. CONSULTATION ON THE 2016/17 BUDGET

The Working Group was asked to consider what form of consultation they felt would be appropriate to make the public aware of the Council's current financial position. This issue had been raised at an earlier meeting. Reference was made to the Savings Challenge and whether or not the suggestions raised were ever considered. It was explained that a lot of the suggestions were either already being investigated or were the responsibility of the County Council. It was acknowledged, however, that it was a low cost way of obtaining views.

The Group felt that the savings made over the past five years had been very well managed and that the changes in delivery of services had been minimal to date. It was accepted, however, that with the savings the Council was expected to save over the next few years this would change and that the public needed to be made aware of this before it impacted on them.

AGREED

That officers arrange for details of the Council's financial position to be publicised along with the current work being undertaken with the transfer of services and facilities to town and parish councils.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGREED

That the next meeting of the Working Group be held at 6.00 p.m. on 1st October, 2015 at Nelson Town Hall.

Chairman _____