

# CABINET

Meeting of the

held on Wednesday 6 February 2002

PRESENT:-

Councillor **MARSDEN** (Chairman and Leader of the Council), Councillor **LACEY OBE** (Deputy Chairman),  
Councillors **Mrs GOODALL**, **Mrs MURRAY** and **TAYLOR**.

**114. MINUTES.** The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2002 were submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

**\*115. COUNCIL BUDGET 2002/2003.** Councillor Marsden presented the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services submitted on behalf of the Corporate Management Team.

Councillor Marsden reported on the wide consultation undertaken at key development stages of the budget and of the positive response received from a meeting held on 6 February 2002 with representatives of business and community groups. Councillor Marsden thanked Mrs McHugh and the other officers involved for their work in preparing the budget papers.

The forecast outturn for 2001/02, based on the position at the end of December was an underspend of £67,000. Following an update report to Cabinet on 9 January there had been a significant improvement in the Tourism and Leisure position where the forecast overspend had been reduced to £6,000. This was due to income from theatre productions and the identification of budget savings. It was proposed to fund the following growth items from the underspend.

- Town Centre Retail Development £50,000
- Queen's Golden Jubilee Celebrations £5,000

Councillor Mrs Goodall referred to the success of the theatre productions and reported that on a recent visit, the English Tourism Council had been impressed with the facilities Eastbourne offered to tourists.

It was reported that the government grant settlement for 2002/03 was set at £9,877,000, an increase of 2.3% on 2001/02. The final Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) figure had been set at £13,117,000, an increase of 4.1% on 2001/2002. In providing a percentage increase in grant which was lower than the percentage increase in SSA, the government was expecting the balance to be funded from council tax increases. The percentage increase in council tax at the standard rate needed to bridge the gap was 7.4%. It was reported that the budget proposed an increase in council taxes of 4.5% and a Band D tax of £131.16. Councillor Marsden reported that this was the lowest rise compared to those proposed by the other authorities across East Sussex.

The service and overall budget summaries for 2002/2003 were attached at appendix A to the report. At appendices B and C details of proposed growth items totalling £1,299,000 and savings totalling £797,000 were given.

(2) That the General Fund Revenue Account service budgets for 2002/03 be as set out in appendix A to the report, incorporating the growth and savings detailed at appendices B and C.

(3) That the following growth items be funded from the 2001/02 budget through virement from underspent areas:-

- Town Centre Retail Development £50,000
- Queen's Golden Jubilee Celebrations £5,000

(4) That the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2002/03 be as set out in appendix D to the report, incorporating gross income of £18,787,000 and an equal amount of expenditure including appropriations.

(5) That the capital programme for 2002/03 totalling £6,649,000 plus an estimated carry forward from 2001/02 of £3,599,000 be as set out in appendix E to the report.

(6) That the Director of Finance and Corporate Services be authorised to commit expenditure within the approved capital programme as receipts become available, following consultation with a Cabinet Member.

**\*116. BORROWING LIMIT AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

**POLICY FOR 2002/03.** Councillor Lacey presented the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services. The report was submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 providing for the local authority to make certain determinations at the commencement of each financial year. A new Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services had recently been published by CIPFA to apply from 1 April 2002. The Code represented a substantial revision from the previous 1996 Code and continued to be a proper practice under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and as such was required to be formally adopted by the Council.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported that the annual fee paid to the Council's Treasury Advisors included consultations on the Council's borrowing limit and that the advice provided was impartial.

**RESOLVED:** (1) That for the year 2002/03:-

(a) An overall borrowing limit of £42m be determined.

(b) The short term borrowing limit be set at 15% of the overall borrowing limit.

(c) The proportion of the total amount of interest payable by the Council which may be at variable rates be up to 25%.

(2) That the Council be recommended to:-

(a) Adopt the key recommendations of CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the Code) as described in section 4 of that Code.

(b) Create and maintain, as the corner-stones for effective Treasury Management:

- A Treasury Management Policy Statement, stating the policies and objectives of its Treasury Management activities.

the Cabinet and that the execution and administration of treasury management decisions be the responsibility of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services who will act in accordance with the Council's policy statement and treasury management practices, and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.

(e) Determine that its Treasury Management Policy Statement be as follows:-

(i) The Council defines its treasury management activities as:

"The management of its cashflows, banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective management and control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks".

(ii) The Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and management and control of risks to be the prime criteria by which effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of its treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the Council.

(iii) The Council acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievements of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principle of achieving best value in treasury management, and to employing suitable performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management.

	<p><b>*117. COUNCIL HOUSING RENT SETTING AND OUTLINE OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET FOR 2002/03.</b></p> <p>Councillor Mrs Murray presented the report of the Head of Housing Management regarding the rent setting levels for 2002/2003 for all of the Council's housing tenants and outlining the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2002/03. At its meeting on 5 December 2001, Cabinet agreed that the Council's housing rents would in future be set in accordance with the governments proposals for bringing rent levels of Council and Housing Association housing together and to achieve rent convergence over a ten year period.</p> <p>It was reported that the net effect on rent levels for 2002/03 would be an average increase of 1.8%. The required rent changes varied from property to property and the full range of average rent changes and the link to property type was set out in appendix 1 of the report. A report on rent restructuring and the proposed increases had been submitted to the Tenants Advisory Group on 28 January 2002.</p> <p>As a result of the changes to the rent setting process it was no longer practicable to align garage rent changes to those of the housing stock. It was therefore proposed to increase garage rents by 3% in line with the Councils other charging increases.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Council be recommended:-</p> <p>(1) To agree that the housing rents are set with an average increase of 1.8% with effect from the 1 April 2002.</p> <p>(2) To agree that garage rents are set with an increase of 3% in line with the other charging increases set by the Council.</p>
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**\*118. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION STRATEGY 2002 TO 2005.** Councillor Marsden presented the report of the Director of Housing, Health and Community Finance regarding the draft Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy for 2002-2005. The revised strategy had been prepared following wide consultation with the community, including surveys, questionnaires, focus group sessions and the analysis of information from organisations to determine both crime reduction priorities and geographic areas to be targeted.

The draft had been now been circulated for consultation to all Members of the Council, statutory and voluntary agencies, Tenants and Residents' representatives and members of the Police Consultative Forum and was available on the Eastbourne Borough Council Website. The final version of the strategy, following any required amendments as a result of the consultation process, would be published on 1 April 2002.

The activities of the Crime and Reduction Partnership during the 2002-2005 strategy would address the following six priority areas which reflected a balance between the demands of the community that have been evidenced through consultation and data collection exercises and Government crime reduction targets.

- The Fear of Crime
- Violent Crime
- Domestic Burglary
- Substance Misuse
- Vehicle Crime
- Anti-Social Behaviour

Each section of the strategy contained targets and actions. The actions would be monitored in order to assess their effectiveness in achieving crime and disorder reduction targets. Targets for violent crime, domestic burglary and vehicle crime would be taken each year from the Sussex Policing Plan. Councillor Marsden thanked Justine Armstrong for her work to produce the draft strategy.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council be recommended to endorse the draft Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy 2002 to 2005.

<p><b>119.</b></p>	<p><b>BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS.</b> Councillor Lacey presented the report of the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities regarding the concept of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) which formed the basis for a proposal featured in the December 2001 Local Government White Paper. The principle aim of a BID was that Business Ratepayers in an area form a partnership to deliver development improvement via an agreed supplementary rate that is collected for them by the Council and given to the BID Partnership to spend on agreed priorities. The Regeneration Team would promote the concept to local business organisations and partnerships encouraging them to work with the Council and other stakeholders to work up BID proposals. The proposed launch date for the initiative was April 2004.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the concept of Business Improvement Districts be launched with the local business community and that the Cabinet work jointly with stakeholders to develop emerging proposals.</p>
<p><b>120.</b></p>	<p><b>EUROPEAN FUNDING.</b> Councillor Lacey presented the report of the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities regarding current European funding activity.</p> <p>Additional information on the elements common to European Funding programmes and an explanation of the Structural Funds was set out in appendix 1 of the report.</p> <p>With regard to European funding programmes most relevant to East Sussex local authorities, it was proposed that consideration be given to developing a bid for submission to the next round of applications in 2003 to the EQUAL programme. This programme aimed to test new methods of combating all forms of discrimination and inequality in the labour market for those in work and those seeking work in transnational co-operation. EQUAL had nine themes which broadly matched the Corporate Aims of a Prosperous Place and a Place for Everyone, including: employability; entrepreneurship; adaptability and equal opportunities for women and men. It was agreed that a bid should be developed for employability and entrepreneurship only.</p> <p>Following the success of the INTERREG II programme, a further programme would follow for 2002-2006 worth £70m for the area East Sussex and Kent on the UK side and Seine-Maritime, Somme and Nord-Pas de Calais in France. A cross border project would include, in principle, partners on both sides of the border or otherwise would be required to demonstrate interest and impact for the overall cross-border region. The topics eligible covered six main themes as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Developing a wider maritime region and its urban and rural areas.</li> <li>(b) Reinforcing the cohesion of the cross border area bordering the Channel and the promotion of projects contributing to the competitiveness of the region and the creation of employment.</li> <li>(c) Involving citizens more closely and taking account of their needs.</li> <li>(d) Supporting sustainable development of the area</li> <li>(e) Promoting the use of Information and Communication Technology</li> <li>(f) Promoting Equal Opportunities and social Inclusion.</li> </ul> <p>The Interreg III Programme would become active in Spring 2002 and it was noted that in order to take advantage of the funding opportunities the required resources in officer time and matched funding would need to be identified.</p>

(4) That in the light of resolution 3 above, consideration be given to a bid for EQUAL in the next appropriate round for the themes of employability and entrepreneurship only.

(5) That the Cabinet receive further reports about nominations to Interreg Panels and Steering Groups as details emerge.

	<p><b>121. ARRANGEMENTS FOR SINGLE REGENERATION BUDGET SCHEME MANAGEMENT.</b> Councillor Lacey presented the report of the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities regarding a proposed revision of the arrangements for the management of the SRB Scheme. A number of changes in the organisation and management of the scheme had been identified as a result of discussions with the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA). The Reborn Board was currently the only strategic body responsible for the guidance and delivery of the projects. It was proposed that the Council as Accountable Body should take a more pro-active role as the responsible body for the financial management and delivery of the scheme and also the overall success including the outputs of the scheme.</p> <p>The creation of an Executive Team was proposed comprising the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities, Head of Regeneration, SRB Manager and the Financial Strategy Accountant. The team would oversee the quarterly claims procedure and financial propriety, ensure effective delivery of the scheme, produce feedback quickly to the Board and project officers and be proactive in steering the partnership and developing the scheme. It was noted that the Reborn Board had agreed the proposals.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the Cabinet endorses and agrees the establishment of the Executive Team as part of the revised arrangements for the management and administration of the Single Regeneration Budget Scheme.</p>	
	<p><b>122. EASTBOURNE HERITAGE ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCHEME (HERS)- PROPOSED GRANT OFFER - 13 SEASIDE/1 ELMS ROAD.</b> Councillor Mrs Murray presented the report of the Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities regarding the proposed offer of a grant under the Eastbourne Heritage Economic Regeneration scheme for roof and structural repairs at 13 Seaside Road/1 Elms Avenue. Although grant levels per property were normally limited to a maximum of £25,000, the proposed scheme was regarded as exceptional because of the major scale of the problems with the building and its importance to the townscape of Seaside Road. Councillor Mrs Murray thanked the Officers involved for the work undertaken in consultation with English Heritage.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That a Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme grant of up to £35,000 be offered in respect of the scheme at 13 Seaside Road/1 Elms Road.</p>	

123.	<p><b>SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK - COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION.</b> Councillor Taylor presented the report of the Directors of Tourism and Leisure and Planning, Regeneration and Amenities regarding the Council's response to the public consultation on the creation of a South Downs National Park. This consultation phase had commenced on 27 November 2001 with comments being sought by 28 February 2002. It was noted that a formal consultation with local authorities would take place during the summer 2002. The report set out proposed responses to the boundary and administration issues put forward for consideration by the Countryside Agency. Councillor Taylor thanked Mr Cookson and Mr Smith for their work in preparing the response.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That the response set out in appendix 3 to the report be approved as this Council's response to the Countryside Agency's consultation on the South Downs National Park boundary and administration.</p>	
124.	<p><b>FUNDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUPPORTING PEOPLE LEGISLATION.</b> Councillor Mrs Murray presented the report of the Housing Strategy and Development Manager regarding progress of the implementation of the Supporting People legislation and seeking agreement to continue Countywide joint funding.</p> <p>The introduction of Supporting People by the Government in April 2000 fundamentally changed the way in which supported accommodation was planned, managed and funded. From April 2003 housing benefit would no longer pay for service changes relating to support and counselling. This affected all rented supported housing, including retirement housing and the Lifeline service and Care and Repair. Prior to that date service providers must negotiate interim contracts which would ensure their projects continue to be funded when the new scheme came into effect.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> (1) That the procedures for administering the Supporting People legislation be noted and that the payment of Eastbourne's allocation of £20,539 into the single Countywide budget for the co-ordinated preparation and administration of Supporting People for 2002/03 be approved.</p> <p>(2) That such agreement be dependant upon all other East Sussex local authorities making the same commitment and continual full representation of the Council on all strategic, operational and consultative steering bodies.</p>	
125.	<p><b>JOINT STAFF COMMITTEE.</b> The draft minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Committee held on 28 January 2002 were submitted for the Cabinet's information.</p> <p><b>NOTED.</b></p>	

126.	<p><b>EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC.</b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> 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>	
127.	<p><b>SUMMARY OF CONFIDENTIAL PROCEEDINGS FOR INFORMATION.</b></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><b>(a) Domestic Gas Contracts to Council Housing.</b> The Cabinet agreed arrangements for repackaging the Domestic Gas repair and servicing contracts.</p> <p>(Exempt information reason – Paragraphs 9 and 12 - Terms of a proposed contract and information on legal proceedings).</p>	
	<p><b>(b) Premature Retirement - Legal and Property Services.</b> The Cabinet agreed a request for premature retirement.</p> <p>(Exempt information reason – Paragraph 1 - Information relating to an employee).</p>	
The meeting closed at 4.55 p.m.		
		<p><b>G H Marsden</b></p> <p><b>Chairman</b></p>
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