

**Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet**

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 at 6.00 p.m.**  
**in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley**

**Present:**

Councillor P Lowe (Leader – Chair)  
Councillor S Turner (Deputy Leader)  
Councillors K Ahmed, H Bills, D Branwood, T Crumpton, J Foster,  
R Harris and G Partridge.

Opposition Group Members nominated to attend meetings of the Cabinet:-

Councillors P Harley, R James, L Jones, P Miller and M Wood (Conservative Group); Councillors P Brothwood and S Etheridge (UKIP Group)

**Officers:**

S Norman (Chief Executive), J Millar (Strategic Director (Environment, Economy and Housing)), P Tart (Strategic Director (Resources and Transformation)), D Harkins (Chief Officer (Health and Wellbeing)), I Newman (Chief Officer (Finance and Legal Services)), M Bowsher (Chief Officer (Adult Social Care)) and S Griffiths (Democratic Services Manager) together with other officers.

**Observers:**

Councillors N Barlow, A Goddard, I Kettle, N Neale, K Turner and D Vickers

60 **Apology for Absence**

An apology for absence from the meeting was received on behalf of Councillor D Sparks.

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61 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

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## **Revenue Budget Strategy and Setting the Council Tax 2015/16**

A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Chief Officer (Finance and Legal Services) was submitted on the deployment of General Fund revenue resources, a number of statutory calculations that had to be made by the Council and the Council Tax to be levied for the period from 1st April, 2015 to 31st March, 2016.

During the discussion on this item, Cabinet Members responded to specific questions and issues raised by Opposition Spokespersons concerning the budget proposals. The points made were noted and requests for further information would be dealt with as necessary. The report and recommendations would be submitted to the Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2015.

Resolved

- (1) That the Council be recommended to approve:-
- (a) The budget for 2015/16, and service allocations (including the Public Health budget) as set out in the report.
  - (b) That the statutory amounts required to be calculated for the Council's spending, contingencies and contributions to reserves; income and use of reserves; transfers to and from its collection fund; and council tax requirement, as referred to in Section 67(2)(b) be now calculated by the Council for the year 2015/16 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as shown in Appendix 10 of the report.
  - (c) That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts in Appendix 10, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, agrees the following levels of Council Tax for Dudley Council services for 2015/16:

### Valuation Bands

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>
£857.89	£1000.88	£1143.85	£1286.84
<u>E</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>G</u>	<u>H</u>
£1572.80	£1858.77	£2144.73	£2573.68

- (d) The revision of 2014/15 budgets to reflect the variances set out in paragraphs 9 and 11 of the report.

- (e) The Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in the report.
- (2) That the Council be recommended to determine that a referendum relating to Council Tax increases is not required in accordance with Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (3) That Cabinet Members, the Chief Executive and Directors be authorised to take all necessary steps to implement the proposals contained in the report, in accordance with the Council's Financial Management Regime.
- (4) That the Chief Executive and Directors be reminded to exercise strict budgetary control in accordance with the Financial Management Regime and care and caution in managing the 2015/16 budget, particularly in the context of commitments into later years and the impact that any overspending in 2015/16 will have on the availability of resources to meet future budgetary demands.
- (5) That the Chief Officer (Finance and Legal Services) be authorised to approve the realignment of budgets in due course to reflect the new Directorate structure, including the allocation of the £1m savings from the review of senior management.
- (6) That consultation on proposals to remove local authority transport provision for children attending specialist nurseries be extended and that further work be undertaken with parents to identify ways to deliver the planned saving whilst mitigating the impact on children and their families.
- (7) That the creation of Budget Challenge Teams be approved, as set out in paragraph 55 of the report.
- (8) That the Council be recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2015 as set out in Appendix 12 to the report.

(This was a Key Decision with the Council and Cabinet being named as Decision Takers).

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The meeting ended at 6.45p.m.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL