

cuts bulletin

no.8

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CUTS VOTED THROUGH

£10.3 million axed from budget

The "wall of resistance" to the cuts which Council Leader, Ted Knight once promised to build around Lambeth was breached on Wednesday night when the Policy and Resources Committee voted to cut next years budget by £10.3 million.

The "cuts package" had been hammered out by the Labour Councillors at a group meeting on Monday night with only 3 members voting against it.

It is based on 10% cuts in each committee's non-capital spending. Overtime is to be cut back by £700,000 and Council vehicles will be switched to a leasing system, saving another £700,000 in "Council wide" savings of £1,400,000. The package, as approved at Wednesday nights meeting, is as follows:-

Council Wide Items	1,400,000
Social Services Committee	2,469,000
Housing Committee	1,947,700
Public Services Committee	594,500
Amenity Services Committee	900,000
Health & Consumer Services Committee	237,000
Town Planning Committee	151,500
Community Affairs Committee	100,000
Economic Activity and Employment Committee	39,600
Management Services Sub-Committee	2,469,000
TOTAL PROPOSED REDUCTIONS	£ 10,308,300

there will have to be some "redeployment". Some of these are included in the "cuts package" but the majority are concentrated in the Borough Development Department, where up to 100 architects, surveyors and engineers may have to be "redeployed" as a result of government cut backs in the building programme.

The salaries of all staff in Borough Development have to be funded through the capital or building programme. The Housing Investment Programme and other capital allocations have been cut back so much further this year that BDD have estimated that, on the basis of the proposed capital programme (which has not yet been finally agreed) there is a shortfall of up to £1 million on the funding for salaries. This is equivalent to 80-100 staff.

The Council is not considering a general policy of early retirements or voluntary redundancy and there are no proposals for such a policy in the current package.

The package does not include a formal freeze on recruitment but Ted Knight has advised

Special Branch Meeting

25 march 1981

ace cinema

The Labour Group have reaffirmed their pledge of "no redundancies" but say that

the branch that they will be seeking to freeze approximately 200 white collar posts during the year, on a selective basis. The number of vacant posts is also to rise through the raising of the "vacancy discount" in each directorate, by an average of 2%. The Council propose to save a total of £1.5 million in this way, with the major proportion "saved" from non-manual salaries, as they will not be seeking to freeze manual posts.

The Council also hopes to cut running costs by closing two Council buildings, moving departments in to "share" with others. There are definite proposals to shut 91 Clapham High Street (Amenities) and tentative proposals to shut 55 Leigham Court Road (Borough Development).

The effect of the cuts on jobs and services is not yet clear as a detailed breakdown is not yet available. Management are now being asked to revise the draft estimates in accordance with the cuts in spending. The new estimates will be considered at a special meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on Friday, 20th March, before the rate is finally decided at the full Council meeting on 25th March.

The Executive Committee, at a Special Meeting on Tuesday, 10 March, resolved "to continue to do everything possible within existing branch and national policy to protect our members' jobs and the services to the community that we provide". It was also decided that each Directorat Shop Stewards Committee should determine, as far as possible, the effects of the cuts in their directorate. As soon as this can be done, Directorate and/or Sectional meetings should be called to inform members.

A branch meeting will be held at 10.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 25th March, the same day as the Council meeting to fix the rate.

Members are strongly advised NOT TO IMPLEMENT CUTS OR CHANGES IN PROCEDURE until they receive advice from their Shop Stewards Committee.

Members are also asked to advise their Shop Steward if they are instructed to make cuts or change procedures. It is essential that the branch is aware of any moves to implement any part of the cuts package.

The latest details of the cuts, as presented to the Policy and Resources Committee are given below.

Community Affairs

This committee programme includes the Public Relations Division. The "staffing re-organisation" involves redeployment of staff "since there are no vacancies in PR

at the moment". Grants to neighbourhood councils are being cut by nearly 20%. Grants to other voluntary organisations (not yet specified) to be cut by £13,000

PROPOSED REDUCTIONS IN NET EXPENDITURE

	£
Staffing reorganisation	22,500
Central Publicity	39,000
Discontinue Ward consultation	9,500
Net grants to Neighbourhood Councils	14,000
Other net grants	13,000
Neighbourhood Councils printing and stationery votes	2,000

Environmental Health and Consumer Services

The "increased vacancy discount" includes "Natural Wastage" of 9 Admin/Technical posts (no section specified). "No new equipment for monitoring pollution, trading standards etc". "Rubbish Left uncleared on private sites". "Reduction in information displays". To make cuts above 10%, "Dismissal of existing staff would be necessary".

PROPOSED REDUCTIONS IN NET EXPENDITURE

	£
<u>Control of the Environment</u>	
Equipment, etc.	13,000
Transport	4,000
Increase vacancy discount	66,000
Derelict sites and works in default	7,000
Analysts fees	13,000
<u>Community Services</u>	
Repair, alterations and maintenance of buildings	10,000
Consumer Advice Display	10,000
Consumer Advice Furniture	4,000
No grants to organisations (except £11,000 to Lambeth Safety Council)	12,000
Slipper Baths and Laundries, Registration of Births, Marriages & Deaths	52,000

Administrative & Technical Expenses

Printing, stationery, equipment, exhibits and events (including overtime)	46,000
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Town Planning

The "increased vacancy discount" includes keeping present vacancies frozen and not filling vacancies arising during the year. "Further levels of saving can only be achieved by reduction in numbers of staff with consequent reduction in services".

PROPOSED REDUCTIONS IN NET EXPENDITURE

	£
Increase vacancy discount	69,000
Supplies, services and equipment (including transport and information research, and printing)	10,000
Disposal of remaining Community Land Act sites (except Classic Cinema)	20,000
Transport	1,500
Town Planning application charges	50,000
Charges for brochures and other publications	1,000

Town Planning & BDD

The Council is proposing shutting 55 Leigham Court Road with the staff moving into Courtenay House.

Amenity Services

The Council want to shut 91 Clapham High Street and move Amenities into 164 Clapham Park Road. The proposal is to squeeze ALL DEHCS workers into 146 Clapham Park Road, leaving 164 vacant.

The "increased vacancy discount" will mean "carrying a 9% discount overall: The effect would be a small but random loss of service". A further increase would mean that "in some areas, services will start to be hit seriously by staff shortages".

A cut of £105,000 in Libraries materials is a cut of 25% in the book fund, and "will seriously affect service".

ALL sports coaching is cut. Cutting "provision for dutch elm disease" means that "some trees may become dangerous before they can be felled". The cuts in maintenance and repairs will reduce budget to a "patch and repair" level, which "may lead to greater costs later". "Further reducing seasonal play schemes....." represents a "further significant service cut". A cut of £15,000 in the entertainments budget is a 75% cut which "will seriously deplete programme and probably entail the deletion of posts".

Councillor Bright, Chairman of Amenity Services comments that the 10% level of cuts "shows major loss of service and may not be achievable without compulsory redundancies".

<u>PROPOSED REDUCTIONS IN NET EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>£</u>
Increase vacancy discount on all staffing by 3%	115,000
Repairs and maintenance, and minor improvements	200,000
Libraries materials	105,000
DAS establishment expenses	25,000
Provision for Dutch Elm disease	30,000
Park equipment	20,000
Other equipment	15,000
Grants	50,000
Coaching expenditure	5,000
Expenditure on the Country Show and Festival of Sport	10,000
Programme of other entertainment and activities	15,000
Brixton Recreation Centre staffing estimates	120,000
Revenue expenditure on Brixton Recreation Centre	40,000
DAS central admin. expenses	30,000
Further reduce seasonal play schemes, seasonal staffing, equipment, activities etc.	20,000
Maintenance of grounds	100,000

Social Services

The huge cuts in Social Services are only

barely outlined in the Policy and Resources Committee paper. So far, it is clear that 28 Inner City posts, presently vacant, are to be deleted, leaving the newly built Myatts Fields Day Centre without any workers. Nearly ALL secondments which are used to train staff such as residential and day care workers, a high proportion of whom have received no formal training.

Meals-on-wheels charges are to be doubled to 20p per day, and holidays for the elderly are being increased from £2 to £10 per week.

"Running Costs" for childrens and adults services are to be slashed by £398,000 and £195,000 respectively. Whilst "running costs" cover laundry, fixtures and fittings etc., the biggest cost is FOOD

<u>PROPOSED REDUCTIONS IN NET EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>£</u>
Increase vacancy discount on all staffing of 3%	600,000
Reduced secondments	95,000
Delete ICP posts	180,000
Reduce running costs Adult Services	398,000
Reduce extras and recreational activities Adult Services	100,000
Reduction in aids and adaptations	32,000
Reduced holidays	10,000
Reduced running costs Children's Services	195,000
Reduced extras e.g. equipment, storytelling Children's Services	63,000
Use of private and voluntary homes (reduced by Leader)	200,000
Repairs and Maintenance (all services)	78,000
Reduced grants to voluntary organisations	183,000
Reduced running costs Holding accounts	161,000
Use of Cowley House	18,000
Additional Income (Holidays)	33,000
Additional Income (Meals)	100,000
Additional Income use of transport	25,000

Management Services

There will be ^{NO} further investment in the Computer Development Programme. Nearly all provision for staff training is to be cut, and the Council want to "save" £10,000 by "reviewing uneconomic cater units". "Unidentified reductions" are projected to "save" £150,000.

Increase vacancy discount	217,000
Repairs, alteration and maintenance of buildings	100,000
Reduction in office running costs and disposal of surplus leases etc.	400,000
Uncommitted parts of computer development programme	100,000
Floral decorations in administrative offices	12,000
Review uneconomic staff catering units	10,000
Staff training	180,000
Supplies, stationery, equipment, advertising, etc.	500,000
Other reductions yet to be identified	150,000

Public Services

The vacancy discount is to be more than doubled. "Reducing grass verge cutting" will have "staffing implications for DAS" as will the non-replacement of street trees. Reducing early morning cover for conveniences "will result in random non-manning in the morning in the event of staff sickness".

PROPOSED REDUCTIONS IN NET EXPENDITURE	£
Increased income (excluding inflation)	41,000
Close Lonesome Depot (including Civic Amenity site)	22,000
Skip service - Reduce holiday relief provision and eliminate the spare vehicle	2,000 10,000
Gully Cleaning Service reduce spare vehicles by one	11,000
Mechanical Sweeping - Eliminate the spare vehicle	11,000
Dump Clearance - Reduce overtime and do not recruit 1 crew of 4 men and vehicle (temporarily abandoned)	38,000
Popes Road Car Park proposals as detailed in Committee report	17,000
Reduce grass verge cutting	11,000
Cease contributing to the Wandsworth Lorry Park	8,000
Reduce equipment for highways	3,000
No replacement of Street trees	20,000
Reduce recruitment advertising	8,000
Reduce securicor collection	500
Reduce provision for stationery, equipment, furniture, etc.	9,000
Reduce provision for traffic surveys and make no provision for central refuges	11,000
Reduce early opening cover in conveniences	8,000
Reduce spare vehicles for:-	
(a) Binlifter	13,000
(b) Street Drift	12,000
(c) Domestic Refuse	27,000
Reduce holiday reliefs for:-	
(a) Domestic Refuse	7,000
(b) Binlifter	5,000
Increase average salary vacancy discount from 7% to 13%	240,000
Redeploy 1 radio communication staff	7,000
Reduce highway's amenities provision	10,000
Cemeteries - Reduce provision for maintenance of grounds, equipment and stationery	20,000
Progressively reduce gully cleansing crews from 6 to 4	23,000

Housing

The "increased vacancy discount" affects about 25 manual and 25 non-manual posts, and assumes that "redeployment of staff into critical vacancies" will be possible "to avoid a significant loss of service. Effects of other cuts are not yet clear, although it is likely that stopping the use of Housing Association property for the homeless will force the use of bed and breakfast accommodation once more.

PROPOSED REDUCTIONS IN NET EXPENDITURE	£
Rent rebates	320,000
Rent allowances	150,000

Use of Housing Association Short Life Property	300,000
Closure of Lillieshall Road Hostel	20,000
Closure of North Side Reception Centre	48,000
Publicity for Country Show + Improvement Grants	8,000
Rehousing Allowance for Crawley tenants	20,000
Closure of all Laundries	64,500
Increase in DHP salaries + wages vacancy discounts	300,000
Reduction in DHC recharge (deletion of vacant HAA/GIA posts)	125,200
Cut Tenants News & Supplements	10,600
Reduction in stationery etc.	9,400
Reduction in supplies, services and other establishment expenses	22,000
Revision of DCS Housing Maintenance estimate	500,000
Bulk gas charges	10,000
Garage charges	40,000

....and about that 'Town Hall Union Split'

Some members will have seen last Tuesday's South London Press, which carried a lead article proclaiming a "Town Hall Union Split" in the Branch.

The story was apparently based on an unseen, anonymous letter from an unspecified number of people in a unidentified department, who professed that they were Branch members and complained "people are being intimidated if they try to help colleagues by doing jobs outside their normal duties". The story "happened" to appear the day before a mass meeting of housing members. Unfortunately for the anonymous letter-writers and for the South London Press, the 400 strong meeting voted overwhelmingly in support of the Housing Shop Stewards Committee resolution condemning those members who are fighting majority decisions through the Press and not in the Branch.

The Branch's industrial action on Council house sales coincidentally made the front pages of a few newspapers the day before the issue was to be debated in the House of Commons. The fuss was over a total of 19 letters which had not been processed. All Branch members will shortly receive a letter from the Branch Secretary outlining the latest position on the dispute for WHICH NATIONAL BACKING HAS BEEN REAFFIRMED.

More details next issue!