

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 24 January 2013

Present: Councillor S Williams (Vice-Chair in the Chair)

Councillors L Fraser J Stapleton
D Mitchell M Sullivan
C Muspratt KJ Williams
T Norbury

Deputies: Councillors L Rowlands (In place of D Elderton)
D Roberts (In place of J Crabtree)

Cabinet Member Councillor H Smith

45 **COUNCILLOR D ELDERTON**

The Chair gave Councillor Elderton's apologies and the Committee expressed their best wishes to Councillor Elderton who was currently unwell in hospital.

46 **MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to consider whether they had any disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

No such declarations were made.

47 **BUDGET 2013/16 - INITIAL PROPOSALS**

The Committee were invited to consider the following savings options agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 December, 2012 (minute 144 refers) and which fell under the remit of this Committee.

Budget Option	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	2015/16 £000	Total £000	Requires formal staff consultation
Senior Management Re-structure					
- Re-structure - Technical Services	250	0	0	250	Yes
Deletion of vacant posts					
- Pest Control	30	0	0	30	No

Mr R Beresford, Head of Regulation, informed the Committee that the item 'Restructure - Technical Services' shouldn't have appeared as a separate item in the list as the saving was part of the global savings for management restructuring. Responding to a question he advised the Committee that he understood that the table of savings in the Cabinet minute had been prepared by the Finance Department. The Cabinet Report containing the table had been referred to all five themed Overview and Scrutiny Committees as the savings covered a number of different areas.

Councillor Fraser expressed her great concern at the absence of the Interim Director of Technical Services or the Head of Service, Waste and Regulation and a Finance Department representative to explain the savings to this special meeting.

Mr Beresford explained the saving to be made in respect of the deletion of the vacant pest control post. A number of operational changes had been introduced to reduce the costs of the service. He informed the Committee of the successes of the service, including for the treatment of rats and, in line with the majority of Local Authorities, there was no intention to introduce charges for the treatment of rats because of the public health risk. After some considerable discussion on this issue Members expressed the view that the service provided for the treatment of rat infestations should remain free.

Councillor Mitchell stated that he could not completely agree with the comments of the Leader of the Council in the preamble to the minute.

Resolved – That the Cabinet minute 144 be noted.