

**Committee: Finance & Administration**

**Agenda Item**

**Date: 24 March 2011**

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**Title: Lead Officer's Report**

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Item for information

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## **Introduction**

1. This report updates Members on matters arising since the last meeting that are not otherwise on this Agenda, and other items of interest.

## **2011/12 Budget**

2. On 24 February Full Council approved the 2011/12 budget in accordance with the recommendations of this Committee.

## **Visit by the Comptroller and Auditor General**

3. On 25 February the Comptroller and Auditor General and Head of the National Audit Office, Amyas Morse, visited UDC as part of his research and development of the post-Audit Commission external audit and inspection framework. The purpose of the visit was to give Mr Morse an understanding of district council services, how a district council operates, pressures we are facing and how these are being managed, and to obtain our views on external audit. UDC is the only district council being visited by Mr Morse. UDC was approached by the NAO on the recommendation of CIPFA's Chief Executive.

## **Revenues & Benefits Partnership**

4. The Joint Committee met on 23 February. Both partners remain committed to establishing a shared service with effect from October 2011. Recruitment of a project manager is taking place. The project manager will be introduced to Members at the Joint Committee meeting on 23 March.

## **Single Persons Discount Review**

5. Members will recall that an exercise is underway to identify and remove ineligible Council Tax Single Persons Discounts. A minor dispute has arisen on the sharing of the costs of the exercise. Essex County Council and Essex Fire Authority have agreed to meet their share of the costs, in proportion to the increase in income that will be received, but Essex Police Authority has thus far declined to give a similar undertaking. The district council CFOs have asked the Police Authority Treasurer to facilitate a reconsideration of this position.

## **Pension Fund**

6. The Essex County Council Pension Fund Board was due to meet on 9 March to formally set the funding strategy. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

**Stephen Joyce**

**Assistant Chief Executive – Finance**

**8 March 2011**