

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: ALL

Date of Meeting:	25th November 2002		
Public			
Key Decision:	Yes	Recorded in Forward Plan:	Yes
Inside Policy Framework			

Title: CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - BUDGET REPORTS - COMMENTS

Report of: Town Clerk and Chief Executive

Report reference: TC 228/02

Summary:

The reports summarises the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee's comments on those savings and charges reports considered at its meeting on 24th October 2002.

Recommendations:

The Executive consider, take account of and where appropriate give its reaction to the comments.

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1. COMMENTS

The following is a summary of the committee's comments which are recorded more fully in the draft minutes. They follow the sequence, headings and reference numbers of those draft minutes.

CROS.123/02 BUDGET POLICY ISSUES TIMETABLE

(1) It was hoped that slippage in the timetable would not affect consideration

by O&S committees.

(2) The committee decided that there should be a special meeting of the committee to enable it to make an appropriate response to the consultation on the Executive's Budget

(3) A written reply was to be sent to Councillor Mrs Bradley with regards the cost of the above consultation exercise and the source of funding.

CROS.124/02 COMMUNICATIONS BUDGET SAVINGS

1. Members were not supportive of reducing the frequency of Focus which they felt went against the Best Value Review findings and the Corporate Plan.

(2) It was noted that the Executive were to receive a further report on savings from the Communications Budget at their meeting in November and it was felt that the report should come to the committee.

CROS.125/02 BUDGET ISSUES – DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

(1) Members felt that certain relevant information (relating to car parking) to enable effective scrutiny was not included in the report, this included :-

the results of a parking demand study,

the projected income arising from each of the recommended options,

the impacts of imposing Sunday charging and comparisons with other authorities,

proposals for enforcement on Sundays and the costs of this,

details of informal consultation undertaken.

(2) The Director of Environment and Development was to provide a written reply to Councillor Mrs Styth in relation to this information.

(3) The Director of Environment and Development was to report to the next meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the details of costs, staffing etc, additional income, impact of public transport and comparisons with neighbouring Authorities.

(4) That the proposed brief for and audit study relating to procurement/purchasing should be reported to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

CROS.126/02 TOWN TWINNING FINANCIAL POLICY OPTIONS.

No comments.

CROS.127/02 CORPORATE PUBLICATIONS – BUDGET REVIEW

Subject to statutory requirements still being met, no comments.

CROS.128/02 BEST VALUE BUDGET REVIEW

Subject to the Best Value process still being adequately resourced, suitable Lead Officers being identified and appropriate support given where needed, no comments.

CROS.129/02 BUSINESS AND ENTERPRISE SUPPORT BUDGET

AREA

It was felt that the proposed internal audit report should come to the committee.

CROS.130/02 ADVICE AGENCIES

It was felt that the report to be submitted to the Executive at its next meeting should also be considered by O&S.

CROS.131/02 LOCAL LAND AND PROPERTY GAZETTEER AND

NATIONAL LAND INFORMATION SERVICE

No comments.

CROS.132/02 LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP CO-ORDINATOR

It was felt that future funding should only be released subject to an evaluation being carried out into the effectiveness of the Local Strategic Partner Co-ordinator Post.

CROS.133/02 REVIEW OF CHARGES 2003/04 HIRE OF

CIVIC CENTRE ETC

No comments.

CROS.134/02 HOUSING GENERAL FUND – REVIEW OF CHARGES

2003/04

No comments.

CROS.135/02 REVIEW OF LOCAL LAND
CHARGES AND SEARCH FEES

No comments.

CROS.136/02 LICENSING CHARGES REVIEW

The post of a Licensing Administrative Assistant was supported.

CROS.137/02 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHARGES REVIEW

No comments.

CROS.138/02 LEISURE FACILITIES – CHARGES REVIEW

1. It was noted that the Council's Corporate Charging Policy was generally to increase income by inflation plus 1% (a total of 3.5%).
2. It was felt that, if certain Bereavement Services charges were to increase as proposed, that the Executive should consider phasing over a number of years.

(3) It was also noted that the Bereavement Services charges were to be included as part of the consultation exercise, and that the committee wished to consider the outcome of that consultation exercise.

(4) It was further noted that the Executive had taken notice of comments by District Audit that the City Council should avoid subsidising this service and officers were asked to provide the committee with the copy of the District Auditor's comments to that effect.

(4) The Deputy Leader of the Council's comment that, as part of the Council's budget decision in February 2001, the Council had agreed to bring fees in respect of Bereavement Services in line with costs, and that these proposals were in line with that policy was also noted.

2. CONSULTATION

The committee is a consultee

3. STAFFING/RESOURCES COMMENTS

N/A

4. CITY TREASURER'S COMMENTS

N/A

5. LEGAL COMMENTS

N/A

6. CORPORATE COMMENTS

N/A

7. RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

N/A

8. EQUALITY ISSUES

N/A

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

10. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

N/A

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive consider, take account of and where appropriate give its reaction to the comments.

12. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To give the Executive's feedback to the committee.