

**Extract from Cabinet Minutes
15 February 2011**

A12. FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2011

Councillor Kenyon presented this budget and noted there was a 14% reduction in funding and this had been a difficult budget on which there had been a large amount of consultation. She thanked The Head of Finance and Asset Management, Nick Edwards and the Corporate Finance Manager, Kerry Metcalfe, for their hard work on this budget.

Nick Edwards thanked his staff for their hard work on this report. Noted that this was a draft report. The final government settlement had been announced and there was an increase of £47,000 funding and he suggested that this was put into the contingency funds.

Mr Edwards went through the changes that had been introduced. Noted that the report proposed the reinstatement of the monies for the Spa scheme by Yorkshire Forward.

It was noted that Scarborough Borough Council had £200,000 of seaside reward grant for regeneration and it was proposed that this be applied to support the redevelopment of the Futurist. However North Yorkshire County Council had removed funding for the community partnership;

Mr Edwards advised Cabinet that some of most contentious issues in the budget were the changes to park ranger and the outsourcing of plants from Manor Road. This budget had been very difficult but it had tried to limit the effects of the cuts on the front line service. There was now a need to deliver on these savings and to keep a tight grip on finances.

Councillor Popple stated that he did not support the market testing of outsourcing plants as this undermined the good work being done at Manor Rd. He also asked about the monies from Defra of £1million for Knipe Point and asked if this was guaranteed. The Head of Technical Services, Mr Riby stated that the Council were now well down the road to resolution at Knipe Point and he did not foresee Defra removing the funding for this pathfinder scheme.

Councillor Fox stated that it was ridiculous to suggest that the council did not market test its services to see if there were efficiencies to be made if services were outsourced. The Council had to make savings and he found it incredible that there were not savings to Scarborough Borough Council of the £3.2 million that was spent on the Parks budget.

Councillor Bastiman stated that it was incumbent on this authority to review all services to see what efficiencies could be made. The issue of the nurseries had been discussed for many months and it was incumbent on the Council to discuss this together with the changes to the depot site.

Councillor Kenyon supported the Leader's comments and stated that there could be no sacred cows as part of the budget setting.

Councillor Watson spoke against the removal of the park rangers. He stated that if these were replaced with volunteers this could lead to having vigilantes.

Councillor Fox stated that time recording had shown that 42% of time for park rangers was spent travelling and 24% of their time was spent at Manor road nursery. Only 5% of time was spent patrolling Whitby. They carried out a large number of duties that either duplicated duties or should be done by other services. For example Park Rangers attended fly tipping but this should be done by environmental

health. There was a new post of Community Engagement officer and would be working with volunteers. Noted there was a scheme of Youth Angels who were part of street angels and street safety scheme and these would be able to target areas where there was concern. Councillor Fox believed that improvements could be realised by the changes that were being implemented.

Councillor Jefferson stated that she wanted to compliment all the work that was done by parks and countryside and would be bringing her views to the full council meeting. Councillor Mortimer stated that she was concerned about the information that was being put out to the community on this.

Councillor Haycock stated that the Council should have started working with the community groups before making the changes.

Councillor Dixon stated that this issue had been scrutinised in detail and noted that the service in any event that was not borough wide.

Councillor Lawn stated that he was chair of the task group and noted that there was now a Community Empowerment officer. The Scrutiny review had been very thorough.

Brian Bennett stated that he had proposed this saving two years ago as it had originally been suggested to him by the Parks and Countryside Manager, Roger Burnett. It was noted that Mr Burnett would be working with voluntary groups in the future to deliver a better service.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

- note and endorse the budget proposals set out in this report, in advance of them being presented to Full Council for approval on 25 February; and
- note the responses from the budget consultation.

Reasons:

Full Council must approve the 2011/12 budget and associated Council Tax level, which are incorporated within the Financial Strategy, at its meeting on 25 February 2011. It is important that the Council has consulted with the public and key stakeholders on its budget prior to it being approved, and has taken any feedback received from this consultation into consideration.