

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES DECISION MEETING**

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Hugh Mason, at his decision meeting held on Tuesday 1 December 2009 at 9.30am in the Guildhall, Portsmouth.

Councillor Donna Jones (Opposition Spokesperson, Conservative Group) and officers were welcomed to the meeting by Councillor Mason.

### **22 Apologies for Absence**

No apologies had been received.

### **23 Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 1)**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **24 Monitoring of the 2nd Quarter 2009/10 - Revenue Cash Limit and Capital Programme (AI 2)**

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR AND SECTION 151 OFFICER)

Ms Susan Page introduced the report and provided members with a summary of the report comparing the controllable cash limit for 2009/10 with the forecast outturn for that year and provided information on the reasons for variances.

In response to questions the following points were made:

- 3.4 Revenue Expenditure - it was confirmed that savings on windfall budgets accrue to the corporate centre but overspendings on windfall budgets that cannot be absorbed within the portfolio budget are funded corporately.
- The overspend on Housing Benefits is the current forecast and this reflects the economic climate in that there is likely to be more demand.
- It was confirmed that since the report was written there have been more calls on the feasibility studies budget provision including an extra £30,000 for the library.
- It was confirmed that the anticipated overspend in the Democratic & Community Engagement budget of £50k in the current financial year was as a consequence of savings agreed in the budget in February 2008. At that time it was anticipated that the Best Value review of Community Involvement would identify a new structure for community engagement that would generate efficiencies across council services involved with the community sector. The incidents of these savings were unknown at the time and the total sum was included with the CIED budget until the detailed savings could be identified and

reallocated to the relevant services. However this remains an uncertain prospect and it is not realistic for the Democratic & Community Engagement budget to absorb these savings in the current financial year or in the longer term. Basically a review was never implemented so no savings have materialised and therefore cannot be realised.

- With regard to the landlord's maintenance forecast overspend of £45,000, it was confirmed that there is no choice but to spend this money as they have been identified as urgent health and safety works. It was explained that although Asset Management Service has a contingency fund, this is capital and not revenue.
- The forecast overspend in relation to the staff club was for loss from the current budget. Funding for this facility was withdrawn as part of the 2009/10 budget savings approved by the city council in February 2009.
- The staffing vacancy mentioned in 3.4.6 has now been filled.
- There was some discussion about the project management provision of £283,500 which has not been called on to date. It was explained that this does not just relate to this portfolio and it was confirmed that this will be reviewed in February 2010 as part of the revised capital programme to consider whether there is still a need for this capital.
- With regard to the capital contingency of £500,000 in respect of landlord's maintenance, there was a discussion about the possible use of this money for projects such as the Stamshaw and Tipner Leisure Centre. It was suggested that Councillor Donna Jones could email Councillor Leo Madden, one of the ward councillors for Stamshaw and Tipner to see what could be done about this leisure centre. Ms Sue Page also said that the re-roofing of the library is another scheme which may become a call on money in the capital contingency.
- With regard to the Disability Discrimination Act councillors asked for details of the five properties mentioned and requested a breakdown of the costs estimated in respect of each property.

With regard to Appendix B of the report the following points were clarified:

- The city wide communications network is not the same as the telephone system.
- Professional fees will be reviewed and updated as part of the revised capital programme.
- Ms Sue Page agreed to email details of everything spent under miscellaneous developments number 5 - professional fees and number 7 - project management.

- Sue Page also confirmed that with regard to Appendix A the headings contained in the table would be reconsidered to see whether they were the most useful way of presenting the information.

**DECISION:**

**That the content of the report be noted.**

The meeting concluded at 9.58am

.....  
Councillor Hugh Mason  
Cabinet Member for Resources