

MINUTES

Meeting:	Group Leaders Meeting with Non-Domestic Ratepayers
Place:	Council Chamber, Monkton Park, Chippenham, SN15 1ER
Date:	Wednesday 6 February 2013
Time:	<u>4.00 - 4.30 pm</u>

Please direct any enquiries on these Minutes to Kieran Elliott of Democratic Services, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN. Direct line 01225 718504 or email kieran.elliott@wiltshire.gov.uk

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
Carlton Brand, Corporate Director, Wiltshire Council
Michael Hudson, Service Director (Finance), Wiltshire Council
Pam Denton, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Wiltshire Council
Ken Teal, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

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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.

Details were provided of the central government formula for calculating the grant to Wiltshire from collected business rates, and the current multiplier for business rates was stated to be 46.2p for those with a rateable value under £18,000 and 47.1p for those with a rateable value over £18,000.

The Leader of the Council welcomed questions from the Non-Domestic ratepayer present. There would also be the opportunity to submit questions and comments following the meeting.

The Leader and Deputy Leader provided details of Council investment in superfast broadband to cover 91% of Wiltshire by 2016 and would be capable of handling all streaming requirements of businesses for the region.

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