

# **RESOURCES TASK GROUP**

**12<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1. Minutes - Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009 - confirmed.**
- 2. Variance Report - tabled.**
- 3. Vacancy - Temporary Office Manager JDLC to cover maternity leave approved.**
- 4. Remit of RTG – information to be reviewed at next meeting identified.**
- 5. Date of next meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2009, 10.00 a.m.**

## RESOURCES TASK GROUP

**Minutes of meeting of Resources Task Group held in the McKinley Room, Riada House on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at 10.00am.**

**In the Chair** Alderman J Simpson

**Present** Aldermen: F Campbell, H Connolly, J Simpson  
Councillors: M McCamphill, E Robinson

**In Attendance** Chief Executive, Director of Central & Leisure Services,  
Head of Corporate & Development Services

### 1. Minutes - Meeting held 12<sup>th</sup> January 2009

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell seconded by Alderman Connolly and **AGREED:**

*That the minutes of the Group's last meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> January, as circulated, be confirmed as a correct record.*

### 2. Variance Report

The variance report at 9 months ended 31 December 2009, as circulated, was considered. The Director of Central & Leisure Services advised that the overall surplus was £120,000. She drew particular attention to substantial increase in energy costs, compressed by increased income in JDLC and salaries and wages budgets, although the situation would change when an instalment of back pay paid in March 09. She advised on energy saving measures introduced to reduce energy costs for the remainder of the financial year and gave details of adverse variances:

- Sports Development – Additional courses funded by income
- Community Services – only 6 months grant received
- Finance – new post not included in budget
- Bank interest – reduction in level of funds to be invested and interest rates
- Waste disposal – disposal charges (tonnage) less than budget
- Waste collection – vehicle maintenance, brown bin recycling
- Building Control – new computer software – (agreed to be funded from reserve) to be funded by loan and reduction in fees and property certificate income
- Grounds maintenance – wages 90% at 9 months – off set by cemetery budget, hired plant and maintenance/repairs to equipment
- Community safety 100% funded

The Chief Executive in response to questions advised on attention being given to regulate heat controls in Town Hall which did not have an air conditioning system.

### 3. Vacancy

The Maternity Cover for Office Manager Post at JDLC, with effect from June 2009 for up to 12 months. This post is essential to service delivery and it is recommended that temporary cover be provided through internal trawl within Council and recruitment, either for the post or any vacancy arising.

It was proposed by Alderman Campbell, seconded by Councillor McCamphill and **AGREED:**

***To recommend that temporary Office Manager, JDLC, be recruited through internal trawl within Council and recruitment, either for the post or any vacancy arising, to cover maternity leave, for a period of up to 12 months from June 2009***

#### **4. Remit of RTG**

The suggestion that consideration be given to extending the remit of the Resources Task Group was raised during the rates process (*at Council Meeting 9/2/09*). Copy of the RTG Terms of Reference and policy on filling new and existing vacant posts, were circulated.

Members noted that while there was no consideration being given at present to redundancy and reassurance had been given to staff in this regard, if Council wished to achieve savings on current depleted budgets to implement capital projects, this could only be secured through reducing service(s) or level of service.

It was noted that a redundancy policy, on which consultation with trade unions was necessary, was being developed as it was good practice to have a policy in place. The Chief Executive advised that a redundancy policy required the employer to explore all options before moving to redundancy. He advised that the vacancy control policy will address the needs of the new cluster council and is a separate issue from the redundancy policy.

Committee discussed cost reduction measures implemented by other councils, including not filling vacant posts, closing/reducing opening hours of facilities, termination of fixed term contracts, ban on overtime, withdrawal of service on public holidays. The Chair reported on representations from Causeway Coast and Glens RTO and Causeway Coast & Glens Heritage Trust for reinstatement of their contributions.

The Chair advised he had asked the Director of Central and Leisure Services for the following information for the group to consider:

1. details of all vacant posts and cost of covering posts, ie agency costs
2. details of all fixed term contracts – position, department, date of termination
3. details of overtime worked in 07/08 and 08/09 to date, per department
4. details of any contractual overtime – cost 08/09
5. details of services provided on public holidays
6. estimate of cost of heating Council Buildings

The Director of Borough Services had already provided the Chair with information as requested at 5. & 6. for his directorate.

#### **5. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the group meet again on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2009, 10.00am , to consider the information requested by the Chair.

The meeting concluded at 12.05 pm