
EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2017

HWSP.32/17 BUDGET 2018/19 – 2022/23

(a) Budget Update - Revenue Estimates 2017/18 to 2021/22

The Chief Finance Officer submitted report RD.31/17 providing a summary of the Council's revised revenue base estimates for 2017/18, together with base estimates for 2018/19 and forecasts up to 2022/23 for illustrative purposes. The base estimates had been prepared in accordance with the guiding principles for the formulation of the budget over the next five year planning period as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Charging Policy; Capital Strategy; and Asset Management Plan approved by Council on 12 September 2017.

The report set out known revisions to the MTFP projections, although there were a number of significant factors affecting the budget that were currently unresolved, details of which were recorded at Section 1.3. A summary of the outstanding key issues, together with the resource assumptions was also provided at Section 4.

Turning to the issue of savings and additional income proposals, the Chief Finance Officer added that the current MTFP included a savings requirement to be found by 2018/19 of £3.475 million. Further savings / additional income had already been identified in the budget process for 2018/19, details of which were set out at Section 6 of the report.

The Executive had on 20 November 2017 (EX.117/17) received the report and resolved:

“That the Executive:

1. Noted the revised base estimates for 2017/18 and base estimates for 2018/19.
2. Noted the current Medium Term Financial Plan projections, which would continue to be updated throughout the budget process as key issues became clearer and decisions were taken.
3. Noted the initial budget pressures / savings needing to be taken into account as part of the 2018/19 budget process.
4. Noted the review of the earmarked reserves as outlined in paragraph 9 and Appendix G to Report RD.31/17”

In considering the Report Members asked for clarity with regard to rough sleepers and the reason for the additional Homelessness resources.

The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services responded that Carlisle was fortunate in that it did not have a significant issue with rough sleepers. Anyone who had been identified as rough sleeping were offered support and advice from the Homelessness Team, in addition the Council carried out Rough Sleeper Audits to monitor the situation and ensure everyone received the support they needed.

He explained that the proposed new spending pressure for Homelessness was to provide additional staff resources at John Street Accommodation which had not yet opened following the

2015 flood. The additional resources would allow two part time posts to be increased to full time posts so that the Accommodation could be safely staffed on a shift pattern.

The Chief Finance Officer drew the Panel's attention to the Leisure Contract Subsidy which had been re-tendered and the new contract values had been agreed. The MTFP had included a £329,000 recurring saving to be achieved in 2018/19 onwards, which reduced the annual subsidy budget to £465,000 per annum. However, until a new facility was built, there would continue to be a subsidy payable to the operators of £680,000. Once built the subsidy would change to a net concession fee payable to the Council resulting in additional savings of £456,000 from 2022/23 which would increase further in future years.

In response to a question regarding the Sexual Assault Referral Service Grant the Chief Finance Officer explained that the future funding, if agreed, would form part of the Budget Monitoring process which was considered by both the Executive and the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel. The Panel asked for more details on the Service and agreed that further information would be included in the Community Safety Report which was scheduled for scrutiny by the Panel in January 2018.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Budget Update – Revenue Estimates 2018/19 to 2022/23 (RD.37/17) be received.

2) That information on the Sexual Assault Referral Service be included in the Community Safety Report which was scheduled for scrutiny in January 2018.

(b) Review of Charges 2018/19 –

The Chief Finance Officer presented the Review of Charges reports informing the Panel that there was a 3% increase on the overall level of income in line with the Corporate Charging Policy.

Community Services

Report CS.33/17 was submitted setting out the proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 relating to those services falling within the Community Services Directorate.

The charges highlighted within the report would result in an anticipated level of income of £2,903,300 against the MTFP target of £2,903,300 which represented the income target being met. The Panel were asked to consider the areas which were in their remit as set out on the agenda.

The Executive had on 20 November 2017 (EX.113/17) received the report and decided:

“That the Executive agreed for consultation the changes, as set out in the body of Report CS.33/17 and relevant appendices with effect from 1 April 2018; noting the impact those would have on income generation within the report”.

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that the City parks were used for a mixture of charitable, low key, large and commercial events and activities. The fee proposed in the report represented inflationary increase designed to help offset the increasing maintenance costs. For larger commercial events the Council proposed to negotiate fees based on the anticipated size of the audience and/or scale of the event. This would better reflect the recent trend in the use of Bitts Park and allow the Council to negotiate on a case by case basis.

In response to a question the Deputy Chief Executive reminded the Panel that there was a Policy with regard to the use of the digital banner and the Panel was welcome to propose any changes to the Policy that they felt appropriate.

RESOLVED – That the Review of Charges 2018/19 – Community Services (CS.33/17) be noted

Governance and Regulatory Services

Report GD.66/17 was submitted concerning the proposed fees and charges for areas falling within the responsibility of the Governance and Regulatory Services Directorate.

The report set out the proposed charges relative to Environmental Health and Housing; Homeless, Prevention and Accommodation Services; and Legal Services. The introduction of the proposed charges was forecast to generate income of £909,700 in 2018/19 as summarised in the table at Section 5.10 of the report.

The Executive had on 20 November 2017 (EX.115/17) received the report and decided:

“That the Executive agreed for consultation the charges as detailed within Report GD.66/17 and accompanying appendices, with effect from 1 April 2018; and noted the impact thereof on income generation as detailed within the report.”

RESOLVED – That the Review of Charges 2018/19 – Governance and Regulatory Services (GD.66/17) be noted.

(c) Revised Capital Programme 2017/18 and Provisional Capital Programme 2018/19 to 2022/23

The Chief Finance Officer submitted report RD.32/17 detailing the revised Capital Programme for 2017/18, now totalling £9,010,700, together with the proposed method of financing. The report summarised the proposed programme for 2018/19 to 2022/23 in the light of the new capital proposals identified, together with the estimated capital resources available to fund the programme.

Section 4 provided details of the current commitments and new spending proposals. Any capital scheme for which funding had been approved by Council may only proceed after a full report, including business case and financial appraisal, had been approved.

A summary of the estimated resources compared to the proposed programme year on year was also provided.

The Executive had on 20 November 2017 (EX.117/17) received the report and decided:

“That the Executive:

- (i) Noted the revised capital programme and relevant financing for 2017/18 as set out in Appendices A and B to Report RD.32/17;
- (ii) Had given initial consideration and views on the proposed capital spending for 2018/19 to 2022/23 given in the report in the light of the estimated available resources;

- (ii) Noted that any capital scheme for which funding had been approved by Council may only proceed after a full report, including business case and financial appraisal, had been approved.”

In response to a Member's question the Chief Finance Officer stated that the Council was undertaking some public realm works at Chatsworth/Portland Square and agreed to circulate further information on the spending pressures to Panel Members.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Revised Capital Programme 2017/18 and Provisional Capital Programme 2018/19 to 2022/23 (RD.32/17) be noted.

2) That the Chief Finance Officer provide the Panel with further information regarding the Chatsworth/Portland Square new spending proposals.