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## **EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2010**

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**COSP.91/10    BUDGET 2011/12**

### **Revenue Budget Reports**

#### **(a) Summary of New Revenue Spending Pressures**

The Assistant Director (Resources) (Mr Mason) submitted report RD.56/10 summarising the new revenue spending pressures and reduced income projections that had emerged as part of the 2011/12 budget process. The issues were to be considered in the light of the Council's corporate priorities.

The Executive had on 22 November 2010 (EX.186/10) received the report and forwarded it to Overview and Scrutiny Panels for consideration as part of the 2011/12 budget process.

Mr Mason advised that all the pressure grant incomes had been reduced including a reduced grant settlement. The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) had had their admin grant reduced that resulted in a reduced grant to the Council in the form of housing benefits of 7%.

Members then considered the following new priority for revenue spending which fell within the areas of responsibility of this Panel.

- **Housing Benefit Administration Grant**

The Government's announcement on reduction in funding would impact on the level of specific grants receivable. Until further details were provided later in 2010, a budget pressure of £60,000 had been included for a potential reduction in Housing Benefit admin grant in 2011/12 with a phased increase in future years.

- Would the proposed savings for Tullie House be met?

Mr Mason advised that the saving would be £174,000 in year 2011/12.

RESOLVED – That Report RD.56/10 be noted.

#### **(b) Summary of Savings Delivered and New Proposals**

Report RD.57/10 had been circulated to the Panel by way of background information.

Mr Mason advised that the saving in year 2011/12 would be £75,000. All reviews had indicated a saving of between £149,000 and £157,000 over the years on community development.

RESOLVED – That Report RD.57/10 be noted.

### **(c) Review of Charges 2011/12**

- **Local Environment**

Report CS.28/10 was submitted, setting out the proposed fees and charges for the services falling within the remit of the Local Environment Directorate.

The Executive had on 22 November 2010 (EX.181/10) decided that the report be noted and referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for their consideration.

Mr Mason advised that there had not been any budget saving pressure and that there would be no leeway in the coming year.

Councillor Cape declared a personal interest in the item relating to allotments in respect of being an allotment holder.

- With regard to charges for allotments all allotment holder would be charged the same for water supplies regardless of their size.

Mr Mason advised that some charges had to be increased and that allotments were already heavily subsidised.

RESOLVED – That the observations of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, as outlined above, be conveyed to the Executive.

- **Community Engagement**

Report CD.21/10 was submitted, setting out the proposed fees and charges for the services falling within the remit of the Community Engagement Directorate.

The Executive had on 22 November 2010 (EX.182/10) decided that the report be noted and referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Panels for their consideration.

RESOLVED – That the observations of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel, as outlined above, be conveyed to the Executive.

- **Licensing**

GD.51/10 was submitted for information setting out the proposed fees and charges for areas falling within the responsibility of the Licensing Section of the Governance Directorate. The Regulatory Panel had responsibility for determining the licence fees. The fees were approved.

The Executive had on 22 November 2010 (EX.185/10) noted that the Licensing Charges had been approved by the Regulatory Panel on 13 October 2010.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

### **Capital Budget Reports**

#### **(d) Revised Capital Programme 2010/11 and Provisional Capital Programme 2011/12 to 2015/16**

The Assistant Director (Resources) (Mr Mason) submitted report RD.53/10 detailing the revised capital programme for 2010/11, together with the proposed method of financing as set out in Appendices A and B. The report also summarised the proposed programme for 2011/12 to 2015/16 in the light of the capital bids submitted for consideration, together with the estimated capital resources available to fund the programme.

The Executive had on 22 November 2010 (EX.188/10) considered the report and decided:

- “1. Noted the revised capital programme and relevant financing for 2010/11 as set out in Appendices A and B of Report RD.53/10;
2. Recommended that the City Council approve slippage of £3,654,300 and savings of £99,700 from 2010/11 identified in Phase 1 of the Review;
3. Had considered the proposed criteria, as suggested by the Senior Management Team, to be used in determining the revised Capital Programme (Phase 2) based on capital resources available;
4. Had given initial consideration to the capital spending requests for 2011/12 to 2015/16 contained in Report RD.53/10 in the light of the estimated available resources; and
5. Noted that any capital scheme for which funding had been approved by the Council may only proceed after a full report, including business case and financial appraisal, had been approved.”

Details of the new capital spending proposals which fell within the area of responsibility of the Panel were as detailed on the Agenda for the meeting.

- **Rickerby Park** – A five year enhancement plan had been detailed in report CS.17/10 which had been considered by the Executive on 4 June 2010.
- **Customer Contact Centre** – The spending proposal was for Phase 2 and 3 of the refurbishment of the Customer Contact Centre which would generate additional revenue income.

Details of the potential capital resources available which fell within the area of responsibility of the Panel were as detailed on the Agenda for the meeting.

- **Regional Housing Pot** – The regional Housing Pot grant reduced by £354,000 in 2010/11, and initial indications from the Government Spending Review indicated that the grant could be cut completely. On that basis, estimated receipts of £1.22m for future years had been removed from the projections. A further report would be presented to the Executive once the position of Regional Housing Pot grant had been received.
- **Disabled Facilities Grants** - The Disabled Facilities grant allocation would not be announced until January 2011, although it had been indicated that the grant would be protected at the 2010/11 levels/ A further report would be presented once the 2011/12 allocation had been received.
  - The same figure is projected for 2015/16 and as people are living longer there is likely to be an increase in the number of people requiring this grant. How will the Council resolve or tackle the issue?

Mr Mason stated that it would be a major issue for the housing section and there was an assurance any grant from Government would be matched. Money would be sourced from elsewhere and criteria amended. The matter would be referred back to Government following discussion at the Executive.

- Has any progress been made re RSL?

Mr Mason advised that there had been discussions with Riverside as they had statutory responsibility.

- What is the position regarding purple sacks for refuse?

Mr Mason explained that the matter was out for consultation and would be dealt with by the Executive and that the charges were set before the start of the budget process.

RESOLVED: To accept the recommendations