

Annual Business Rate Payers

Minutes

Monday, 15 February 2016 at 09:30

PRESENT :

Councillor Thirtle (in the Chair), Councillors Annison, T Wainwright and Walker.

Ms K Sly (Interim Section 151 Officer), Mrs D Summers (Group Manager - Resources), Mrs S Wintle (Member Services Officer)

Mr J Newman (Town Centre Partnership), Mr M Westrup (Federation of Small Businesses)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Grey and Councillor Plant.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no Declarations of Interest at the meeting.

3 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Welcome and introductions were carried out.

4 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6 February were received.

5 THE BUDGET 2016/17

The Committee received and considered the Interim Section 151 Officers report on the Budget 2016/17.

The Interim Section 151 Officer reported on the Local Government finance Settlement key points, Members were advised that the settlement would last for four years from

2016/17 to 2019/20 and that it would then be subject to a Efficiency Plan.

It was reported that based on Government assumptions the core spending power assumptions for GYBC would be based on the following :-

- Revenue Support Grant - Reductions of 15% to 20% Per annum, £2m in 2019/20.
- Business Rates Baseline Funding - RPI increase per annum.
- Council Tax Income - Annual Tax Base Growth based on previous years, Increases to Council tax - 2016/17 and 2019/20 by £5 per annum.
- New Homes Bonus - 2016/17 current allocation, 2017/18 pro rata of national funding and four year scheme.

It was reported that as from 2021 it is assumed that Revenue Support Grants will no longer be available.

The Section 151 Officer reported on the Local retention of Business Rates, the splitting of Business Rate Revenue and Business Rates relief.

It was reported that the New homes bonus - consultation sets out proposals for a reduction in the number of years for which the bonus is paid from the current 6 year to 4, and that the following penalties would be in place :-

- Local Plan not submitted
- Delay in adoption of Local Plan
- Reductions where homes approved on appeal

It was noted that these changes had been proposed for 2017/18.

The Section 151 Officer reported on the emerging Business Strategy for 2016 and beyond as follows :-

- Strategic Asset Management - The development of a strategic approach to GYBC's assets
- Build the Business Rate Base - the Development of a strategy to support new and growing businesses
- Increase the Council Tax Base
- Make sure the the Council operates as effectively and efficiently as possible.

The representative from the Federation of Small Businesses asked in relation to the Business Rate retention in GYBC and other Authorities.

A Member expressed concern in regard to the DCLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) budget and GYBC.

A question was raised in regard to the Business rates re valuation next year, Jonathan Newman, Town Centre Partnership asked had this impact been taken into account, and was advised that this had not and that any changes would be flagged as a risk.

The representative from the Federation of Small Businesses questioned the retail income for Great Yarmouth, the Section 151 Officer advised that a project was in working progress together with North Norfolk District Council and that once complete further advice could then be given.

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Section 151 Officer asked that Members considered other methods of receiving the Annual Business Rate payers statutory information. After discussions Members indicated that they would be happy to receive information electronically through the web.

The meeting ended at: 10:05