

ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE (SPECIAL)

8th January 2008

**PRESENT:-**

**Conservative Group**

Councillor Bladen (Chairman), Councillor Ford (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Lemmon, Murray (substitute for Councillor Bale), Mrs. Patten, Timms, Watson and Mrs. Wheeler (substitute for Councillor Mrs. Hood).

**Labour Group**

Councillors Mrs. Gillespie (substitute for Councillor Mrs. Lane), Richards, Southerd, Taylor and Tilley.

**In Attendance**

Councillors Atkin, Mrs. Farrington (Conservative Group), Dunn and Richards (Labour Group).

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Bale and Mrs Hood (Conservative Group) and Councillor Mrs. Lane (Labour Group).

**MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE**

EDS/37. **SERVICE BASE BUDGETS 2008/2009**

A report was submitted on the Committee's proposed base budget for 2008/09. This included an overview of the Committee's main spending areas and some of the main cost pressures facing its services. It was proposed that the estimated income and expenditure was included in the consolidated budget of the Council for 2008/09 subject to the Council's overall medium-term financial position. The report also set out proposals for the level of fees and charges under the responsibility of this Committee for the next financial year. A summary was included of the Committee's existing capital investment programme. In addition, an analysis of the Committee's proposed service development bids was also included for consideration.

The Committee's net revenue expenditure was summarised in an Appendix to the report, which set out the estimates for each main cost centre and aggregated several of the main service areas. It was confirmed that the Committee was responsible for some large spending areas, in particular Waste Collection and Street Cleansing, together with a range of services across Environmental Health. There was pressure on many of these budgets, in particular waste collection, as greater demands were placed on recycling and composting. These budgets included the ongoing effects of previous investment in this area.

The Committee was also responsible for services where substantial amounts of income were generated for the Council. These included Licensing, Land Charges, and in particular Planning, where gross income was almost

£1million per year. These areas could have a big impact on the Council's overall financial position, were also difficult to predict and were subject to external factors such as the type and volume of planning applications received. Consequently they were confirmed as a fairly high risk in the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan. Details of the Committee's overall net revenue expenditure were given, with the Committee's net expenditure estimated to reduce overall between 2007/08 and 2008/09. It was confirmed that all variances were known and had previously been reported and included in the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan.

Details of all other variances arising within the base budget for 2008/09 were given with reasons for these variances by Cost Centre. These were explained in further detail under the following headings:-

- Waste Collection and Street Cleansing.
- Income from Land Charges, Building Regulations and Planning Fees.

A further analysis was provided in a table to show the Committee's services by cost type. The detail of the report looked at capital charges, comprising of Depreciation and Deferred Charges. Central Establishment Recharges were reported, together with Accounting for Pensions.

The budget for 2008/09 had initially been compiled at November 2007 prices. An allowance for inflation had been included where it was considered unavoidable, to cover for price increases to March 2009. Details were provided of the assumptions built into the estimates.

Capital investment was considered and the report detailed the Committee's three current schemes.

A further Appendix provided a schedule of the proposed fees and charges that would operate from 1st April 2008, together with a comparison to the existing charge. No major changes were proposed for 2008/09 and generally, it was proposed that fees and charges be increased on average by around 2.75%.

The report concluded by considering the Committee's proposed service developments, which were explained in detail in an Appendix to the report.

In response to a Member's question, further information was provided on the assumptions built into the estimates with regards to utilities.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That the budgeted revenue income and expenditure for 2008/09 for the Committee's services be recommended to the Finance and Management Committee for approval.***
- (2) That the Committee's proposed fees and charges for 2007/08 be approved as submitted.***
- (3) That the Committee's service development proposals be recommended to the Finance and Management Committee for consideration.***

J. BLADEN

CHAIRMAN

The Meeting terminated at 6.25 p.m.