

<p style="text-align: center;">Meeting of the</p> <h1 style="text-align: center;">CABINET</h1> <p style="text-align: center;">held on Wednesday 5 December 2001</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRESENT:-</p> <p>Councillor MARSDEN (Chairman and Leader of the Council), Councillor LACEY OBE (Deputy Chairman), Councillors Mrs GOODALL, Mrs MURRAY and TAYLOR.</p>	
<p>86.</p>	<p>MINUTES. The minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2001 were submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.</p>
<p>87.</p>	<p>ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2000/2001. Councillor Marsden presented the report of the Chief Executive drawing the Cabinet's attention to the annual audit letter submitted by the District Auditor. A copy of the letter had been appended to the report. Mr Richard Smith of the District Auditor's office was present and was invited by the Chairman to present a summary of the audit letter. The Chairman thanked Mr Smith and his colleagues for the letter and welcomed the good working relationship that existed between District Audit and the Borough Council. He also expressed his thanks to council officers for their work which had resulted in a satisfactory audit letter.</p> <p>In summary the District Auditor said that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Council had sound arrangements for discharging stewardship responsibilities. · There was a high level of commitment to improving public services. · The Council's overall financial position was strong. <p>RESOLVED: That the content of the annual audit letter 2000/2001 be noted with satisfaction and that the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Corporate Services be requested to report regularly to Cabinet to enable the District Auditor's recommendations to be actioned.</p>

88. 2002/2003 COUNCIL BUDGET (page 183, minute 57). Councillor Marsden presented the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services on the preparation for next year's budget. Latest details for proposals for growth and savings were given. Growth proposals totalling £378,000 were listed at appendix A together with details of additional budget pressures of £358,000. These were offset by proposed budget reductions (principally from fees and charges and other income totalling £215,000). The consequential level of savings to achieve a balance budget was £618,000.

Since the Cabinet had last considered the budget at their meeting on 26 September 2001 further growth pressures had arisen in relation to the proposed withdrawal of grant in respect of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (of between £30,000 and £110,000), additional costs of dealing with abandoned vehicles (£8,000) and the provision of holiday pay to casual staff in Tourism and Leisure (£45,000). The current estimate of these costs was £83,000, at minimum, which would increase the savings target to £701,000.

In addition there was a need to address certain unrealistic income targets within the Tourism and Leisure budget. A fundamental review was proposed to tackle these budgets in the long term, however, additional funding of up to £127,000 would be required. It was proposed that a Strategic Change Fund be established utilising the £250,000 from the recent rating appeal success and that the Tourism and Leisure income shortfall be met from this fund in 2002/03 pending development of a long term sustainable solution.

Details of the efficiency savings identified to date totalling £319,000 were given as set out below:-

	£		
Mainframe migration savings	36,000		
Highways income (following Best Value Review)	66,000		
Corporate Management review	66,000		
Further leisure centre rating reductions	10,000		
Devonshire Park grounds maintenance	15,000		
Devonshire Park theatre management	20,000		
Telephone budgets	20,000		

	Environmental Health structures	20,000	
	Bank retendering	3,000	
	Best Value Review of Finance	20,000	
	Community Finance budgets	<u>43,000</u>	
		<u>319,000</u>	
	A further list of savings totalling £122,000 were proposed and the Cabinet was invited to consider these as follows:-		
			£
	Cash office closure		16,000
	Holywell Chalets income		25,000
	Joint Industrial Estate Co-ordinator		15,000
	CCTV masts		4,000
	Anti-poverty steering group		12,000
	Visitor attractions		15,000
	Parks		<u>35,000</u>
			<u>122,000</u>

With regard to the suggested closure of the cash office at an earlier date than originally envisaged, the Leader said that the closure would only take place once the planned alternative methods of payment were in place. The report also discussed further areas where savings could be made or expenditure proposed in 2002/2003 brought forward to the current year to reduce the call on next year's budget.

A separate confidential report was circulated relating to potential savings in certain areas of the Council's activity. Confidentiality was required at this stage as discussions had not yet been commenced with Unison and the staff affected. These are dealt with at minute 94 below in the confidential section of the minutes.

The savings proposals presently quantified reduced the funding gap to £260,000 subject to

	<p>89. COUNCIL HOUSING RENT RESTRUCTURING. Councillor Mrs Murray presented the report of the Head of Housing Management on the Government's proposals for bringing rent levels of Council and Housing Association housing together. The intention was to phase convergence over a ten year period. The effect in Eastbourne in 2002/2003 would be a 2% average increase in rents. The range of actual changes in rents would vary from a 2.3% reduction to a 7.9% increase. About 800 tenants would have reduced rents and some 600 an increase of over 4%. In future rent levels would be linked to the market value of the property and this would have implications on rent changes following improvement works to a property. It was estimated that by 2011/2012 Council rents would have fallen in real terms by 9.5% in Eastbourne. The majority of Councils would however see rent levels increase in real terms. Adoption of the Government's rent setting formula was considered essential in order to protect the Council's position so far as future rent subsidy levels were concerned.</p> <p>RESOLVED: (1) That the new rent setting formula be utilised in 2002/2003.</p> <p>(2) That steps be taken to ensure that, where practicable, all rents are on track to meet target rents by 2011/2012.</p> <p>(3) That rents are set where practicable in 10 even stages.</p> <p>(4) That this matter be reviewed each year in the context of the annual Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and the annual subsidy determination.</p> <p>(5) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet on 6 February 2002 to determine the rent levels for 2002/2003.</p>	
	<p>90. DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON NEW POLICY FOR PARKING STANDARDS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN EAST SUSSEX. The Chairman reported that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda and would be re-presented at the Cabinet's next meeting on 9 January 2002.</p> <p>NOTED.</p>	
	<p>91. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ORDERS (page 231, minute 18). The Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on the 23 October 2001 had considered a report on the activities of the Eastbourne Crime Reduction Partnership. At the meeting Members expressed concern regarding the process of serving Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and suggested that representations should be made to Local Government Associations to approach the Government to seek changes in the requirements for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Leader write to the Local Government Association seeking their support in finding ways to simplify the process of obtaining Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.</p>	
	<p>92. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as otherwise there was a likelihood of disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The relevant paragraphs of Schedule 12A and descriptions of the exempt information are shown in the open summary of the minutes below.</p>	

<p>93. SUMMARY OF CONFIDENTIAL PROCEEDINGS FOR INFORMATION.</p>	<p>(Note: The full minutes of the under-mentioned items are set out in the confidential section of these minutes. The reports remain confidential).</p>	
	<p>(a) 2002/2003 Council Budget. The Cabinet authorised officers to open discussions with staff and other interested parties in respect of certain savings proposals.</p> <p>(Exempt information reason – Paragraph 1 – Information relating to employees).</p>	
	<p>(b) Devonshire Park Theatre In-House Productions. The Cabinet agreed to the Council promoting its own productions for the 2002 summer season in the Devonshire Park Theatre and to the payment of honoraria to three staff in respect of the successful 2001 summer season.</p> <p>(Exempt information reason – Paragraph 1 – Information relating to employees).</p>	
	<p>(c) Sale of Land in Cade Street. The Cabinet approved the sale of land in Cade Street for the purposes of building additional garages.</p> <p>(Exempt information reason – Paragraph 9 – Terms of a proposed contract).</p>	
	<p>(d) Domestic Gas Contractors to Council Housing. The Cabinet agreed to steps being taken to terminate the existing contract and for a further report to be made to Cabinet concerning contract re-tendering.</p> <p>(Exempt information reasons - Paragraph 9 and 12 – Terms of a proposed contract and information on legal proceedings).</p>	
<p>The meeting closed at 5.05 p.m.</p>		
	<p>G H Marsden</p> <p>Chairman</p>	
<p>(der\P:\cabinet\minutes\01.12.05)</p>		