

ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

8th January 2015

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Watson (Chairman) and Councillors Roberts, Mrs Brown, Ford, Mrs Hall, Mrs Patten and Stanton

Labour Group

Councillors Chahal, Frost, Mulgrew, Stuart, Taylor and Tilley

In Attendance

Councillor Atkin and Councillor Mrs Plenderleith (Conservative Group)

EDS/66 **APOLOGIES**

They were no apologies for absence received for the Meeting. The Chairman invited Angela Edwards, Senior Legal Officer to introduce the new Democratic Services Officer Tove Cecilia Lindgren.

EDS/67 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no Declarations of Interest had been received from its members relating to any of the items on today's agenda.

EDS/68 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

EDS/69 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

EDS/70 **REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee was informed that there were no Overview & Scrutiny Committee reports for it to consider.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE**EDS/71 SERVICE BASE BUDGETS 2015 / 16**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented a report which informed Members of the Committee's about the proposed base budget for 2015/16 in comparison to the current year, 2014/15. This included an overview of the Committee's main spending areas. It was proposed that the estimated income and expenditure was included in the consolidated budget of the Council for 2015/16 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, including a summary of the Committee's existing capital investment programme.

The Committee is also responsible for services where substantial amounts of income are generated for the Council, which contributes to the cost of services. These include Licensing, Trade Waste Collections, together with Building Regulation Applications, Land Charges and Local Planning Applications. Consequently, these income streams can have a big impact on the Council's overall financial position and are considered to be a risk in the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which was reviewed and updated in October 2014. This showed that the General Fund has built up a good level of reserves, mainly due to budget underspends. Much of this had been due to one-off factors such as staffing vacancies and additional income, some base budgets prudently increased, the Net increase was £125k.

Two particular outgoings were highlighted, Waste & Street Cleansing to the cost of £60k, mainly due to a continuous need for cover staff of these crucial services, and Vehicle Repairs at £40k, due to the age of some vehicles requiring substantial repair. Other financial risks associated with the Committee's services were Planning Income, Staffing Levels in Planning, and Costs of the Local Plan, Agency Income, Recycling and Growth of the District. There were areas which have made savings i.e. Local Plans had fallen to £29k, and Highway Maintenance reduced to £30k by delivering this service in-house.

A detailed review of fees and charges had been undertaken and some costs had been increased to reflect inflation and demand for these services, as it is principal that we continue to cover costs. An appendix was provided which showed a schedule of the proposed levels of fees and charges that would operate from 1st April 2015, together with a comparison to the existing charge. Key points relating to fees and charges were highlighted within the report and included details on Collection of Trade Waste, Land and Property Charges, Charges under the Licensing and Gambling Acts of 2003 and 2005, Animal Licensing, Private Hire Licensing, Other Licenses, Pest Control Charges, Planning Services and, Fees for Building Regulations.

RESOLVED:

(1) The Committee welcomed and approved the proposed revenue income and expenditure for 2015/16 for the Committee's Services, as detailed in Appendix 1, and referred it to the Finance and Management Committee for approval.

(2) The Committee approved the proposed fees and charges, as detailed in Appendix 3, for 2015/16.

EDS/72 **EXEMPT QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no exempt questions from Members of the Council had been received

The meeting terminated at 18:25pm

COUNCILLOR P. WATSON

CHAIRMAN