

Committee: Council Meeting
Date: 22 October 2002
Agenda Item No: 6ii
Title: Budget Update and Strategy 2003/04
Author: John Dickson (01799) 510300

Summary

- 1 This report incorporates the recommendations from the Resources Committee Meeting on 19 September covering budget savings targets and a review of the updated proposals for Council priorities.

Background

- 2 Minute RE29 of the 19 September Resources Committee meeting agreed that the following points should be recommended to the Council Meeting on 22 October 2002:-
- a) a list of priorities from those submitted to the Council meeting on 16 July split between corporate and service priorities (Appendix 1). The full list is shown as an appendix to Minute RE29.
 - b) an additional General Fund net budget reduction target of £345,000 split between the Committees as follows:-

	Community & Leisure £'000	Development Control & Licensing £'000	Environment & Transport £'000	Health & Housing £'000	Resources £'000	Total £'000
Additional savings required	120	50	70	5	100	345

These proposed reductions in net expenditure are in addition to those already previously identified by Officers totalling £258,000. They were suggested by Councillor Chambers as Leader of the Council to cover several significant uncertain issues. These include potential additional costs connected with the Government's proposals for Stansted Airport and the possible loss of the Area Cost adjustment from the Revenue Support Grant.

- c) The updated budget projection including the savings target shown in b) above would form the basis for Officers to prepare detailed estimates for consideration in the November/December cycle of Committee

meetings. These targets would be in line with the previously approved overall net spending target of £6.888m which reflects an indicative Council Tax increase of 2.5%.

- 3 Also on this Council's agenda is a report on Budget and Council Tax Consultation. Some of the areas recommended for consultation with the public are covered in the list of priorities as recommended by the Resources Committee. It is therefore important for Council to confirm these priorities.

RECOMMENDED that Council:

- 1) Confirms the list of priorities as recommended by the Resources Committee on 19 September 2002 (Appendix 1)
- 2) Confirms the Committee savings targets totalling £345,000 as recommended by the Resources Committee on 19 September 2002 (paragraph 2 of this report)
- 3) Instructs Officers to prepare detailed estimates based on the additional Committee savings targets (paragraph 2 of this report) which will be presented to the November/December cycle of Committee meetings.

Background Papers: Budget Update & Strategy Report – Resources Committee 20 June 2002
Budget Update & Strategy 2003/04 Report – Resources Committee 19 September 2002

	Priority Area	Comment/action
	Corporate Priorities	
1	Prepare Council for CPA and aim for high CPA classification for rural district; link to training priority 4	Lack of corporate staffing will place strain on organisation to meet requirements. Guidance on CPA for districts not yet received.
2	Improve links with business and establish resource to oversee management of and investment in local economy	Need clarity on member proposals – possible staffing implications. Consider as part of corporate resource discussions?
3	Strengthen corporate policy resource	This potentially is a response to pressures identified under these priorities and elsewhere. There would be revenue implications. Cost of performance manager or similar including on-costs likely to be £30-35K. Also raised in BV review.
4	Improve communications; encourage village appraisals	Some clarity needed. Possible revenue implications, especially for staffing.
5	Increase training for officers and members	Revenue implications – no detail yet on proposed size of budget increase.
6	Public Service Agreement	Lack of corporate resource to oversee process. Possible financial gain at end of year 3 if targets met
	Service Priorities	
7	Encourage partnership working	Extensive partnership working exists. Specific proposals to be brought to members as appropriate – audit partnership now agreed for which budget implications already flagged. Pursuing LSA with ECC which may cover other areas.
8	Review Arts Development & sports	Part of current best value review on community & leisure. Review outcomes need to set service priorities and any budget adjustments to flow from this.
9	Reduce Community Safety costs	Some staffing re-organisation in 2002. Continuing to make maximum use of external funding opportunities.
10	Pursue policy on airport	This is being actively pursued. Additional expenditure for current campaign to be met from reserves.
11	Extend recycling including green waste	No further growth items so far included in budget plan. Pilot putrescible waste scheme being funded by Environmental Trust – likely start date March 2003. Need clarity on any further member proposals
12	Encourage Council house sales	Ongoing; possible legislative changes may affect sales and use of receipts
13	Enable more affordable housing	Ongoing – reflected in annual housing strategy. Related to priority 12 in respect of use of receipts.
14	Pursue sponsorship with members taking a lead in strengthening sponsorship capability	Need further information on members' lead and expectations. Progress in 2002/03 to be reported to members November 2002.
15	Financial gains from BV reviews	To be established on individual review basis.
16	Centralise grants schemes	Examination of costs and process for administration of grants requested to try and identify savings. Scrutiny 1 recently considered but made no recommendations for change. Resources suggested re-look at SLA with CAB – cf Norfolk model
17	Restructure planning department	Proposals to be brought to members in due course.
18	Rebalance resources towards informal countryside and youth activities and away from established activities	Need clarity on member proposals – possible revenue implications.

Notes

1. Growth items from “business as usual” list: 1) budget consultation; 2) community strategy (£5,000 recommended from Resources Cttee)
2. The above list is not numbered in priority order.

Committee: Council
Date: 22 October 2002
Agenda Item No: 6(iii)
Title: Grants – Amendment to Delegation Scheme
Author: Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560

Summary

- 1 This report recommends the Council to confirm an amendment to the delegation scheme for Ad Hoc Grants.

Background

- 2 The District Grants Advisory Panel agreed at its meeting on 21 May 2002 to recommend to the Community & Leisure Committee that, in order to reduce administrative costs and take a consistent approach with the Best Value Review of Grants, the Head of Community & Leisure, in consultation with the Chairman of the Community & Leisure Committee, be given delegated authority to confirm Ad Hoc grants and provide information reports retrospectively to the Community and Leisure Committee.
- 3 The recommendation was agreed at the Community & Leisure Committee meeting on 28 May 2002.

Amendment to Delegation Scheme

- 4 It is necessary for full Council to ratify the amendment to the Delegation Scheme.

RECOMMENDED that full Council ratify the amendment to the Delegation Scheme so that the Head of Community & Leisure, in consultation with the Chairman of the Community & Leisure Committee, be given delegated authority to confirm Ad Hoc grants and provide information reports retrospectively to the Community and Leisure Committee.

Background Papers: Best Value Review of Grants; Minutes of meetings of District Grant Advisory Panel (DG5) and Community & Leisure Committee (CL4)