

Report of: Strategic Director Finance & Corporate Services

To: Executive Board and Council

Date: 29th January and 12th February 2007

Item No: 13

Title of Report : Budget 2007-08 to 2009-10

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present the Council's budget for approval and recommendation to Council.

Key decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Stephen Tall, Better Finances

Scrutiny Responsibility: Finance

Ward(s) affected: All

Report Approved by:

Cllr. John Goddard, Leader of the Council

Cllr. Stephen Tall, Better Finances

Jeremy Thomas, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Policy Framework: Financial Stability

Recommendation(s): Executive Board are asked to recommend that Council:

- a) approves the General Fund budget at Section 1 of the budget book (Appendix 4)
- b) approves the Housing Revenue Account budget at Section 2 of the budget book (Appendix 4)
- c) delete the 3 schemes in paragraph 38.
- d) agree to devolve budgets in these areas to Area Committees subject to a further report outlining how this can operate in practice.

Executive Board are asked to consider:

- a) which of the bids in the Capital Bids list should be included in the capital programme.

- b) the recommendations arising from the consultation shown at Appendix 3.

Summary

1. This is the third of the three reports that inform our budget process for the three years beginning 2007-08 and sets out our detailed budget position for each year.
2. This third report in the series provides details of feedback from consultation, an update on changes that have occurred since the consultation budget was issued and a risk assessment of the deliverability of the budget.
3. Attached to this report are the following appendices:
 - Appendix 1 - changes from the indicative budget
 - Appendix 2 - projection of reserves
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4. Appendix 3 shows recommendations arising from consultation meetings. Appendix 4 is the draft Budget Book and comprises : :
 - Section 1 - a summary of the General Fund, three year savings plans and Administration proposals
 - Section 2 - a summary of the Housing Revenue Account
 - Section 3 - a summary of the capital programme and funding detailed budgets
 - Section 4 - Fees and Charges
5. The first report presented on 6th November gave an overview of the financial prospects for 2007-8 and future years. That report included the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which detailed the key financial assumptions for the budget and identified areas of concern that Members should be aware of. We have assumed that Members would take into consideration the factors in the earlier report and have focussed this report on highlighting changes that have taken place and new information.
6. The second report on 18th December was the Indicative budget report and included detailed proposals for savings.

Progress since December

General Fund

Review of Savings

7. The interim Chief Executive asked for action plans behind each saving. These action plans detailed key milestones and responsible officers. The action plans were reviewed in early January in Directorate meetings. Where questions over deliverability could not be satisfied,

the savings were withdrawn and other savings suggested instead. There remains an £84k shortfall in the Health & Community Housing Directorate. This budget assumes that savings of that sum will be identified and delivered.

8. Identifying the £4m savings required to balance the budget has been challenging. A combination of drawing on one-off windfalls and balances means that a policy space for Member priorities has been maintained.
9. As part of the budget process the basis for Service Level Agreements (SLAs) has been reviewed and figures recalculated. The net impact is a reduction in charges to the HRA of £81,000, this means an increase in cost to the General Fund.
10. There has been a long-standing issue on the Item A adjustment as part of the Credit Ceiling (the measure of the authority's debt). During closure of the accounts 2005-06 there was a disagreement between the authority and the auditors over this calculation. The auditors now agree the authority's original calculation. The implication of this is a restating of the HRA credit ceilings. This reduces the interest charged to the HRA (therefore reduced income to the general fund) by £253,000 in 2006-07 and £262,000 in 2007-08 and future years. The General Fund has a provision of £610,000 that will be used to cover this initially.
11. One of the main drivers for increasing balances in the indicative budget was the impact of Concessionary fares. Additional expenditure of £600,000 in both 2006-07 and 2007-08 had been estimated. The authority has listened to the view of our consultant in this area who believes it is still too early to form a judgement as the appeal to DfT will not be heard until February at the earliest. The Council has taken a balanced view of the risk and created a provision of £600,000 to cover any additional payment to the operators. The Council has taken the advice of the consultant in respect of bus fare inflation and allowed 10% in 2007-08.
12. The indicative budget had a deficit of £251,000 and allowing for the changes above, the deficit has now increased to £800,000 excluding the Policy Space. Details are shown in Appendix 1 This is funded for 2007-08 through movements in reserves, as described below, ensuring the Council's balances remain above the prudent figure of £3M recommended by the S151 Officer.
13. The budget has not been changed for the recent increase in interest rates as this had already been factored in from February 2007) or for the publication of the higher inflation rate. The budget allows 2.5% for pay increases, but there will now be increased pressure for the pay award to be higher to compensate for rising prices.

Review of Provisions & reserves

14. A detailed review of all reserves & provisions has been made. This has resulted in some provisions being released back into General Fund balances.
15. The interim Human Resources manager has worked through the implications of Single Status and £300,000 of the current year's budget has been identified as available to be returned to balances.
16. The Council has held a VAT provision in case of breach of the partial exemption limit. This was created to cover the VAT impact of major investment in Leisure. The Council has however made a number of Option to Tax decisions and this has kept the Council well within the partial exemption limit. This provision can be returned to balances with the proviso that any future investment in Leisure looks at the impact on VAT and makes a revenue provision if necessary.
17. There are a number of annual outstanding Housing Benefit Claims, where the Council has made provision to pay additional sums to DWP. Officers anticipate £100,000 will be spare and can be returned to balances

Quarter 3 monitoring

18. The assumptions in the budget assume that quarter 3 monitoring keeps to the quarter 2 target of £137k overspend except for items identified below. If the final year end figures draw down from reserves, the figure will be recovered by reducing expenditure in the 1st quarter of 2007-08.
19. Reduction in interest income from the HRA £253,000 (detailed above).
20. Officers have recalculated the likely income from LABGI grant and anticipate this to be £150,000, this will be received in 2006-07.
21. Reserves at 31st March 2007 are therefore anticipated £4.5m as shown in Appendix 2. This means that £1.5m from reserves can be used to fund the 2007-08 budget, £1.2m more than the £313,000 identified in the indicative budget.

General Fund

Summary position (Appendix A)

22. The minimum level of balances in the previous budget report was suggested to be £3.5m. Officers have worked through the table of probabilities and concluded that having taken into account the major risks, balances may remain at the previous minimum level of £3m.
23. If the minimum level is £3m, there is a further £1.2m of balances that may be used in the 2007-08 budget. Use of these balances in 2007/08 will increase the savings targets in 2008-09 to £3.0m In both 2008-09

and 2009-10 there is an assumption that a policy space of £500,000 is available.

24. The budget from 2008-09 onwards includes a sum of £900,000 per annum that is earmarked for funding the backlog of repairs and maintenance in the capital programme.
25. Applying £1.2m of balances to the budget gives a one-off policy space of £400k of which £100k can be used for ongoing policy as there is additional interest of this amount projected for 2008-09 onwards.

Use of policy space

26. In the indicative Budget the Council has used £108,000 reducing the Council Tax increase from 4% to 3% and £100,000 on investigating the possibility of a Leisure Trust.
27. The proposals to use the remaining policy space of £100k ongoing funding and £300k one-off are included in the budget book.

Housing Revenue Account

Review of savings

28. The HRA budget has been set to deliver a £1,266,000 surplus that can then be used to fund Capital expenditure.
29. In terms of savings put forward in the indicative budget, these have been reviewed by the Chief Executive in January. The HRA management team are confident that the full savings can be delivered. If the full savings can not be made the surplus and the contribution to capital will be reduced.

Housing Subsidy Determination

30. The indicative budget report considered the Draft Housing Subsidy determination and the potential increase in Subsidy payable to Central Government.
31. The Rent Constraint Allowance has now been amended to fully compensate for prior year constraints on rent increases. The main area of concern remains the Guideline Rent figure which has not been amended in the final determination. The result is that an additional £521k of subsidy will be payable in 2007-08. Our advisors at the Housing Quality Network have suggested that we need to build the additional cost into the 2007-08 budget as the results of the Special Determination request won't be known in the immediate future. They also suggest that it is unlikely that the DCLG will amend the determination without being forced to despite the error being pointed out to them. There are 47 other authorities affected, so it is likely that

one or more of them will seek a Judicial Review to try and get the amendment made.

32. It was also suggested that the guideline rent adjustment would taper downwards between 2007-08 and 2011-12, the year convergence is supposed to take place. The effect of this isn't known but it would mean that even if the special determination request was successful not all of the £521k would be 'returned'.
- 33.. The HRA assumes that the £521,000 is not recovered. This reduces the contribution available to Capital. Capital resources have however been boosted by the announcement of a Supported Borrowing figure of £548k.

Quarter 3 monitoring/ Balances

Capital strategy, programme and funding

General Fund

34. Deliverability of the capital programme and associated funding was identified as a key risk in the MTFS published in November. As requested by the portfolio holder officers began a detailed review of the programme.
35. In order to see areas of the Capital Programme where the Council has discretion, the programme was split between funded from external resources (mainly Developer Contributions and S106) and funding from the Council's own resources, mainly capital receipts. This demonstrated that of the annual capital programme of about £10m, only about £2m is funded by receipts and within control of Council.
36. The Council has an annual programme of Area Committee spend of £200,000 and approximately £600,000 of Environment Health grants so choices are limited further.
37. The current capital programme for 07/08 (approved in February 2006) would use all available resources (assuming that the "longshot" capital receipts do not materialise).
38. The review of the capital programme suggests that of the schemes in 2006-07 and 2007-08, the following could be deleted from the programme creating funding of £701,000 to fund new schemes:

<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Donnington Community Centre	370,000
Westgate	98,000
Community Centres(1 st year of programme)	233,000

39. Executive Board is asked to recommend Council to delete the 3 schemes in paragraph 38 and consider which of the bids in the Capital Bids list should be included in the capital programme.
40. The Indicative budget report referred to a priority list. The intention of this is that schemes (unless 100% externally funded) will be held until funding is available. The implication of this is that although schemes will be approved in the budget process, they may not be able to proceed until funding becomes available.

HRA

41. The HRA capital programme is shown in the budget book in section 3 The shortfall remains at £6.6m as reported in December.
42. Since the last budget report the HRA capital programme and its funding have been reviewed. This has resulted in changes to the phasing of the programme, though the total expenditure has not changed. The largest change relates to work on the Tower Blocks which require a longer preparation/ lead in time, with the expenditure spread over the next four years.
43. The phasing of available funding has changed slightly as a result of the review. Direct revenue financing in 2007-08 has reduced by £0.5m, reflecting the indicative budget for 2007-08, though this is offset by supported borrowing. Direct revenue financing in future years has reduced slightly, reflecting the additional leasing cost of Southfield Park.

Area Committee devolution

44. The Council wishes to give Area Committees the flexibility they need to be able to exert real implementation of their local priorities to cover community centres, small parks, play areas and NEAT team activities.
45. Executive Board is asked to recommend Council to agree to devolve budgets in these areas to Area Committees subject to a further report outlining how this could operate in practice.

Next Steps

46. This budget will go to Council on February 12th for approval.
47. Once the budget has been agreed, a Council Tax setting report will go to Executive Board and Council on
48. Within 28 days of the Budget being approved a detailed budget Book will be produced. A revised Medium Term Financial Strategy will also

be produced and this will lead into the beginning of the 2008/9 budget process which will start in May/June 2007.

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Background papers:

Indicative Budget Report – Executive Board 18th December 2006
Budget Overview and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2007-08 to 2011-12
Executive Board November 6th 2006



	<u>£'000</u>
General Fund budget deficit as at Indicative Budget (EB 18.12.06)	251
<i>Finance & Corporate Services Directorate</i>	
Removal of Business Systems saving	25
Collection Fund Surplus (£86k not £55k)	-31
	SFBS02
<i>Housing, Health & Community</i>	
Removal of Community Housing Savings	15
Elderly Services	20
Reduce temp Accom manager Est - natural wastage	60
VFM Proposal	100
Community Housing - saving in twice	
	SHCH12 SHCH11 SHCH13 SHCH09
Removal of Customer Services Savings	30
Shared service prov	
Removal of Neighbourhood Renewal Savings	5
BU Support staff review	
outsource NR work to voluntary sector	20
	SHNR03 SHNR08
Removal of Environmental Health Savings	10
VFM proposal	
Further reduction in reliance on expensive EH contractors	5
	SHEH05 SHEH04
HH&C compensating savings	
Review of PSL Leasing	-86
Elderly Services Staff savings (2.5 posts)	-60
EH Grant - net income after spend (70-35)	-35
HHC Balance to find	-84
	CH CH EH
<i>Physical Environment</i>	
Additional pressure - pension cost	12
	BE
SLA's reduced charge to HRA	81
07/08 reduction in interest charged to HRA	262
Concessionary fare inflation	200
Policy Space	400
Running Total	1200
	drawdown of balances

Note: Drawdown of balances used in Indicative Budget December 06 was £0.3m, total contribution from balances is £1.5m

General Fund and HRA Projected Balances - January 2007 & Future Years

	General Fund	HRA
2006-07		
Closing Balances at 31 March 2006	(5,810,815)	(2,777,178)
Approved carry forwards	154,547	340,000
Available balances as at 1 April 2006	(5,656,268)	(2,437,178)
Balances used/(returned to balances) in 2006/07 budget	1,940,856	(35,000)
Impact of creation of single HRA unit	107,000	(107,000)
IRP recommendations on Members' Allowances	24,904	
Member priorities (July 2006 EB)	86,300	
Return to balances of DWP provisions not required	(756,006)	
Proposed expenditure for Unlary status preliminary work	60,000	
Other forecast variances as at September 2006 (General Fund not yet approved)	77,000	112,000
Costs of unitary	140,000	
06/07 reduction in interest charged to HRA	253,000	
Concessionary Fares	600,000	(253,000)
Return to balances of Item A reserve	(610,000)	
Estimated HB subsidy claims - provision for repayments not required	(100,000)	
Return to balances of VAT provision for Partial exemption	(270,000)	
Return to balances - Equal Pay revenue provision	(300,000)	
LABGI	(150,000)	
Direct Revenue Funding of capital spending		720,178
Revised balances at 31 March 2007	(4,553,214)	(2,000,000)
Balances used/(returned to balances) in 2007/08 budget	313,471	(1,266,000)
additional balances used in 2007/08 budget (includes 07/08 reduction in interest charged to HRA)	1,200,000	
Subsidy and interest changes for HRA		317,000
Direct Revenue Funding of capital spending		949,000
		0
		0
Revised balances at 31 March 2008	(3,039,743)	(2,000,000)
Balances used/(returned to balances) in 2008/09 budget	(904,437)	(830,000)
Revenue contribution to capital in 2008/09 budget	900,000	
Direct Revenue Funding of capital spending	0	830,000
		0
		0
Revised balances at 31 March 2009	(3,044,180)	(2,000,000)
Balances used/(returned to balances) in 2009/10 budget	(904,437)	(830,000)
Revenue contribution to capital in 2008/09 budget	900,000	
Direct Revenue Funding of capital spending		830,000
Revised balances at 31 March 2010	(3,048,617)	(2,000,000)
Recommended minimum level of balances	(3,000,000)	(2,000,000)

**MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF AREA AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEES ON THE INDICATIVE BUDGET 2007- 08 AND OTHER
RESPONSES RECIEVED**

PART 1 - AREA COMMITTEES

Cowley Area Committee – 3 January 2007

108. INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR CONSULTATION 2007-2008

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated now appended) which provided details of the indicative budget with regard to Area Committees.

In response to questions Sarah Fogden said that "Systems Thinking" was a pilot that was being conducted by the Council through a company called Vanguard which looked at how the back-office systems worked and how these could be streamlined to improve service delivery and reduce costs.

Angela Cristofoli said that the proposed cut in the Area Committee Discretionary Budget of £15k across all 6 Area Committees, would mean a cut of approximately £2k from the Cowley Area Committee Discretionary Revenue Budget.

The Committee agreed:

- (a) To request the Leisure and Cultural Services Business Manager to provide the Cowley Area Committee with details of how and on what the £800k listed in the budget for the Temple Cowley Swimming Pool would be spent;
- (b) To RECOMMEND the Executive Board:
 - (1) To support the provision of a new customer contact centre at Cowley Centre, and to provide the necessary funding in the Capital Programme;
 - (2) Not cut £15k from the Area Committee Discretionary Revenue Budgets in years 2007/08, 08/09 and 09/10 and that the current levels of funding should be maintained as this funding was relatively new and supported many vital local projects;
 - (3) That the level of service provided to Area Committee by Committee Services should be maintained at the current level and that accordingly there should not be any reduction in the budget;
 - (4) To note that the Cowley Area Committee would support the allotments funding being spread over 5 years.

North Area Committee – 4 January 2007

155. INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR CONSULTATION – 2007/08

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated now appended) which contained a summary of the budget decisions which the Area Committee would be asked to comment on.

Councillor Goddard as Leader of the Council introduced the item and said that the budget was an indicative budget that was largely prepared by Officers and given the Administration for approval for consultation. He said that the budget was a “work in progress” and included the direction the Administration wanted to go in with regard to its manifesto promises when it took Office. He added that as this was an indicative budget it would not necessarily be the same budget that would be adopted by Council.

Councillor Goddard said that he felt that appendix B to the report was not up to date, as it seemed to be the old capital programme, which was now under review. In response Penny Gardner said that the document allowed Members to make comments and to update what they felt were the priorities.

In response to questions concerning the cut of £15k in the Area Committee Discretionary Budget, Penny Gardner said that within the Area Committee budgets there was no provision to fund inflation and the increase in staff costs and that by cutting £15k from the budget this would be solved.

The Committee agreed:

- (a) To note that this was an indicative budget prepared by Officers and approved for consultation by the Executive Board, but that this would not necessarily be the budget that would be adopted by Full Council;
- (b) That the Area Committee Discretionary Revenue Budget should be increased as any decrease would weaken local area devolvement of the services and budgets.

South East Area Committee – 8 January 2007

153. INDICATIVE BUDGET 2007/2008 FOR CONSULTATION.

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services, submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended), concerning the indicative budget for the year 2007/2008. Sarah Fogden presented this to the Committee and gave the following additional information: -

- (1) The current proposal was for a 3% increase in Council Tax for 2007/2008.
- (2) The Indicative Budget removed £15,000 from the budget for Area Committees.
- (3) There could be a saving made on the running costs of Blackbird Leys Community Centre should that be devolved to a Community Association to run.
- (4) It was proposed to spread the budget for Allotments, previously presented to the Committee, over 5 years as opposed to 3.
- (5) It was not proposed to put any money in the budget for the refurbishment of play areas.
- (6) Some money had been put in the budget for the refurbishment of Community Centres, and the officers had submitted a bid for funding for an all-weather pitch at the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre. This latter item was to match funding sought via a bid to the Football Foundation.

The Area Committee expressed concern at the lack of funding for the play areas, since children and young people should be a priority for the Council. Work on the Allotments, and at the Community Centres within the City, was also very important. Councillor Tanner asked what had happened to the development of the Littlemore Baptist Church, and Councillor Craft enquired whether it might be desirable to build a large swimming pool at the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre.

Resolved:-

- (1) To note all comments made;
- (2) To RECOMMEND to Executive Board that:-
 - (a) Spending on allotments should be over 3 years and not the 5 years proposed in the indicative budget;
 - (b) Money should be placed in the budget for the refurbishment of play areas;
 - (c) The South East Area Committee opposed the reduction of £15,000 in the Area Committee's budget;
- (3) To ask the Area Co-ordinator to update the Committee at the next meeting concerning the Littlemore Baptist Church redevelopment scheme.

Central South and West Area Committee – 10 January 2007

This meeting had become inquorate before the budget item was discussed. Comments from an informal discussion between the 3 remaining members (Councillors Huzzey, Pressel, and Van Nooijen) are attached.

CONSULTATION ON THE INDICATIVE BUDGET 2007/2008

Members: -

- noted concerns expressed by members of the public present regarding the suggestions that the funding for improvements to allotments should be phased over five years rather than three and that car park charges on Saturdays should be increased
- expressed concern at the proposed re-phasing of funding for improvements to allotments; expressed opposition to the savings on Area Committee budgets and increasing car parking charges on Saturdays; suggested, in view of the fact that the Jericho Community Centre was to be replaced, that capital work it was proposed to carry out should not be done; suggested that as much funding as possible should be available for maintaining play areas to be allocated on the basis of super output figures
- asked that information be circulated to members concerning the proposals relating to: the rationalisation of leisure facilities, efficiency savings on the Area Committees budget, the re-organisation of litterbins, reducing Sure Start income pressures, reducing the SLA cost to the Chinese Advice Centre and the proposals regarding increased charges/income from the recycling/refuse collection scheme
- asked that information concerning the proposal to rationalise leisure facilities also be sent to the Oxford Sports Council.

North East Area Committee – 16 January 2007 (from the Action Sheet)

Resolved to RECOMMEND the Executive Board to:

1. Progress the devolvement of budgets to Area Committees so that local priorities can be addressed as soon as possible;
2. Reverse the proposals to spread out allotment funding over 5 years;
3. Note that with the number of play areas in the area the Committee was concerned to see support for the future.

East Area Parliament – 17 January 2007

Recommendations will be reported at the meeting.

PART 2 - SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Community Scrutiny Committee – 11 January 2007

Although the Committee has not considered the Indicative Budget as such, it made a Budget related recommendation at its meeting on 11 January.

73. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CO-ORDINATOR

The Strategy and Review Business Manager submitted a report concerning the work of the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator since the post was created. The post holder, Liz Jones, presented this report to the Committee. The following additional information was given and key points made: -

- (a) Domestic violence accounted for 25% of all violent crime reported, and cost each household in the City £169 per year. However, only 2.6% of domestic violence incidents were reported. One aim of the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator's post was to raise awareness of the whole issue of domestic violence
- (b) It was stressed that the "Sanctuary Scheme" would be open to both men and women.
- (c) The John Radcliffe Hospital had been given funding to monitor people attending the Accident and Emergency department with alcohol related injuries, and staff were to be trained to make enquiries about domestic violence related incidents. It was important to identify such cases, especially where people were repeat victims. Approximately 70% of Social Services caseload related to families in a domestic violence situation. Parents needed to be made aware of the effect this had on their children.
- (d) There was a need to reach groups that were traditionally hard to reach. A hidden area of abuse was within the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Another hidden area was the black and minority ethnic community, as well as people with learning difficulties. Work in these areas was progressing, although more needed to be done. For example Health Advocates, including midwives, could receive training in broaching this topic with their clients.
- (e) It should be noted that although this topic was labelled "domestic violence", abuse did not have to be physical to be damaging - it could be psychological too. Violence and abuse were about control and power as much as anything else.

- (f) At present there were mandatory Perpetrator Programmes within the criminal justice system, available via the Probation Service, but very few voluntary schemes. Perpetrator Programmes aimed to raise the individual's own awareness of his/her behaviour, and equip them with the tools necessary to cope with their own feelings without resorting to abusive behaviour. These were not short schemes, each lasted about 30 weeks, and each participant needed to be self-motivated and desiring to change. At present there was a 1-year waiting list for the mandatory schemes. Councillor Pressel suggested that a letter was sent to Bullingdon Prison and the Home Office, in which it was suggested that anyone convicted of violence should have access to such a scheme, either during their prison sentence, or as part of their community based sentence.
- (g) The County Council also had a Domestic Violence Co-ordinator, with whom the City Council co-ordinator worked quite closely; and it was hoped to develop an integrated domestic violence strategy across Oxfordshire. Education was a key part of the strategy – people needed to understand what effect abuse had, and people needed to learn, from a young age, that violence and pain were never acceptable in any relationship. There were various initiatives around, but strong Government backing (and funding) was also needed.

Resolved: -

- (1) To RECOMMEND to Executive Board that the necessity of this post was recognised, and that the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator's post was made permanent from April 2007 as part of the base budget;
- (2) In the event that this post became permanent, to request that an Action Plan for the future development of this work be presented at a future meeting.

Housing Scrutiny Committee – 15 January 2007

89. INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR CONSULTATION 2007-08

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated now appended) on the indicative budgets for 2007/08 to 2011/12. A confidential appendix was also submitted.

Graham Bourton in response to questions said that with regard to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) he was able to achieve the savings, but not at the expense of service delivery to the customer. Unidentified savings of £80,000 would be achieved through not filling vacant posts, increased productivity and using different procurement methods. It was agreed that overall £80,000 was not a large amount when you take the budget as a whole and that there needed to be some flexibility on the achievement of some

savings, by reviewing income/expenditure on a month by month basis rather than at the outset being specific on how the saving would be made.

Roy Summers said that an additional £600k would have to be paid to the Government in Housing Subsidy, however this had been anticipated and would not affect the overall funding position. He added that Officers were still in discussions on the amount of subsidy to be paid. He further added that the Council had supported borrowing of £556k from the Government and receive interest on unspent capital funds. This would make up the shortfall and that the overall budget would breakeven in 2007/08.

Councillor Turner commented that there were still significant disposal to achieve Decent Homes. He added that wind turbines were not cost neutral as a cost would still be incurred even if a scheme did not proceed and this should be reflected in the budget. Graham Bourton said that other methods and schemes could be used to achieve energy efficiency for tenants rather than using wind turbines.

Graham Stratford with regard to the Community Housing budget, said that the budget reflected the savings that were most likely to be achieved. There would be problems delivering the Homechoice Scheme in 2007/08. This service had been overspent in previous years, but the shortfall that had been made up from other parts of the Business Unit budget (mainly from income from PSL properties). As the number of PSL properties had fallen, this option was no longer available to the Council.

Councillor Turner said that the Homechoice Scheme was already "rationed" (in that it was only available to those who otherwise would be accepted as homeless and placed in temporary accommodation) and asked how it could be rationed further. In response Graham Stratford said the only way to make the budget go as far as possible was to put a monthly financial limit in place. One this had been spent, the service would be closed and homeless people, who may otherwise be offered Homechoice, would be placed in temporary accommodation.

Councillor Turner said that closing the Scheme early was arbitrary and a blunt way of saving money, and would not save money in the long-term as other costs (such as the cost of leasing PSL properties) would rise.

Graham Stratford said that he had also put a bid in for £60k to undertake a feasibility study for a Foyer Scheme.

Councillor Brundin said that there were a small number of essential activities which if cut would not generate savings, as the activities would still have to be done and so funded from savings in other budgets. He also felt that if the Foyer Scheme was important it should be in the budget and funded, as such a scheme had been talked about for many years and should either be progressed or dropped.

The Committee agreed:

To RECOMMEND the Executive Board:

- (1) To support the Officers views that the voluntary energy efficiency and renewable scheme for tenants should be dropped from the budget and considered as a saving to the HRA. Officers have not yet been able to demonstrate that this scheme would become cost neutral;
- (2) That funding of £60k should be added to the budget to pay for a Foyer Scheme feasibility study. The Housing Scrutiny Committee felt that this scheme should be progressed and funding made available;
- (3) The Housing Scrutiny Committee felt that it was not appropriate to offer a saving on the back of the Homechoice Scheme, by closing the scheme each month once the monthly budget had been spent. Indeed, the proposal, as put forward would not save the Council money in the longer term as more homeless people would be housed in temporary accommodation. Officers should be requested to consider this saving again and offer a different proposal to make the required savings.

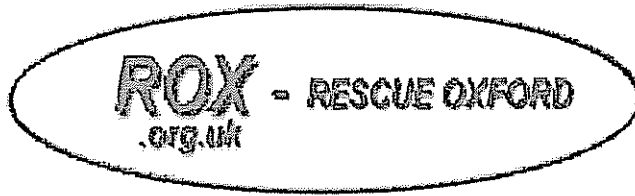
Finance Scrutiny Committee – 18 January 2007

Recommendations will be reported at the meeting.

Environment Scrutiny Committee – has not considered the Indicative Budget.

PART 3 – RESPONSES FROM OTHER SOURCES

Letters from ROX Rescue Oxford and Jemini (Covered Market) are attached



c/o 30, St Giles,
Oxford
OX1 3LE

Tel. (01865) 513243

Fax (01865) 552780

e-mail : gsjones@talk21.com

M/s Sarah Fogden,
Business Manager,
Oxford City Council,
St Aldates Chambers,
109 – 113, St Aldates,
Oxford
OX1 1DS

16th January, 2007

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your letter of 9th January on Business Rates Consultation. As the local business campaign group we welcome the opportunity to comment on your budget proposals for 2007-2008.

Similar to any business, we would expect you to concentrate on your core services and ensure that those which you provide are of high quality while fringe, nice to have provisions are looked at more critically.

In our response we limit our comments to those which have a more direct bearing on business and the economic well-being of the city.

Appendix A General Fund – Proposed Savings For Inclusion in 2007/2008 Budget

Any genuine savings through improved efficiency will receive our support provided that they do not lead to a deterioration in service and do not further reduce key services which require improvements and, possibly, more finance.

Although steps have been taken to improve street cleaning in the city centre, we believe that this has fallen back in recent months. We hope that the suggested cut backs on spending on street cleansing will not further impact on this in a negative way. Many other cities seem to have a stricter cleaning regime whereby the streets, particularly the shopping streets, are swept and washed, and litter bins cleared, before and after the normal working hours i.e. by 7.30 a.m. and after 5.30 p.m. Will the financial provision for next year allow for this?

Please can you clarify the situation about the litter bin proposal which talks about a “third party” and savings of £39,000? Does this mean that you have a sponsor for the bins? If so, how will that illustrate itself?

Will the proposed saving at your Park and Ride sites affect security?

We oppose the planned increased Saturday car parking charges. Oxford’s charges are already higher than competing towns and cities within 40 miles of Oxford. Penalising people, particularly families, who choose to come into Oxford by car to spend money in shops, restaurants, cinemas, theatres and other visitor attractions will only deter them altogether.

If this happens, the planned extra income may be far less than anticipated and local businesses will suffer as well. The next four years, when there will be some disruption during the building of the Westgate development, will be critical for most local retailers and restaurants and we feel very strongly that a welcoming signal saying “open for business” needs to be sent out, not one that says “if you venture in, you will pay through the nose for it”!

Appendix B Capital Programme 2006/2007 (Should this be or have said 2007/2008?)

It was very difficult to decipher from the small font text provided.

However, did we notice £98,000 to be spent on the Westgate car park? Is this to improve something which is going to be knocked down within the next two years?

Appendix C General Fund Budget 2007-08

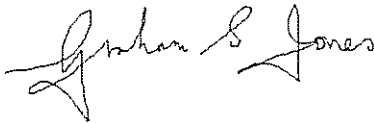
We are shocked by the high level of central administration non -income generating costs and believe that there could be savings there.

WE notice that the council makes a healthy profit from off street parking which it uses to fund the three Park and Ride services it operates. Is there not scope here for more carrot and less stick for visitors to oxford, whether they come by bus or car?

As the fourth or fifth most visited tourist location in the UK, are we making the most of tourism in the city? How does the funding and promotion compare with places like Bath and York?

We hope that these comments are helpful and we look forward to receiving a response to the questions that we have raised.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Graham Jones".

Graham Jones
For **ROX-Rescue Oxford**



Jemini

BESPOKE
PROFESSIONAL
FLORAL DESIGNERS

CHELSEA
GOLD MEDALLISTS

The Covered Market
Oxford OX1 3DX

Tel: 01865 242726
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Email: Info @
jemini.co.uk

www.jemini.co.uk

also at Abingdon
and Headington

Jemini Oxford Ltd
Company Number
2686707

13th January 07

Ms Sarah Fogden
Business Manager
Financial and Asset Management
St. Aldates Chambers
109 - 113 St. Aldates
Oxford
OX1 1DS

Dear Ms Fogden

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Business Rates Consultation. There are two items of particular concern to the Covered Market. Firstly security in and out of the Covered Market and issue which has been ongoing for many years. Secondly roof repairs which is even more pressing as a result of the severe weather we now appear to be experiencing. We have had at least two instances of serious flooding in the last twelve months and it is only a matter of time before premises in the Market become uninsurable if the present situation continues.

It is, therefore, imperative these items remain in the budget and on programme particularly as the sums involved are so modest especially when set against the annual rental income from the Market.

Yours sincerely

Sandra Griffith

S.M. Griffith
Director

Oxford

City Council

Budget Book

2007 – 08

BUDGET BOOK 2007-08

Section 1 – General Fund

Budget Summary 2007-08

Detailed analysis by Business Unit

Proposed Three Year Savings

Three year budget projection

Administration Budget proposals

Section 2 – Housing Revenue Account

Budget Summary 2007-08

Proposed Savings

Three Year Budget Projection

Section 3 – Capital Programme

General Fund Capital Programme

General Fund Capital Funding

General Fund Capital Bids

HRA Capital Programme and Funding

Section 4 – Fees and Charges

General Fund

2007 – 2008

GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2007-08

	Gross Expenditure £	Gross Income £	Net Controllable Expenditure £	SLAs And Capital Charges £	Total Budget £
<u>Business Units</u>					
Chief Executive	662,509	0	662,509	(662,472)	37
Corporate & Democratic Core	555,424	0	555,424	2,966,038	3,521,462
Chief Executive	(210,000)	0	(210,000)	0	(210,000)
Chief Executive	1,007,933	0	1,007,933	2,303,566	3,311,499
Strategy and Review	1,935,348	(205,192)	1,730,156	(257,142)	1,473,014
Human Resources	2,109,536	0	2,109,536	(1,265,108)	844,428
Financial & Asset Management	3,214,036	(6,389,238)	(3,175,202)	(1,825,671)	(5,000,873)
Legal & Democratic Services	1,882,256	(51,200)	1,831,056	(1,601,136)	229,920
Business Systems	1,363,954	0	1,363,954	(1,498,544)	(134,590)
Facilities Management	1,391,377	(530,374)	861,003	(412,047)	448,956
Revenues & Benefits	2,871,633	(1,751,386)	1,120,247	1,697,467	2,817,714
Finance & Corporate Services	(343,000)	0	(343,000)	0	(343,000)
Finance & Corporate Services	14,425,140	(8,927,390)	5,497,750	(5,162,181)	335,569
Area Co-Ordinators	496,438	0	496,438	(234,479)	261,959
Community Housing	6,994,985	(2,818,521)	4,176,464	447,628	4,624,092
Customer Services	1,185,291	0	1,185,291	(1,148,796)	36,495
Neighbourhood Renewal	4,193,826	(376,424)	3,817,402	1,472,057	5,289,459
Environmental Health	2,520,759	(554,295)	1,966,464	359,275	2,325,739
Housing Health & Community	(221,000)	0	(221,000)	0	(221,000)
Housing, Health & Community	15,170,299	(3,749,240)	11,421,059	895,685	12,316,744
Built Environment	2,885,706	(876,478)	2,009,228	(1,204,368)	804,860
City Works	13,895,021	(10,432,630)	3,462,391	2,960,147	6,422,538
Planning	2,374,737	(1,251,027)	1,123,710	562,665	1,686,375
Transport & Parking	5,185,034	(6,408,157)	(1,223,123)	717,989	(505,134)
Leisure And Cultural Services	10,581,147	(4,734,898)	5,846,249	2,233,448	8,079,697
Physical Environment	(269,000)	0	(269,000)	0	(269,000)
Physical Environment	34,652,645	(23,703,190)	10,949,455	5,269,881	16,219,336
Total Business Unit Expenditure	65,256,017	(36,379,820)	28,876,197	3,306,951	32,183,148
Policy Space					400,000
<u>Corporate Accounts</u>					
Local Cost Of Benefits					200,000
Asset Management Revenue Account					(1,181,862)
Transfer To Capital Reserve					(2,835,813)
Investment Income					(2,293,922)
Interest Payable					1,441,690
Pension Increase (2.3%)					550,000
Total Expenditure					28,463,241
<u>Funding</u>					
External Funding (2% per annum)					16,021,464
Council Tax (3% per annum)					11,096,370
Less assumed parish precept (4% per annum)					(168,064)
Assumed movement in balances in base budget					1,513,471
Collection Fund surplus (£86K saving shown in Revenues & Benefits Business Unit)					0
Total Funding Available					28,463,241
(Surplus)/Deficit for year					(0)

GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2007-08

<u>Business Units</u>	Gross Expenditure £	Gross Income £	Net Controllable Expenditure £	SLAs And Capital Charges £	Total Budget £	Savings Reference
Chief Executive						
Chief Executive, Directors & Corpora	662,509	0	662,509	(662,472)	37	
Total Chief Executive	662,509	0	662,509	(662,472)	37	
Corporate & Democratic Core						
Corporate & Democratic Core	555,424	0	555,424	2,891,565	3,446,989	
Total Corporate & Democratic Cor	555,424	0	555,424	2,891,565	3,446,989	
Chief Executive						
Chief Executive	(210,000)	0	(210,000)	0	(210,000)	
Total Chief Executive	(210,000)	0	(210,000)	0	(210,000)	
Total Chief Executive	1,007,933	0	1,007,933	2,229,093	3,237,026	

GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2007-08

<u>Business Units</u>	Gross Expenditure £	Gross Income £	Net Controllable Expenditure £	SLAs And Capital Charges £	Total Budget £	Savings Reference
Strategy and Review						
	0	0	0	45	45	
Strategic Policy	606,060	(100,376)	505,684	104,526	610,210	1
Partnerships	440,780	(23,050)	417,730	86,045	503,775	2
Review	136,983	0	136,983	(136,798)	185	3
Team Management	244,732	(34,406)	210,326	(129,271)	81,055	4
Crime Strategy	203,057	(32,000)	171,057	10,821	181,878	5
Media & Communications	303,736	(15,360)	288,376	(192,510)	95,866	6
Total Strategy and Review	1,935,348	(205,192)	1,730,156	(257,142)	1,473,014	
Human Resources						
Employee Services	675,412	0	675,412	(675,403)	9	7
Occupational Health	42,181	0	42,181	(42,181)	0	8
Learning & Development	568,943	0	568,943	(568,944)	(1)	9
Job Evaluation	823,000	0	823,000	21,420	844,420	
Total Human Resources	2,109,536	0	2,109,536	(1,265,108)	844,428	
Financial & Asset Management						
Business Manager	162,422	0	162,422	(210,688)	(48,266)	10
Accountancy	1,273,257	(120,451)	1,152,806	(1,104,526)	48,280	11
Payroll	91,555	(11,764)	79,791	(79,790)	1	12
Commercial Properties	687,842	(6,238,268)	(5,550,426)	544,714	(5,005,712)	13
Corporate Finance	353,461	(5,955)	347,506	(342,565)	4,941	14
Audit & Risk	182,895	(12,800)	170,095	(170,097)	(2)	15
Asset Management	462,604	0	462,604	(462,719)	(115)	16
Total Financial & Asset Management	3,214,036	(6,389,238)	(3,175,202)	(1,825,671)	(5,000,873)	
Legal & Democratic Services						
Legal	847,990	(40,216)	807,774	(807,776)	(2)	17
Committees (incl. Area Committees)	353,935	(4,711)	349,224	(343,224)	6,000	19
Member Services	484,783	(202)	484,581	(484,582)	(1)	20
Election Services	195,548	(6,071)	189,477	34,446	223,923	21
Total Legal & Democratic Services	1,882,256	(51,200)	1,831,056	(1,601,136)	229,920	
Business Systems						
Core Systems	128,964	0	128,964	(128,957)	7	22
Servers & Networks	167,228	0	167,228	(167,227)	1	23
Staff/Running Costs	1,016,983	0	1,016,983	(1,151,582)	(134,599)	24
E-Government	50,779	0	50,779	(50,778)	1	25
Total Business Systems	1,363,954	0	1,363,954	(1,498,544)	(134,590)	
Facilities Management						
Administrative Support	146,210	0	146,210	(146,210)	0	
Caretaking & Cleaning	330,789	(211,930)	118,859	(180,288)	(61,429)	26
Town Hall Management	385,121	0	385,121	(385,123)	(2)	27
Switchboard	361,995	(315,411)	46,584	463,806	510,390	28
Switchboard	167,262	(3,033)	164,229	(164,232)	(3)	29
Total Facilities Management	1,391,377	(530,374)	861,003	(412,047)	448,956	
Revenues & Benefits						
Income & Collection	909,358	(430,790)	478,568	638,404	1,116,972	30
Housing Benefit Administration	1,754,918	(1,223,358)	531,560	1,011,412	1,542,972	31
Benefit Investigation	207,357	(97,238)	110,119	47,651	157,770	32
Total Revenues & Benefits	2,871,633	(1,751,386)	1,120,247	1,697,467	2,817,714	
Finance & Corporate Services						
Finance & Corporate Services	(343,000)	0	(343,000)	0	(343,000)	34
Total Finance & Corporate Service	(343,000)	0	(343,000)	0	(343,000)	
Total Finance & Corporate Service	14,425,140	(8,927,390)	5,497,750	(5,162,181)	335,569	

GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2007-08

<u>Business Units</u>	Gross Expenditure £	Gross Income £	Net Controllable Expenditure £	SLAs And Capital Charges £	Total Budget £	Savings Reference
Area Co-Ordinators						
Area Co-Ordinators	258,509	0	258,509	(258,507)	2	
Area Committee Budgets	237,929	0	237,929	24,028	261,957	35
Total Area Co-Ordinators	496,438	0	496,438	(234,479)	261,959	
Community Housing						
Community Housing Management	168,029	0	168,029	1,583	169,612	
Temporary Accommodation Manage	249,192	(81,961)	167,231	6,142	173,373	36
Housing Options & Allocations	1,031,313	0	1,031,313	141,396	1,172,709	
Homelessness Accomodation Costs	3,109,354	(1,431,312)	1,678,042	96,604	1,774,646	37
Home Choice	439,066	0	439,066	205,015	644,081	
Housing Advice	186,553	0	186,553	750	187,303	
Choice Based Lettings	110,862	0	110,862	6,798	117,660	
Elderly Services	865,644	(693,920)	171,724	17,410	189,134	38
Homelessness Service & Private Let	834,972	(611,328)	223,644	(28,070)	195,574	
Total Community Housing	6,994,985	(2,818,521)	4,176,464	447,628	4,624,092	
Customer Services						
Customer Sevices	1,185,291	0	1,185,291	(1,148,796)	36,495	39
Total Customer Services	1,185,291	0	1,185,291	(1,148,796)	36,495	
Neighbourhood Renewal						
Community Development	290,949	(23,484)	267,465	13,176	280,641	
Community Centres	392,916	(60,152)	332,764	1,074,511	1,407,275	40
Community Recreation	39,320	(22,751)	16,569	57,731	74,300	41
Grants	1,221,548	0	1,221,548	8,448	1,229,996	42
Street Wardens	540,285	0	540,285	30,979	571,264	
Housing Development	61,061	0	61,061	11,499	72,560	
Housing Grants	0	0	0	2	2	
Anti-social Behaviour Order	335,399	(82,944)	252,455	50,223	302,678	
Housing	424,958	0	424,958	994	425,952	
International Exchange	52,487	(5,273)	47,214	7,528	54,742	43
Neighbourhood Renewal Services	316,208	0	316,208	177,190	493,398	44
Rough Sleepers	0	0	0	0	0	
Social Inclusion	177,274	(20,029)	157,245	9,529	166,774	45
Community/Sports Development Sct	0	0	0	178	178	
Funded Schemes	173,737	(159,876)	13,861	26,894	40,755	
City Centre / CCTV	167,684	(1,915)	165,769	3,175	168,944	
Total Neighbourhood Renewal	4,193,826	(376,424)	3,817,402	1,472,057	5,289,459	
Environmental Health						
General Management	169,164	0	169,164	79,970	249,134	46
Occupational & Residential Health &	502,177	(66,565)	435,612	72,414	508,026	47
Food Safety	291,798	(142,621)	149,177	33,249	182,426	48
Environmental Protection	445,243	(24,256)	420,987	45,001	465,988	49
Public Health	693,406	(120,853)	572,553	64,651	637,204	50
Support & Development	418,971	(200,000)	218,971	63,990	282,961	51
Total Environmental Health	2,520,759	(554,295)	1,966,464	359,275	2,325,739	
Housing Health & Community						
Housing Health & Community	(221,000)	0	(221,000)	0	(221,000)	52
Total Housing Health & Communit	(221,000)	0	(221,000)	0	(221,000)	
Total Housing, Health & Communi	15,170,299	(3,749,240)	11,421,059	895,685	12,316,744	

GENERAL FUND BUDGET 2007-08

	Gross Expenditure £	Gross Income £	Net Controllable Expenditure £	SLAs And Capital Charges £	Total Budget £	Savings Reference
<u>Business Units</u>						
Built Environment						
Building Control (Ring-fenced)	644,479	(774,484)	(130,005)	113,040	(16,965)	
Building Control (Other)	144,800	0	144,800	6,554	151,354	
Design Team	268,424	(25,981)	242,443	(70,455)	171,988	53
Highways Residual	28,672	0	28,672	20,716	49,388	
Shopmobility & Disability Access	139,570	(40,151)	99,419	27,851	127,270	54
Admin Buildings	1,116,181	(6,894)	1,109,287	(1,109,283)	4	55
Building Design & Construction	360,008	(28,968)	331,040	(331,039)	1	
Property Maintenance (Part)	183,572	0	183,572	138,248	321,820	
Total Built Environment	2,885,706	(876,478)	2,009,228	(1,204,368)	804,860	
City Works						
Engineering	1,391,727	(1,735,346)	(343,619)	258,061	(85,558)	
Street Cleaning	2,276,576	(273,238)	2,003,338	588,895	2,592,233	56
Street Furniture	156,383	0	156,383	15,653	172,036	
Public Conveniences	436,968	(7,168)	429,800	84,142	513,942	
Recycling	2,034,027	(1,073,768)	960,259	328,180	1,288,439	57
Refuse	3,268,789	(1,764,370)	1,504,419	495,439	1,999,858	58
Markets	364,802	(169,816)	194,986	84,871	279,857	
Motor Transport	1,916,905	(3,378,517)	(1,461,612)	929,030	(532,582)	59
City Works Management & Depot Co	2,048,844	(2,030,407)	18,437	175,876	194,313	
Total City Works	13,895,021	(10,432,630)	3,462,391	2,960,147	6,422,538	
Planning						
Production Of Local Plan/LDF	(10,000)	(1,000)	(11,000)	456	(10,544)	60
Planning Policy	670,161	(80,000)	590,161	91,439	681,600	61
Planning Control	1,005,906	(736,272)	269,634	362,113	631,747	62
Planning Management & Technical S	472,881	(102,637)	370,244	(35)	370,209	63
Property Services	235,789	(331,118)	(95,329)	108,692	13,363	64
Total Planning	2,374,737	(1,251,027)	1,123,710	562,665	1,686,375	
Transport & Parking						
Off Street Parking	2,169,925	(5,609,595)	(3,439,670)	489,792	(2,949,878)	65
Park & Ride	650,431	(539,601)	110,830	161,285	272,115	66
Taxis	116,680	(173,681)	(57,001)	52,834	(4,167)	
Concessionary Fares	2,158,865	0	2,158,865	5,546	2,164,411	
Public Transport	32,462	0	32,462	1,219	33,681	
Gloucester Green Bus Station	56,671	(85,280)	(28,609)	7,313	(21,296)	
Total Transport & Parking	5,185,034	(6,408,157)	(1,223,123)	717,989	(505,134)	
Leisure And Cultural Services						
Leisure & Culture Business Support	216,967	(640,000)	(423,033)	36,891	(386,142)	67
Culture Management	57,343	0	57,343	7,760	65,103	
Arts, Dance & Events	282,175	(120,238)	161,937	20,709	182,646	68
Museum & Carfax Tower	842,672	(559,128)	283,544	227,613	511,157	69
Former Leisure Management	0	0	0	5,861	5,861	
Leisure Central Management & Supp	497,742	0	497,742	77,404	575,146	70
Pool Facilities	924,818	(203,787)	721,031	424,026	1,145,057	
Leisure Centres	2,671,218	(1,114,663)	1,556,555	1,013,870	2,570,425	71
Ice Rink	724,597	(787,453)	(62,856)	70,430	7,574	
Sports Development	54,743	(3,755)	50,988	2,276	53,264	72
Externally Funded/Partnerships	403,207	(402,945)	262	4,692	4,954	
Parks Management & Administration	561,566	(194,160)	367,406	184,780	552,186	
Parks	2,948,183	(468,229)	2,479,954	120,620	2,600,574	
Countryside	185,751	(9,647)	176,104	15,736	191,840	
Allotments	117,022	(18,250)	98,772	11,207	109,979	73
Burial Services	93,143	(212,643)	(119,500)	9,573	(109,927)	
Total Leisure And Cultural Service:	10,581,147	(4,734,898)	5,846,249	2,233,448	8,079,697	
Physical Environment						
Physical Environment	(269,000)	0	(269,000)	0	(269,000)	74
Total Physical Environment	(269,000)	0	(269,000)	0	(269,000)	
Total Physical Environment	34,652,645	(23,703,190)	10,949,455	5,269,881	16,219,336	