

TITLE: Budget For 2006/07
TO/ON: Cabinet 25th January 2006
BY: Executive Director of Resources
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk Management
STATUS: For Publication

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the development of budget proposals based upon the consultation options for submission to the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1.1 That the responses to the Consultation document received so far be noted, and the process endorsed.
- 2.1.2 That authority be delegated to the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management in consultation with the Head of Financial Services to submit final budget proposals on behalf of the Cabinet to the Full Council meeting on 23rd February taking into account consultation responses.

3. REPORT AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS AND TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 For the first time the Council published outline spending plans for the coming year on 10th January 2006. These outline options are part of a consultation process leading up to the setting of the budget by the Full Council on 23rd February 2006. The plans were considered by the Policy Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a special meeting on 17th January and are available via the website or in hard copy to the public and partners.
- 3.2 The process this year is different in part through the adoption of good practice in encouraging wide consultation and in part because of the change to the Cabinet system. Under the Cabinet system the Cabinet needs to put forward spending plans for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny and then make recommendations to the Council. The Consultation document issued on 10th

January fulfils the first part of this requirement and allows the Council to engage with a wide range of stakeholders on the options being considered through the Local Strategic Partnership and the Community Network. Comments received will be reported to the Full Council when it comes to debate the budget.

- 3.3 In terms of the process for finalising proposals it is suggested that the Cabinet delegate authority to the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management in consultation with the Head of Financial Services (as the relevant statutory officer) to produce final recommendations to the Council based upon the consultation document and taking into account responses to the consultation process.

4. CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

4.1 FINANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1.1 A robust budget rooted in the Council's priorities and which addresses the risks faced by the organisation is central to delivering improvement in this area.

4.2 MEMBER DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.2.1 The process outlined in this report allows members to engage in debate over budget options and for that debate to be informed by a wide range of stakeholders, The budget can thus become a tool in the Council's development as a community leader.

4.3 HUMAN RESOURCES

- 4.3.1 The subject of this report has no immediate human resources implications, although a number of the options being considered for budget variations clearly do.

4.4 ANY OTHER RELEVANT CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 4.4.1 The various options being considered as part of this process would impact on a range of priorities.

5. RISK

- 5.1.1 The budget proposals specifically identify and address risk issues of various sorts.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM THE REPORT

- 6.1 The Council is required to set a balanced budget and as a minimum to consult business ratepayers on its spending plans. The process outline in this report more than meets these requirements.

7. EQUALITIES ISSUES ARISING FROM THE REPORT

7.1 None specifically.

8. WARDS AFFECTED

8.1 All.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1 Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Risk Management and Head of Financial Services.

Background documents:

For further information on the details of this report, please contact:

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