

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Wednesday 15th November 2006

at 11.30 am

**in the Red Room, the Avondale Centre, Dyke House School,
Raby Road Entrance, Hartlepool**

MEMBERS: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors S Allison, Brash, Clouth, R W Cook, Cranney, Gibbon, Hall, Henery, Lilley, Rayner and D Waller.

Resident Representatives: Ann Butterfield, Ian Campbell and Linda Shields

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM

No Items.

4. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

No items.

5. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS/BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

5.1 Neighbourhood Services Department: Budget and Policy Framework Initial Consultation Proposals 2007/08 – *Scrutiny Support Officer*

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

No itmes.

8. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

FOR INFORMATION

- i) **Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 29 November 2006, commencing at 2.00pm in the Central Library, York Road, Hartlepool.**

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

15 November 2006



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT:
BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK INITIAL
CONSULTATION PROPOSALS 2007/08

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity for the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum to consider the Neighbourhood Services departmental pressures and priorities, grant terminations and proposed savings as part of the Budget and Policy Framework initial consultation proposals for 2007/08.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 At a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 27 October 2006, consideration was given to the Executive's Initial Budget and Policy Framework consultation proposals for 2007/08.
- 2.2 At this meeting it was agreed that the initial consultation proposals be considered on a departmental basis by the appropriate Scrutiny Forum. Any comments / observations would then be fed back to the additional meeting of the SCC to be held on 17 November 2006 to enable a formal response to be presented to the Cabinet on 4 December 2006.
- 2.3 As such attached as **Appendices A to D** are the Neighbourhood Services departmental pressures and priorities, grant terminations and proposed savings as part of the Budget and Policy Framework initial consultation proposals for 2007/08.
- 2.4 To assist Members of this Scrutiny Forum in the consideration of the Neighbourhood Services departmental initial proposals, arrangements have been made for the Director of Neighbourhood Services to be in attendance and an invitation to this meeting has also been extended to the relevant Portfolio Holder (attendance subject to availability).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum:-

- (a) considers the Neighbourhood Services departmental pressures and priorities, grant terminations and proposed savings as part of the Budget and Policy Framework initial consultation proposals for 2007/08; and
- (b) formulates any comments and observations to be presented by the Chair of this Scrutiny Forum to the additional meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to be held on 17 November 2006 to enable a formal response to be presented to the Cabinet on 4 December 2006.

Contact Officer:- Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

APPENDIX A

SCHEDULE OF GRANT REGIMES TERMINATING DURING 2006/2007

Grant Title	Does Council need to consider mainstreaming the grant? Please state Yes/No and provide brief justification.	Value of Grant in 2006/2007 £'000	Value of 2006/2007 Grant spent of staff costs (include NI and Pension) £'000	Number of staff funded from Grant FTE's	Number of staff on fixed term contract FTE's	Estimated cost of making staff redundant £'000	Funding available to fund redundancy costs £'000
Regional Transport travel advisor	Y – risk of loss of LPT monies	15	15	1	0	5	0
Travel Planning assistant	Y – risk of loss of LPT monies	15	15	1	0	5	0
ERDF Community Environmental action initiative	Y – project unlikely to go ahead without mainstreaming of salaries and additional support for community projects – Pride in Hartlepool	59	59	?	0	0	0
Total Grant Regimes Terminating		89					

APPENDIX B

SCHEDULE OF BUDGET PRESSURES 2007/2008

Budget Heading	Description of Budget Pressure	Risk Impact of Not Funding Pressure	Value Budget Pressure <u>2007/2008</u> <u>£'000</u>	Value of additional Budget Pressure in 2008/2009 (only complete this column if value shown in 2007/2008 column is part year pressure) <u>£'000</u>
Environment	The roll out of recycling kerbside collection/alternative weekly collections, was partly funded from temporary grant funding which has now ceased, without this money the new increased recycling project will fail and the authority will not achieve the government targets set.	Red Redundancy of two operatives @ £25k each per annum, however this is not the full saving as the central overhead will continue to require funding	53	
		Total Budget Pressures	53	

APPENDIX C

SCHEDULE OF RED BUDGET PRIORITIES 2007/2008
TOP LEVEL PRIORITIES

Budget Heading	Description of Budget Priorities	Risk Impact of Not Funding Priorities	Priorities Value Budget Priorities <u>2007/2008</u> <u>£'000</u>	Value of additional Budget Priorities in 2008/2009 <u>£'000</u>
Environment LPSA	The loss of this budget will have a negative impact on street cleansing. The LPSA fund has bolstered the council's revenue budget and been used to fund two operatives per year as the existing budget is insufficient. (£53k).	Red Failure to maintain cleansing standards.	53	
School Catering	Implement nutritional standards. Restrictions in types of foods being served to children will impact greatly on the cost of ingredients, i.e. all children to be given bread with a meal if they choose to take it, will increase cost and the replacement of squash with milk or fruit juice as a drink with the meal will further increase the food cost.	Red Failure to follow Government guidelines and legislation. Ofsted inspector would adversely report.	35	3 year programme of implementation of new standards will have knock-on effect.

Budget Heading	Description of Budget Priorities	Risk Impact of Not Funding Priorities	Priorities Value Budget Priorities <u>2007/2008</u> <u>£'000</u>	Value of additional Budget Priorities in 2008/2009 <u>£'000</u>
Environment Marina – Navigation Point Cleaning	The council is in the process of adopting Navigation Point/the Marina because of its high profile to the town, especially in light of the Tall Ships event in 2010 and its strategic link to Victoria Harbour. Income has been generated from stakeholders however this will cease once adopted. The Maintenance of this asset has had a detrimental financial effect on the Cleansing service and other parts of the town have received a reduced service as a consequence.	Red High profile asset in light of Tall ships 2010 and strategic link to Victoria Harbour. Funding will enable the area to receive a cleansing service seven days a week whereas at the moment it operates Monday to Friday.	30	
		Total of Top Priorities	118	

SCHEDULE OF RED BUDGET PRIORITIES 2007/2008
SECOND LEVEL PRIORITIES

Budget Heading	Description of Budget Priorities	Risk Impact of Not Funding Priorities	Priorities Value Budget Priorities <u>2007/2008</u> <u>£'000</u>	Value of additional Budget Priorities in 2008/2009 <u>£'000</u>
Unscheduled Highway Maintenance	The UHM budget is currently inappropriate for need. A year on year reduction has seen this budget diminish to a point where the provision of Highways Maintenance and Gulley cleansing is below acceptable standards. The increased requirement for winter maintenance is also placing a severe strain on this budget.	Red Town's infrastructure deteriorating. Failure to meet BVPI	150	
Environment Dog Foul/Litter Bins – Emptying	The demand for additional litter bins and dog foul bins has increased substantially over the last two years. Whilst we are enforcing littering and dog foul incidents resident feedback is the bins are not being emptied enough. Originally there were 47 dog foul bins, it is now approaching 200, we have around 850 litter bins, all of which need emptying a minimum of twice per week.	Red Impact on BVPI199, cleanliness of the highway indicator, customer satisfaction with the frequency of dog foul bin emptying is low	40	

Budget Heading	Description of Budget Priorities	Risk Impact of Not Funding Priorities	Priorities Value Budget Priorities <u>2007/2008</u> <u>£'000</u>	Value of additional Budget Priorities in 2008/2009 <u>£'000</u>
Environmental Protection Development of Pest Control Service	<p>Funding is required to develop the service (due to increase in number of complaints and increasing inability to reach targets and provide an effective service) and potentially to include control of feral birds.</p> <p>If the service were to be extended this would include offering contracts to businesses in the town which would offset some of the additional costs. Approx 5k income is expected in the first year.</p>	<p>Red</p> <p>Responsive times will increase beyond current two days, which will be unacceptable to the public.</p> <p>Unable to action increasing demand for seagull/pigeon control measures</p> <p>No development of private contract work (fee earning)</p>	20	

Budget Heading	Description of Budget Priorities	Risk Impact of Not Funding Priorities	Priorities Value Budget Priorities <u>2007/2008</u> <u>£'000</u>	Value of additional Budget Priorities in 2008/2009 <u>£'000</u>
Dial-a-Ride – Transport controller	<p>The Dial-a-Ride service will be brought in-house during the summer of 2006 and will be operated alongside the Local Authority's Community Transport Service. This will assist in enhancing the Dial-a-Ride service at specific times of the day. The Community Lynx bus will be funded through the Rural Bus Challenge scheme until April 2007.</p> <p>The service will be operated alongside the Dial-a-Ride service after that date and offer support to the Dial-a-Ride service in its quiet periods. The post of Transport Controller is funded through the Rural Bus Challenge Scheme until April 2007. The post is integral to the provision of the in-house Dial-a-Ride service.</p>	<p>Red</p> <p>Dial-a-Ride service may not be able to be enhanced. The Community Lynx bus will have to cease. The Transport Controller post would be lost – this would have a major impact on the in-house provision of the Dial-a-Ride service.</p>	25	

Budget Heading	Description of Budget Priorities	Risk Impact of Not Funding Priorities	Priorities Value Budget Priorities <u>2007/2008</u> <u>£'000</u>	Value of additional Budget Priorities in 2008/2009 <u>£'000</u>
Supported Bus Service	The reintroduction of the Number 5 supported bus service was recently approved by the Mayor and subsequently tendered. The service is required to allow patients from the new doctors surgery on the Headland who live in the West View part of the town to gain access to this health facility. The Mayor had allocated an additional £75,000 to this budget for the service but the lowest tender was £87,000 leaving a shortfall of £12,000. As the service was restarted part way through the year the £75,000 will be sufficient this financial year but there will be a shortfall next year. The number 5 supported bus, or one or more of the other supported services, may have to be withdrawn next year if the budget shortfall is not met.	Red	12	
		Total of Second Priorities	247	

PROPOSED SAVING AT 3%, 4% AND 5%**APPENDIX D****NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

Budget Heading	Description of Efficiency/Saving	Risk Assessment of implementing efficiency/saving	Impact of efficiency/saving on staffing levels	Value of efficiency/saving £'000	Description of One off cost of achieving efficiency/saving	One off cost of achieving efficiency/saving £'000
Car Parking	E - Increase resident only parking charge from £1 to £20 per annum	Amber Risk: Political and public dissatisfaction with some residents leaving the scheme.	Increased enforcement	90		
Car Parking	E - Introduce Monday-Friday contract parking at the Maritime Experience (100 bays), together with the introduction of charging for staff in Church Street.	Green Risk: Some public and political resistance.	Increased enforcement	100		
Trading Account Administration	E - Reduce by two posts	Amber Risk: Potential impact on services delivery. Efficiencies expected to come from introduction of new costing system. Unable to identify which two posts will be redundant until costing system fully installed and operating.	2 redundancies	40	redundancy payment	??
Financial Support	S - Reduce by half post	Green Risk: Low impact on services delivery. New system should enable remaining team to pick up this element of financial control.	.5 redeployment	22	Redeployment	??
Consumer Services Contractor Payments	S - Non renewal of existing contract with the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide consumer advice service	Green Risk: Government have recently introduced a regional 'Consumer Direct' telephone service to advise public on consumer matters. This overlaps significantly with the service provided by CAB. Non renewal of existing contract may result in reduction of service provided by CAB. Government may impose charge for the 'Consumer Direct' service at some future date	Some increase in number of enquiries to the Trading Standards section may result , but not expected to be significant	14		Nil
Buildings Management and Maintenance	E - Cut one post from a group of 6 posts involved to differing degrees in this service to the Civic Centre, in particular, but also other Council Buildings and Schools	Amber Risk: Potential impact on Service delivery to occupiers/building managers. Impact on remainder of team to provide services.	1 redundancy	35	Redundancy payment	
Emergency Call Out	S - Revision of call-out arrangement	Amber Risk: Potential impact on delivery of service and reduction in employees willing to undertake call-out.		10		
Section 38 Income - developers contribute to the inspection regime necessary	S - A one-off payment of £100,000 can be justified on the basis that the annual requirement for TOS and material testing is in the order of £90,000. The current balance is £256,572, which will leave approximately one and a half years funding for Technical Officer salaries and testing	Amber Risk: The current budget for Section 38s has increased over the past few years due, in the main, to the development at Middle Warren. This has generated a disproportionate surplus which may not be sustained in future years, particularly when Middle Warren is complete. TOS for two members of the Asset Management Team is paid for from this budget, supporting the overall Transportation and Traffic Management account. The future ability to cover this TOS will be dependant upon new developments which cannot be guaranteed with the possibility of budget pressures in subsequent years.	Staffing levels will be dependent upon income generated by new developments in future years. If the income is not sufficient it is possible that one or two members of staff cannot be sustained by existing staffing budgets.	100	N/A	N/A
TOTAL 3%				411		

Budget Heading	Description of Efficiency/Saving	Risk Assessment of implementing efficiency/saving	Impact of efficiency/saving on staffing levels	Value of efficiency/saving £'000	Description of One off cost of achieving efficiency/saving	One off cost of achieving efficiency/saving £'000
Cemeteries & Crematorium	S - Raise charges for burials and cremations by 10% above existing levels, and that required for inflation, drainage improvements, etc.	Amber Risk: Liable to create public criticism. Hartlepool fees would probably become highest in the region. May result in need to abandon further drainage improvements to both Stranton and West View Cemeteries (otherwise yet further increases would be required). May impact on our future ability to repay loan charges for new cremator needed in 2011 (capital cost approx £750k).	Nil	49	Nil - see risk assessment	Nil - see risk assessment
Asset Team Leader Post	S - Vacant Post in Transportation and Traffic Section, Asset Management Team	Green Risk: The Council have a requirement to prepare an Asset Management Plan to direct future spending on all highway assets. This plan is currently under development in conjunction with the other Tees Valley Highway Authorities. An Asset Team Leader would be required to co-ordinate the development of this plan and its evolution into a Hartlepool document rather than a generic Tees Valley document. At present the Asset Management Team do not have a senior officer and report directly to the Transportation and Traffic Manager. Failure to complete and implement the Asset Management Plan could have a detrimental effect on future LTP allocations.	Asset Management Team would not have a direct line of management putting more pressure on the Transportation and Traffic Manager.	40	N/A	N/A
Waste Management	E - Household Waste Recycling Centre and Waste Transfer Station - servicing of both sites using two vehicles and two staff	Amber: outsourcing of this provision may result in two redundancies, but can probably redeploy.	Redeployment of two staff/redundancies	35		
Service Development	E - Reduce by two posts	Green risk on service impact, however highly likely to lead to IT claim. Low impact on service delivery. Post currently being utilised in support of fleet function. History of problems in previous posts and now undertaking ad-hoc work where and when required.	1 redundancy	26	Redundancy payment - potential IT claim	??
TOTAL 4%				561		
Service Development	S - Reduce by half post	Green Risk: Potential impact on service delivery/workforce development. Postholder currently on long-term sick. Reduced service being provided to managers.	Postholder may be leaving on early retirement due to ill health	15	Early retirement settlement - will be paid in any event	
Service Development	S - Reduce by half post	Green Risk: Minor impact on service - postholder currently acting up in role mentioned above.	Postholder may be leaving on early retirement due to ill health	10		
Grounds Maintenance	S - Increase in Income from Unscheduled Works	Red Risk: At present approximately £300k is realised from works carried out for one-off landscape and other unscheduled works to clients. This subsidises the core funding for maintenance to areas in the borough. An increase of 10% in this unscheduled income would allow a £30k reduction in the maintenance budgets received.	Only achievable using existing staffing and resources so therefore a drop in the maintenance standards would inevitably occur. Also assumes that extra work can be identified and won in an even more competitive environment.	30		
Waste Management	S - Closure of all public conveniences	Red Risk: The Cabinet and Scrutiny Forum are currently considering a report recommending some closures but also investment. Considerable public concern at total closure.	Redundancy of two staff	110		
TOTAL 5%				726		