Budget Task Group Minutes

Notes of the meeting of the Budget Task Group held on Tuesday 1 November 2011 at the Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Members present:

Councillor E Anderton
Councillor Brooks
Councillor M Gandhi
Councillor R Gandhi
Councillor Hodgkinson
Councillor Lawrenson
Councillor Lees
Councillor McCann
Councillor MacNaughton
Councillor Martin
Councillor Perkin
Councillor M Vincent

Officers present:
Philippa Davies, Corporate Director of Resources
Peter Foulsham, Scrutiny Officer

BTG. 14 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Anderson and Balmain

BTG. 15 Declarations of Interest

Cllr MacNaughton declared a personal interest in Item 4, in that he worked for a company that sells pest control products (page 32 of agenda papers).

BTG. 16 Minutes of last meeting

Philippa Davies informed members that the current contract with Danfo was for 15 years and 2 months, and not 15 years as stated in the minutes. With that amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 October 2011 were agreed as a true record.
**Fees and Charges**

The Chairman introduced this item, alluding in particular to the key issues that members needed to consider in determining charges which were highlighted in Section 4 of the draft Portfolio Holder Report concerning the ‘Review of Fees and Charges 2012/13’.

Members felt that it was important for charges to keep pace with inflation and discussed the two different levels of increase that had been proposed, namely the Retail Price Index and the Consumer Price Index. It was agreed that the Consumer Price Index for September, which stood at 5.2%, was the most appropriate inflationary index.

Their detailed comments and proposals are covered in the document appended to these minutes.

**Cemeteries**

Members questioned why, when the overall aim of the cemetery service was to break even, the 2011/12 net cost for the Preesall Cemetery was £60,540, significantly higher than Fleetwood Cemetery at £2,300 and Poulton Cemetery at £12,760. The matter was to be investigated and a response provided to the task group for the next meeting. Comparative costs with other neighbouring authorities were also requested.

**Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre**

A revised set of proposals was being prepared for presentation to the next meeting.

**Leisure Centres**

Councillor Martin raised a concern about the opening times of the Leisure Centres, run by the YMCA, for public swimming. This question was to be passed to Wyre’s representative(s) on the YMCA Board.

**Community Centres**

Members discussed the current use of the Community Centre at Garstang. More information about the extent of unused space there was requested.

**Pest Control**

The council currently subsidised pest control treatments by £53 per treatment. There were 314 rodent treatments in 2010/11, amounting to a cost of £16,642 to the council. Following discussion, there was support for continuing a subsidy as it was accepted that there were public health risks.

**Date and time of next meeting**

Tuesday 15 November at 6pm in CR2.
APPENDIX

Review of Fees and Charges 2012/13 – Budget Scrutiny Review – Proposals following meeting 1 November 2011
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Further Information Requested</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning (pre application discussions)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The task group propose that fees should be increased in line with September's CPI of 5.2%.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cemeteries</td>
<td>Can we see some comparable costs for Blackpool and Fylde to assess how Wyre compares?</td>
<td>The task group generally support the principal of ensuring that the cemeteries service breaks-even and therefore would suggest a CPI increase.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cemeteries</td>
<td>Why does Preesall cemetery appear to operate at a significant cost when compared to Fleetwood and Poulton?</td>
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<td>Marine Hall and Thornton Little Theatre</td>
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<td>Held pending further information which will be provided at the next meeting on 15 November 2011.</td>
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<td>Leisure Centres (including pools)</td>
<td>Who are the elected members who represent the Council on the YMCA Board as concerns were expressed about the opening times for public swimming.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Centres</td>
<td>Is there much empty space at this facility?</td>
<td>The task group propose that fees should be increased in line with September's CPI of 5.2%.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Leisure</td>
<td></td>
<td>The task group propose that fees should be increased in line with September's CPI of 5.2%.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Sector Housing Grant Assistance (excluding disabled facilities grant applications)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The task group propose that fees should be increased in line with September's CPI of 5.2%.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pest Control and Drain Clearance</td>
<td>Members note that in respect of the treatment of rodents this often cannot be isolated to one house and therefore are supportive of a continued subsidy in this area.</td>
<td>The task group propose that the fee for rodent control at domestic properties be increased from £30 to £35 and that all other fees should be increased in line with September's CPI of 5.2%.</td>
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<td>Food Safety (excluding Fishery Hygiene and Ship Sanitation Certificates)</td>
<td></td>
<td>The task group propose that fees should be increased in line with September's CPI of 5.2%.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dog Warden</td>
<td></td>
<td>The task group propose that fees should be increased in line with September's CPI of 5.2%.</td>
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