

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

7 September 2015

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Councillor Marjorie James (In the Chair)

Councillors: Jim Ainslie, Allan Barclay, Steve Gibbon, Peter Jackson, Brenda Loynes and Jean Robinson

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Alastair Smith, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods
Alyson Carr, Head of Finance, Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

20. Apologies for Absence

None

21. Declarations of Interest

None

22. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 August 2015

Received

23. Savings Programme 2016/17 – Neighbourhoods Division (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To enable Members to consider the initial 2016/17 savings proposals relating to the Committee's remit. Comments made were to be incorporated with those received from each of the Policy Committees in relation to their remits and reported to Finance and Policy Committee.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods presented the report which included the proposals for delivery of savings in the Neighbourhoods Division as part of the 2016/17 budget process, the risks associated with the proposals and the considerations which had been taken into account in developing them.

The report included a breakdown of expenditure as well as details of inputs/outcomes. The proposed contribution from the Neighbourhood Services Division was £595k against the overall Regeneration and Neighbourhoods departmental savings for 2016/17 of £1,181,000. Details of how the savings would be achieved were provided as detailed in the report. Members were advised of the risk, financial and staffing considerations of the proposals.

In response to a query raised by a Member regarding the current level of reserves, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods advised that details of the planned use of reserves of £364,000 from the 2015/16 budget were included in the strategic financial management report for consideration under the next item of business.

Reference was made to a shortfall in car parking income and clarification was sought as to how this would be managed. Members were advised that the risks associated with respect to car parking income was an ongoing issue and could be managed this financial year, however, it may be that in the future depending upon a number of factors this could become a future budget pressure. The Chair highlighted that given that parking was a budget pressure for Neighbourhoods and a benefit for Economic Regeneration in terms of retail benefits, there was a need to consider those pressures collectively.

Decision

- (i) The Committee agreed the savings proposals relating to the Neighbourhood Services Division.
- (ii) That the contents of the report and comments of Members, as outlined above, be noted and be utilised to formulate a response to be presented to Finance and Policy Committee.

24. Strategic Financial Management Report as at 30 June 2015 (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods and Chief Finance Officer*)

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

The report informed Members of the 2015/16 Forecast General Fund Outturn, 2015/16 Capital Programme Monitoring and provided details of the specific budget areas that the Committee was responsible for.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Head of Finance, Regeneration and Neighbourhoods presented the report which provided the background and financial reporting arrangements for 2015/16 as well as the General Fund budget outturn information in relation to the Neighbourhood Services Department.

As recently reported to the Finance and Policy Committee, Members were advised that there would be an estimated net underspend of between £669,000 and £889,000.

Details of the overall budget position for the Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services Department was summarised in a table included in the report which included the reasons for the forecast outturn. Further details of specific budget areas were outlined at Appendix A. Members were provided with details of recommended reserves together with planned capital expenditure, as set out in the report.

The Committee discussed the adverse variance in relation to additional costs associated with waste disposal expected to be incurred this year and the potential reduction in income from recycling. It was noted that the issues contributing to the reduction in income were as a result of the higher levels of contamination in waste, examples of which were shared with the Committee. In an attempt to address this issue, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods commented on the benefits of establishing a media campaign. Members also emphasised the importance of educating residents and children in schools on recycling and contamination issues.

Decision

That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10.30 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 14 SEPTEMBER 2015