

**BUDGET AND
PERFORMANCE PANEL**

4.30 P.M.

31ST JANUARY 2007

PRESENT: Councillors Keith Budden (Chairman), Jim Blakely, Tina Clifford, John Day, Mike Greenall, Tony Johnson, Roger Mace and John Whitelegg

Also present:

Councillors Ian Barker, Paul Gardner, Emily Heath, Stuart Langhorn, Janie Kirkman, Pat Quinton and Robert Redfern

Mrs Jacqui Thompson and Mr Jim Catterall

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Roger Sherlock

Officers in attendance:

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| Mark Cullian | Chief Executive |
| Roger Muckle | Corporate Director (Finance and Performance) |
| Nadine Muschamp | Head of Financial Services |
| Andrew Kipling | Accountant |
| Liz Bateson | Senior Democratic Support Officer |
| Jon Stark | Democratic Support Officer |

39 BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSALS

The Leader of the Council delivered a presentation on the Budget and Policy Framework Proposals for 2007/08. The Leader outlined the process by which proposals were developed in consideration of Cabinet priorities, Council policy and budget proposals.

It was reported that under the proposals, Council Tax had been limited to a rise of 3.9% for 2007/08, the lowest increase for eight years, and the Council's reserves had been strengthened in excess of the Government's recommended level. Members were advised that it was intended for the repairs backlog for the Council's Municipal buildings to be tackled over the next five years and the capital programme included provision for this to be accomplished.

Members were advised that the proposals included some growth to improve services and these included the deployment of Environmental PCSOs, roll out of further phases of the recycling and waste management scheme, the introduction of plastic recycling and the completion of ongoing regeneration projects.

It was noted that much of the Council's medium term financial plans would depend upon the outcome of the Council's submission for unitary status and how the Council chose to implement the provisions of the White Paper on Local Government. It was also reported that success in the unitary bid would secure significant additional resources for the District.

It was reported that the proposals included provision for the renewal of public toilet facilities, further resources to tackle homelessness, particularly amongst young people and victims of domestic violence, increase of affordable housing and action on climate change. Climate change action included a £100k capital programme of energy efficiencies with payback time of 5 years or less and an air quality programme that was due to be implemented in Lancaster and Carnforth.

The Leader answered a number of questions on the Cabinet's budget and policy framework proposals from the Panel and representatives from other organisations.

Resolved:

That the Leader be thanked for his presentation and that Cabinet's budget and policy framework proposals be noted.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 5.37 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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or email jstark@lancaster.gov.uk**