

To: Health and Housing Committee – 10 January 2002

Agenda Item:

Title: Budgets and Service Plans 2002-03

Author: Nick Harris (01799) 510313

Summary

- 1 This report presents the draft revenue estimates for final consideration by this Committee. The detailed figures attached now include savings approved at the last meeting on 1 November, internal charges and developments since 1 November. The figures are subject to final checks for consistency and accuracy and do not include any new growth or savings items, the implications of any new capital programme items or the impact on internal charges of any growth or savings. The Committee is asked to reconsider these estimates including identifying further savings before their inclusion in the overall budget report to the meeting of the Resources Committee on 24 January 2002. Also included are the key points of the Service Plan for 2002-03.

Background

- 2 At its meeting on 1 November 2001 this Committee considered its draft revenue estimates for the first time. The detailed figures provided at that stage included all direct costs and were presented in the context of the target cash limits and Policy Priorities approved by the Council on 16 October 2001.

- 3 The Committee resolved:

that the Administration's proposals for savings, and the draft net direct cost budgets as presented at this meeting be approved, and that officers be directed to prepare service plans and full budgets for 2002-03 for consideration during the next cycle of committee meetings.

A full list of the Administration's savings proposals is attached at Appendix 1

Developments Since 1 November

4. On 11 December, the Council resolved that further savings be sought from Committees to assist in achieving the 2½% target for the 2002-03 Council Tax Increase.
5. No additional savings or growth items have been identified at this stage.

Summary of the Current 2002-03 Budget Position

6. The last budget report to this Committee demonstrated that total direct costs were some £10,000 more than the target cash limit; the current position is unchanged.

Service Plan

7. Housing General Fund

- Discontinue the Rent Deposit Scheme from 1 April 2002 following a full review project by Wintercomfort. The remainder of the Homelessness Services are subject to a Best Value Review in 2002-03.
- Housing Needs is subject to a Best Value Review in 2002-03 with a Housing Needs Survey to take place by November 2002.
- Continue preparatory work on Supporting People in partnership at County level to ensure that new arrangements required by Government are in place by April 2003.

Health

- Continue the statutory enforcement of food safety and Health and Safety standards as nationally prescribed.
- Implement the approved action plan for Health following the Best Value Review.
- Continue the Port Health and Border Inspection Post functions as directed by U.K. and E.U. legislation.

The Next Step

8. The budgets approved by this Committee will be summarised with the budgets of the other Committees in a report to the Resources Committee. This report will include "below the line" items such as investment income and pension backdating costs. It will also make recommendations to the Council regarding the Council Tax. However, an indicative estimate is that even with a 6% Council Tax increase there would still be an overall budget shortfall of £59,000 not including any growth items.

Conclusion

9. This is the final opportunity for this Committee to consider these draft revenue estimates that now include everything identified to date. It is

RECOMMENDED that the Committee reconsider the draft revenue estimates including identifying further savings before recommending them for inclusion in the overall budget report to the Resources Committee meeting on 24 January 2002.