

## MINUTES

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**Meeting:** Group Leaders Meeting with Trade Union Representatives  
**Place:** Council Chamber, Monkton Park, Chippenham, SN15 1ER  
**Date:** Wednesday 6 February 2013  
**Time:** 2.30 - 3.35 pm

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**In attendance:**

Councillor Jane Scott, Leader of the Council, Conservative Group Leader  
Councillor Jon Hubbard, Liberal Democrat Group Leader  
Councillor Nigel Carter, Devizes Guardians Group Leader  
Councillor Ricky Rogers, Labour Group Leader  
Councillor John Thomson, Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Communities and Housing  
Mike Osment, UNISON  
John Hawkins, ATL  
Mike Harrison, NUT  
Alan Tomala, UNITE  
Jenny Fivash, UNISON  
Carlton Brand, Corporate Director, Wiltshire Council  
Michael Hudson, Service Director (Finance), Wiltshire Council  
Barry Pirie, Service Director (Human Resources and Organisational Development), Wiltshire Council  
Joanne Pitt, Service Head - Human Resources Strategy and Policy, Wiltshire Council  
Paul Loach, Head of Service - Human Resources Operations  
Lorraine Nowlan, Human Resources - Operations Manager, Wiltshire Council  
Pam Denton, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Wiltshire Council

**Apologies:**

Sue Anderson, UNISON  
Tina Green, UNISON  
Sue Dawson, ATL  
Jenny Marshall, UNITE  
David Brown, NAHT  
Siobainn Chaplin, CYWU  
Ian Phillips, NASUWT  
David Nicholson, ASCL  
Marion Gatrell, VOICE  
Richard Harris, CYWU

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## **MINUTES**

### 1. **Wiltshire Council's Financial Plan Update 2013/14**

Michael Hudson, Service Director (Finance) presented the Wiltshire Council Financial Plan Update 2013/14.

The Council's budget was £9.852 million down from the previous year when taking into account the 2012/13 government grant and council tax, compared to 2013/14.

The Council was committed to continuing the freeze in Council Tax for the forthcoming year. The budget also included 1% put aside to cover pay inflation increase.

The Council was continuing to invest in key frontline services such as safeguarding vulnerable children/adults and waste, with a total increased investment of £17.804 million.

Procurement had been an area of large savings, such as with £1.2 million saved with regards the Highways Contract, and a saving of £400,000 from the extension of leisure contracts. In total, savings of £27.656 million had been identified for 2013/14. The largest tranche of savings had been achieved through service efficiencies.

The Service Director (Finance) stated the budget for 2012/13 was anticipated to be balanced.

The Leader of the Council welcomed questions from the Trade Union representatives present. There would also be the opportunity to submit questions and comments following the meeting.

The level of central government funding reduction for Wiltshire was raised, and details were given of changes to government formulas, reallocation to academies, and Wiltshire historically receiving back less of its collected Business Support Rate than more deprived areas nationally. Additional funds resulting from the transition of Public Health into the Local Authority were noted, as well as the level of grant from the Educational Support Fund not being released until 31 March 2013.

In response to queries on the level of lobbying to central government undertaken by the Council, The Leader of the Council provided details on officer, partner and cross-party elected member efforts to lobby for the best deal on funding for Wiltshire. The Service Director (Finance) offered to discuss with Trade Unions other ways that they could carry out joint lobbying in future.

The Service Director (Finance) offered to circulate to attendees a link to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) website which demonstrated how Wiltshire's allocation of Business Support Grant funding was

calculated, and offered to engage with the Trade Unions to co-ordinate lobbying efforts for Wiltshire.

It was also noted that there were also further opportunities to make representations when the Budget would be discussed at the following meetings:

- Overview and Scrutiny – 7 February 2013
- Cabinet – 12 February 2013
- Council – 26 February 2013

## 2. **HR Update**

Barry Pirie, Service Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development, had circulated the HR update prior to the meeting.

It was stated engagement with staff was high, with staff surveys in 2011 and 2012, hub visits by senior management, staff forums and other measures in response to requests for greater consultation and engagement, and a strong emphasis on the ideal culture of the council, through the development of the behaviours framework, was being fostered.

Details of redundancies for the council and schools were provided.

The Council has always worked hard in partnership with Trade Union colleagues and professional bodies to limit any impacts on staff at all times. Despite the difficult times, there had been an increase in positive responses, leadership and communication as reported through the staff surveys.

## 3. **AOB**

Carlton Brand, Corporate Director, offered to liaise with the Union representatives and attend branch meetings to engage and offer updates.

### **ACTIONS:**

- 1. The Service Director (Finance) to discuss options for future lobbying of Government on funding settlements with local Trade Unions.**
- 2. The Service Director (Finance) to circulate a link to the DCLG funding settlement website.**