

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Lee Mason, at his meeting held on Thursday, 10 March 2016 at 10.00 am in The Executive Meeting Room - Third Floor, The Guildhall, Portsmouth.

Present

Councillor Lee Mason (in the chair)

Councillor Colin Galloway

Officers Present

Louise Wilders, Director Customer and Communication

Mark Sage, Acting Tackling Poverty Co-ordinator

Sue Page, Finance Manager

8. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Hugh Mason. Apologies for the late start of the meeting were made by the Cabinet Member for Resources as he had been unavoidably delayed by a traffic incident.

9. Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

10. Local Welfare Assistance Provision - April 2016 onwards (AI 3)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Louise Wilders introduced Mark Sage, Acting Tackling Poverty Co-ordinator, who then introduced the report. He explained that the purpose of the report was to make recommendations on local welfare assistance provision and budget from April 2016, and on the use of under-spend from local welfare provision in 2015/16 (estimated to be £60,000).

He said that local welfare enables recipients to maintain a minimum basic standard of living, by providing small grants to keep warm, and paying for essential furniture and white goods. The budget for 2015/16 is £99,550, allocated from under-spend in the local welfare budget for 2014/15, and £30,000 provided by Public Health Portsmouth (PHP) towards the Keep Warm Keep Well (KWKW) scheme. Supporting households in need, who do not yet qualify for a statutory response, can help to prevent needs from escalating.

The impact of withdrawing support is set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

Mr Sage said that Portsmouth's Director of Public Health has identified the entire Keep Warm Keep Well budget as a saving for 2016/17, so no funding will be provided by PHP.

3.4 of the report sets out how PCC has been working towards a sustainable model to meet local needs.

Mr Sage said that if the recommendations were approved, this will ensure that resources are available for vulnerable people in need, via the agencies that support them; it will also provide those agencies with a decision making tool to enable consistency and prompt other solutions.

DECISION that:

- **A sum of £30,000 from the 2015/16 budget under-spend be allocated to provide local welfare in 2016/17, solely for residents from within the City boundaries to be distributed as £15,000 to Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation for the provision of Keep Warm Keep Well grants in 2016/17 and £15,000 for Housing Options to co-ordinate on behalf of housing support provider partners, for the provision of essential furniture and white goods for vulnerable clients who are re-settling, and require Housing Options to provide a quarterly report detailing the use of funds.**
- **A sum of £30,000 be allocated from the 2015/16 budget under-spend within Resources Portfolio reserve to provide local welfare in 2017/18.**
- **The Acting Tackling Poverty Coordinator (ATPC) to ensure information resources for people in financial hardship are kept up to date.**
- **The ATPC to continue to work with Learning Links to develop a furniture recycling project in the city, with a sustainable model that can meet the needs of residents in financial hardship.**

11. Monitoring of the Third Quarter 2015/16 Revenue Cash Limits and Capital Programmes - information only (AI 4)

(TAKE IN INFORMATION ONLY REPORT)

Sue Page, Finance Manager, introduced the report which compares the forecast revenue outturn 2015/16 with the cash limited budget for that year and the forecast capital expenditure with the approved capital programme and provides information to enable an understanding of the reason for variances. It also lists the action to be taken to mitigate the effect of forecast overspends.

With regard to the Revenue Account, Ms Page said that most of the underspends relate to services holding vacant posts where operationally possible in anticipation of future efficiency requirements. She went on to explain that the forecast overspend in item 8, AMS Design and Maintenance

would be off-set by the forecast underspend in item 10 Landlords Maintenance.

Ms Page said that to date there is an uncommitted balance on the reserve of £723,200. Any non- windfall underspend achieved by the portfolio at the end of the current year will be added to the reserve and conversely any overspend will need to be met from it. She said that the decision on agenda item 3 on today's agenda would reduce the reserve by £60,000.

Ms Page advised that Appendix B gave details of individual capital schemes. She explained that the capital programme has been updated to reflect the impact of new schemes, further approved amendments, re-phasing of expenditure and the removal of completed schemes.

The Cabinet Member for Resources noted the report.

The meeting concluded at 10.30am.

Councillor Lee Mason
Cabinet Member for Resources