



MINUTES of the OPEN section of the meeting of the OVERVIEW and SCRUTINY Committee held on TUESDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2004 at 9.30 a.m. at SOUTHWARK TOWN HALL, PECKHAM ROAD, LONDON SE5 8UB

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Kim HUMPHREYS (Chair)  
Councillors Linda MANCHESTER, Barrie HARGROVE, Eliza MANN, Andy SIMMON, Neal WATSON and Tony ECKERSLEY

**OFFICER** Shelley Burke - Head of Overview & Scrutiny  
**SUPPORT:** Stephanie Dunstan – Scrutiny Team  
Ian Hughes – Corporate Strategy  
Rachel Prosser – Senior Lawyer  
Keith Brown- Chief Financial Officer

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr John Friary, Cllr Gavin O'Brien.

**NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMED URGENT**

None.

**DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

**RECORDING OF MEMBERS' VOTES**

Council Procedure Rule 1.17(5) allows a Member to record her/his vote in respect of any motions and amendments. Such requests are detailed in the following Minutes. Should a Member's vote be recorded in respect to an amendment, a copy of the amendment may be found in the Minute File and is available for public inspection.

The Committee considered the items set out on the agenda, a copy of which has been incorporated in the Minute File. Each of the following paragraphs relates to the item bearing the same number on the agenda.

Cllr Humphreys opened the meeting at 9:40am.

1. **BUDGET SCRUTINY- REPORT OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY: BUDGET MAKING PROCESS 2004/05.**

Scrutiny Officers handed out supplemental information about the Item [Report of Finance and Economic Development Scrutiny to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Scrutiny of the Budget Making Process for 2004/05]

The Chair [ Cllr Humphreys] introduced the item and invited Cllr Eckersley to present to the Committee on the Item.

Cllr Eckersley thanked the Committee and went through the recommendations contained within the Report of Finance and Economic Development Scrutiny to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Scrutiny of the Budget Making Process for 2004/05 (1 (i)- (v) ).

The Chair invited questions from the Committee.

Cllr Simmons directed his question to Mr. Keith Brown [Chief Financial Officer] and asked him what would be the implications of delaying the budget setting process?

Mr. Brown responded that legally the Council had until the 11<sup>th</sup> March to set the Council Tax levels, but that currently Southwark Council is at the front of the queue to issue Council Tax bills and start receiving Council tax and if they wished to keep this position, everything must be finalized by 25<sup>th</sup> February. If Southwark went beyond the 25<sup>th</sup> February there would be considerable loss of revenue in collecting Council Tax.

The Chair asked Mr. Brown to clarify the question of the queue.

Mr Brown reiterated that according to the Liberata timetable, Southwark is at the front of the queue to issue bills and collect Council Tax. However if they do not set Council Tax before the 25<sup>th</sup> February other Councils will have confirmed their Council Tax levels and will get given the position at the front of the queue.

Cllr Watson asked whether it was the first time a 'Challenge Panel'?

Mr. Brown responded that this was the first time they had been named a 'Challenge Panel', and that there were similar exercises held last year.

The Chair expressed concern with the fact that the Finance and Economic Development Scrutiny Sub – Committee did not receive requested information from the Schools Forum.

The Chair asked if the recommendations contained in the Report of Finance and Economic Development Scrutiny to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Scrutiny of the Budget Making Process for 2004/05 were a unanimous decision.

Cllr Eckersley replied that the recommendations were unanimous.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That OSC endorses the recommendations of the Finance and Economic Development Scrutiny Sub – Committee scrutiny report on Budget Making Process for 2004/5.

2. That OSC add the following to Recommendation 2 (ii):

*Whilst the provision of information has improved from the previous year, progress still needs to be made.*

The Meeting Closed at 9.55am

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**