

ITEM 7



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION 31 JANUARY 2005

Report of the Director of Corporate Services

Report of the Community Regeneration, Culture and Prosperity, Education, Planning and Environment, and Social Care and Health Commissions on the Council's draft Revenue Budget 2005/06 – 2007/08

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Scrutiny Management Commission considers the recommendations of the other five Overview and Scrutiny Commissions and reports them, together with its own recommendations on the draft Revenue Budget 2005/06 to 2007/08, to the Council Cabinet meeting on 8 February 2005.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Management Commission will consider the Council's draft Revenue Budget for 2005/06 – 2007/08 at the Commission's meeting on 31 January 2005. At the same meeting the Scrutiny Management Commission will receive the recommendations of the other five Overview and Scrutiny Commissions (Community Regeneration, Culture and Prosperity, Education, Planning and Environment, and Social Care and Health) on the Council's draft Revenue Budget.
- 2.2 Appendices A-F of this report contain reports from the other five O&S Commissions on the Council's draft Revenue Budget. The table in Appendix G summarises the recommendations of the other five Commissions.
- 2.3 It is suggested that Scrutiny Management Commission considers the recommendations of the other five Overview and Scrutiny Commissions and reports them, together with its own recommendations on the draft Revenue Budget, to the Council Cabinet meeting on 8 February 2005.

For more information contact: David Romaine 01332 255598 e-mail david.romaine@derby.gov.uk
Background papers: Appendix A – Implications
List of appendices: Appendix B – Report of the Community Regeneration Commission
Appendix C– Report of the Culture and Prosperity Commission
Appendix D – Report of the Education Commission
Appendix E – Report of the Planning and Environment Commission
Appendix F – Report of the Social Care and Health Commission
Appendix G – Summary of recommendations

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None arising from this report

Legal

2. None arising from this report

Personnel

3. None arising from this report

Equalities impact

4. The Council's Revenue Budget will affect all Derby people.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. The Council's Revenue Budget relates to all the Corporate Objectives and Priorities for Change.

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Report of the Community Regeneration Commission

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SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
31 January 2005

Report of the Community Regeneration Commission

Draft Revenue Budget 2005/06-2007/08 - Draft

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council Cabinet endorse and adopt the recommendations set out in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 2.1 The Community Regeneration Commission considered the draft Revenue Budget for 2005/06-2007/08 at its meeting on 25 January 2005, looking at those elements falling within its direct portfolio plus issues that the Commission has expressed views on through cross-cutting topic reviews. Members interviewed Sue Glithero, Director of Policy, and Don McLure, Assistant Director – Revenues and Benefits.

Issue(s)

- 2.2 Ms Glithero outlined the key service planning issues, including reduction in external funding streams and the associated technical support element to oversee them. She then made reference to the SIMALTO detailed survey of public attitudes to budget priorities. Maintenance of the burglary reduction scheme at current levels was the highest public priority and £100k extra was proposed for the Community Safety Partnership, partly for that purpose. Mr McLure summarised the revenue and benefits agenda for the coming year as continuing improvements and developing council-wide customer service.
- 2.3 The Commission noted the close alignment between the issues the public felt most strongly about, as revealed through the SIMALTO survey, and recommendations made by the Commission in topic reviews and in previous budget rounds. The survey results showed the first issue where the public sought to expand a service, as opposed to maintaining current

levels, was burglary reduction with support for increasing target hardening measures from 110 homes per month to 190.

2.4 Page 38 of the Budget Book, paragraph 4.2 refers, showed two possible further service budget proposals that at this stage are not funded or endorsed by Council Cabinet:

- Continued funding of the three Neighbourhood Co-ordinators was a future issue
- Filling the two frozen Area Panel Manager posts at a cost of £70k

Conclusions

3. Addressing liveability issues should be a Council priority and public priorities funding should be used to increase the number of homes benefiting from burglary target hardening and to employ two Area Panel Managers.

Recommendations of the Commission

- 4.1 **Recommendation 1** In addition to the £100k extra proposed for the Community Safety Partnership, partly to maintain the current burglary reduction scheme, a further £100k should be provided from the public priorities fund, or elsewhere, to expand the number of houses receiving target hardening measures from 110 homes per month to 190 per month.
- 4.2 **Recommendation 2** £70k should be provided from the public priorities fund, or elsewhere, to unfreeze and fill the two vacant Area Panel Managers post.

Reasons for recommendations

- 4.3 The present level of funding allows about 1,300 households to benefit from target hardening measures per year. The Commission welcome the Cabinet's proposal provide £100k to the Community Safety Partnership partly to ensure the current level of service continues. **Recommendation 1** would allow over 900 *extra* households to also benefit. This was the first preference of the public for service enhancement. Apart from the direct benefit to those additional 900 individuals or families there is also the dividend that the Council will have been seen to have listened to and responded to public opinion.
- 4.4 With regard to **Recommendation 2**, Area Panels were instituted locally as part of the new governance arrangements adopted following the Local Government Act 2000. They provide a direct link between the Council and the citizenry and have proved popular with the public and elected members. The intention had been to have one Panel Manager for each Area Panel.

- 4.5 The Panels indirectly contribute to the 'liveability' agenda by enabling issues of concern to be raised and responded to. The Panel Managers are the oil in the machine that help action Panel decisions and chase progress between meetings. Having a dedicated Manager can realise the full value adding potential of each Panel.
- 4.6 The Council's budgetary position tightened over the years since the constitution was adopted in December 2001 so that it was never the 'right time' to complete the team. This year's financial settlement and the availability of £200k per year on a long term basis make this the *right* time to do so.

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IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. As detailed in the draft Revenue Budget 2005/06 – 2007/08.

Legal

2. None arising from this report.

Personnel

3. None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

4. Improved officer support to Area Panels will increase the capacity to engage with more marginalised sections of the community. Expanding the Burglary Reduction scheme will be of particular benefit to the low-income households who have been unable to afford target hardening measures and/or insurance that would replace stolen property.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. This report links to the following of the Council's Corporate Objectives and Priorities for Change:

Corporate Objectives: **Strong and Positive Neighbourhoods, Protecting and supporting people and Integrated cost effective services**

Priorities for Change: **Increasing Value for Money for Council Services, Enhancing the Community Leadership Role of the Council and Responding to people's needs**

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Report of the Culture and Prosperity Commission



SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
31 January 2005

Report of the Culture and Prosperity Commission

Draft Revenue Budget 2005/06-2007/08

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Social Care and Health Commission on the potential health impact on the local community of stopping the funding of the Normanton Park sports zone officer.
- 1.2 To provide the Culture and Prosperity Commission with details of usage, location and the associated costs of any playgrounds, sporting facilities or other recreational areas in the City considered for closure and receive the Commission's subsequent comments.
- 1.3 To allocate some of the £700k 2005/06 public priority fund to:
 - i. Make provision for facilities where needed in the City for street sports such as hockey and skating.
 - ii. Allocate £5k to counteract the inflationary effects on the book fund for which no provision has been made.
 - iii. Provide a £20k grant fund for organisations that benefit all sections of the community by promoting arts and cultural activities across the City.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 18 January 2005, the Culture and Prosperity Commission received a presentation from Jonathan Guest, the Director of Development and Cultural Services, John Winters, the Director of Commercial Services and Lesley Whitney, Assistant Director for Education on the implications for their respective service areas of the Council's draft Revenue Budget for 2005/06-2007/08.
- 2.2 In his presentation Jonathan Guest outlined the key issues and proposals in the 2005/06 draft revenue budget for the Cultural Services Division. He

confirmed that Alvaston Library and the Reading Rocket would continue to be funded through additional corporate funding of the base budget and LPSA rewards respectively.

- 2.3 The most significant budget pressure for the Cultural Services Divisional budget is due to pension increases and salary increments. In addition pressure on the 2005/06 budget arises from the mainstreaming of the Arts in Education post and the additional Caribbean Carnival infrastructure costs.
- 2.4 In order to counteract the additional pressures identified in 2.3 above and to avoid making reductions elsewhere in the Cultural Services Division it is proposed that the Arts in Education and Caribbean Carnival costs should be met from one-off underspends. It is proposed to use the increased income from planning fees and the enhanced planning development grants to meet other divisional pressures within the Development Division.
- 2.5 John Winters, Director of Commercial Services told the Commission that it would no longer be necessary to reduce the amount spent on bedding plants. He invited questions from the Commission on Commercial Services' revenue budget proposals.
- 2.6 Lesley Whitney, Assistant Director of Education presented the key issues arising from the Sport and Leisure element of the Education Department revenue budget. Sport and Leisure falls under the Education Department's non-schools budget and has received only an inflationary increase. Lesley Whitney said that the main pressures arise from pension increases, which will be met from savings. The base budget has been adjusted by £15,000 to reflect a budget transfer in respect of a maintenance contract. The previous underspend of £98k set aside for the Best Value Review of Sport and Leisure could be used to fund actions arising from the implementation plan, for example, it could be used to access capital investment through the Prudential Code. The £98k underspend will be allocated on completion of the review. She also said that the budget for 2006/07 identifies income against the Community and Play budget, which could be generated by introducing a charging policy for some provision. This would be carefully planned in consultation with stakeholders and reflect changes in the provision and funding of out of school activities.
- 2.7 Lesley Whitney said that the Sport and Leisure Service could benefit from the estimated 2004/05 Education Service underspend, including £75k to top-up funding from e-Derby and enable all sports centres to be connected to a common income and booking system. This is necessary because it is planned that CPA indicators will be set to include participation rates, quality of service and customer satisfaction at sports centres.

Issue(s)

- 2.8 Having examined the information contained in the draft Revenue Budget and in the presentations, Commission members expressed concern that consideration had been given to the closure of five playgrounds across the City and Chaddesden Park paddling pool. Concern was also raised about the possible detrimental effects of withdrawing funding for a dedicated sports zone officer at Normanton Park and reinstating charges for parks football pitches.

Conclusions of the Commission

- 2.9 After further consideration the Commission resolved to recommend that Council Cabinet seek the views of the Social Care and Health Commission on the potential health impact on the local community of stopping the funding of the Normanton Park sports zone officer. If the Social Care and Health Commission consider it would be detrimental to stop the post this Commission would recommend the continued funding of the sports zone officer post from the 2005/06 budget.
- 2.10 Concern was also expressed over the proposal to reinstate the policy of charging football teams season tickets for parks pitches at the standard pitch hire price less VAT. Junior teams would also be charged but at half the adult team price.
- 2.11 The Commission also expressed concern that consideration had been given to reduce the number of playgrounds in the City and close Chaddesden Park paddling pool.

Recommendations of the Commission

- 2.12 The Commission recommends Council Cabinet to:
1. Seek the views of the Social Care and Health Commission on the potential health impact on the local community of stopping the funding of the Normanton Park sports zone officer. If the Social Care and Health Commission consider it would be detrimental to stop the post this Commission would recommend the continued funding of the sports zone officer post from the 2005/06 budget.
 2. Provide the Culture and Prosperity Commission with details of usage, location and the associated costs of any playgrounds, sporting facilities or other recreational areas in the City considered for closure and receive the Commission's subsequent comments. The decision to make this recommendation was put to a vote at the meeting and passed by a majority.

3. Allocate some of the £700k 2005/06 public priority fund to:

- a. Make provision for facilities where needed in the City for street sports such as hockey and skating.
- b. Allocate £5k to counteract the inflationary effects on the book fund for which no provision has been made.
- c. Provide a £20k grant fund for organisations that benefit all sections of the community by promoting arts and cultural activities across the City.

Reasons for Commission's Recommendations

2.13 The reason for recommendations 1 and 2 is that members were of the opinion that the issues outlined in 2.8 above could conflict with the Council's physical activity strategy for the City.

2.14 Recommendation 3 was made to address areas where the Commission is aware that there are currently deficiencies or a lack of provision.

For more information contact: Katherine Taylor 01332 255599 e-mail katherine.taylor@derby.gov.uk Background papers: Draft Revenue Budget 2005/06 – 2007/8 List of appendices: Appendix 1 – Implications

Appendix 1

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

6. None arising from this report.

Legal

7. None arising from this report.

Personnel

8. None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

9. None arising from this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. The Council's Revenue Budget relates to all the Corporate Objectives and Priorities for Change.



SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
31 January 2005

Report of the Chair of the Education Commission

Draft Revenue Budget 2005/06-2007/08

RECOMMENDATION

1. By a majority decision the Commission recommended that for the year 2005/06 the central education budgets efficiency savings should be limited to 2.5%.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 17 January 2005, the Education Commission received a presentation from the Director of Education on the draft Revenue Budget for 2005/06-2007/08 for the Education Service.
- 2.2 In his presentation the Director summarised the content of the Education Service draft Revenue Budget and identified the priorities for the budget period. He explained the implications of the Revenue Budget for the Schools and LEA budgets and gave details of the proposed use of the 2004/05 underspends.
- 2.3 It was also explained that there was a 2.5% efficiency target that was applied to the central education budget as a whole and which amounted to around £550,000 each year for three years. The overall efficiencies that had been identified for central budgets totalled £918,000 in 2005/06, £457,000 in 2006/07 and £60,000 in 2007/08.

Issue(s)

- 2.4 Having considered the information contained in the draft Revenue Budget and in the presentation, Commission members expressed concern about the level of central education budget efficiencies that were proposed for 2005/06. Members were of the opinion that the below average size of the LEA placed a heavy burden on staff and that the Education Service did not have the capacity to meet challenges in the future.

Conclusions of the Commission

2.5 After further consideration the Commission resolved to recommend that the central education budget efficiencies for 2005/06 should be limited to the 2.5% that the Education Service was required to achieve. Members were of the view that by reducing the efficiencies for 2005/06 from £918,000 to £550,000 it might be possible for the authority to reduce some of the pressures on staff.

Recommendations of the Commission

2.6 It was a majority decision of the Commission that for the year 2005/06 the central education budget efficiency savings should be limited to 2.5%.

Reasons for Commission's Recommendations

2.7 Members were of the opinion that the below average size of the LEA placed a heavy burden on staff and that it did not have the capacity to meet challenges in the future. Members were of the view that by reducing the efficiencies for 2005/06 from £918,000 to £550,000 it might be possible for the authority to reduce some of the pressures on staff.

For more information contact:	David Romaine 01332 255598 e-mail david.romaine@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	Appendix 1 – Implications
List of appendices:	

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

10. The reduction in efficiency savings for 2005/06 from £918,000 to £550,000 could have short term benefits for the Education Service but may present problems in the two later years as in both 2006/07 and 2007/08 the projected central budgets efficiencies are less than the 2.5% target.

Legal

11. None arising from this report.

Personnel

12. The Commission was of the opinion that a reduction in the central budgets efficiency for 2005/06 could enable improvements in the work-life balance of Education Service staff.

Equalities impact

13. None specified.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

14. The Council's Revenue Budget relates to all the Corporate Objectives and Priorities for Change.

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SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

31 January 2005

Report of the Chair of the Planning and Environment Commission

Draft Revenue Budget 2005/06-2007/08

RECOMMENDATION

2. That Council Cabinet adopts the recommendations set out in paragraphs 2.17 to 2.30 of this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 2.1 At its meetings on 20 and 24 January 2005, the Planning and Environment Commission considered those elements of the draft Revenue Budget for 2005/06-2007/08 that fell within its remit. As part of its consideration of the draft Revenue Budget the Commission received presentations from Jonathan Guest, Director of Development and Cultural Services (D&CS), and John Winters, Director of Commercial Services. The Commission also considered the implications of the draft Revenue budget for the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Division of the Corporate Services Directorate.

Issue(s)

Environmental Health and Trading Standards

- 2.2 The Commission were informed by Andrew Hopkin, Assistant Director Environmental Health and Trading Standards, that progress with implementing the Proof of Age Card Scheme through Derby schools had been excellent. However he said that there was currently no provision for funding the initiative beyond March 2005 and all the good work would be lost if the funding ceased. Commission members considered it would be appropriate to recommend that money from the £700,000 of unallocated Public Priority funds should be used to support the Proof of Age Card Scheme.

Conclusions

- 2.3 Commission members considered that it was important to fully investigate the viability of the Proof of Age card scheme and to assess the benefits it can deliver. For that reason agreed to recommend that revenue funding for operation of the scheme during 2005/06 should be provided from the unallocated Public Priority funds.

Development and Cultural Services

- 2.4 Jonathan Guest outlined those of the Development and Cultural Services Directorate's Revenue Budget proposals that fell within the remit of the Planning and Environment Commission. He said base budget review savings and efficiency savings had enabled improvements to be made in key service areas. These included continuing the roll-out of the Rethink Rubbish twin-bin scheme. He said that although there was an expectation that the Planning and Development Grant would be better next year, it was sufficient this year to implement the Development Control Action Plan. He also told the Commission that base budget reviews on car park income, winter maintenance and public liability insurance had resulted in savings of £198,000 which could be used to offset budget pressures.
- 2.5 The Commission were told that recent public consultation exercises had shown that the public wanted to see improvements in public transport, but the proposed budget did not offer the opportunity to fund such improvements in the immediate future.
- 2.6 Jonathan Guest explained that a further £258,000 of service pressures could be met by increasing city centre car parking charges. He drew the Commissions attention to the financial information relating to car parking charges that were contained in Appendices 9 and 10 of the D&CS budget. He said that the charges illustrated in Appendix 10 would raise a further £74,000 above the proposals in Appendix 9.
- 2.7 The Commission were told that the draft Revenue Budget did not allow for continuing contributions to the Derby and Sandiacre Canal which had previously amounted to around £8,000 per year.

Conclusions

- 2.8 The Commission considered that that the improvement of public transport services should be given high priority and members recognised that there were no proposals under the current revenue budget to address this issue. Consequently they agreed that it would be appropriate to increase city centre car parking charges to the levels indicated in Appendix 10 provided that the additional funds generated by the increased charges were used to fund public transport improvements.

- 2.9 Commission members considered that it would be appropriate to use £8,000 of the unallocated Public Priority funds to continue the Council's support of the Derby and Sandiacre Canal.
- 2.10 The Commission decided that it would be advantageous to use Performance Eye to track the improvement in recycling that result from the roll-out of the Rethink Rubbish twin-bin scheme.

Commercial Services

- 2.11 John Winters outlined the Commercial Services draft Revenue Budget proposals to the Commission. He explained that these proposals included increasing the cost of cremations and ceasing participation in Britain in Bloom. He confirmed that Commercial Services would like to implement the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's recommendations on improvements to the Parks Service and the recommendations arising from the review of the Tree Management Policy, but said that they could not be implemented because no funding was likely to be received and funding could not be found within the service. A proposal to reduce the number of grass cuts from the current 15 to 12 was included in the list of those proposals that had not been included in the draft budget.
- 2.12 At the request of the Commission John Winters provided detailed information about the operating costs of the Bereavement Service to the meeting on 24 January 2005. The need to comply with new mercury emission regulations at the Crematorium was listed as a Service Planning Issue. Information about this requirement which was circulated at the meeting on 24 January showed that the Council had until 2012 to complete the installation of any mercury emissions abatement equipment.

Conclusions

- 2.13 The Commission was opposed to ceasing participation in Britain in Bloom.
- 2.14 The Commission was disappointed that the draft Revenue Budget did not include funding to implement its recommendations in respect of the Tree Management Policy. Commission members considered that the draft Revenue Budget should include funding to implement the their recommendations on improvements to the Parks Service and the recommendations arising from the review of the Tree Management Policy
- 2.15 The Commission expressed its opposition to any proposal to reduce the number of grass cuts across the City.
- 2.16 Commission members considered that the proposal to increase cremation charges from £280 in 2004/05 to £310 in 2005/06 was excessive. Commission members were concerned that the cost of Cemeteries Grounds Maintenance was so high, £274,000 per year, and that the £309,000/year profit from the Crematorium was being used to

cover the £305,000/year loss from the Cemeteries. The Commission considered that:

- Crematorium charges should be increased by a maximum of 4%
- Burial charges should be increased by a maximum of 10%
- The cost of Cemeteries Grounds Maintenance should be examined closely to see whether there were ways in which it could be reduced

Recommendations of the Commission

Environmental Health and Trading Standards

2.17 Recommendation 1 – That £70,000 of the unallocated Public Priorities Fund should be allocated to cover the operating costs of the Proof of Age card scheme during the 12 month period April 2005 to March 2006.

2.18 Reasons 1 - The Proof of Age card scheme has the potential to significantly reduce the purchase of age restricted items by underage customers and thereby to reduce the problems resulting from such purchases. Much excellent work has been done so far in this field by the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Division and this will be lost if funding ceases in March 2005.

Development and Cultural Services

2.19 Recommendation 2 – That city centre car parking charges be increased to the levels set out in Appendix 10 on page 129 of the draft Revenue Budget with the proviso that the increase in income, over and above that which would have been received had the car parking charges in Appendix 9 on page 128 been imposed, is used to fund improvements in public transport in Derby.

2.20 Reasons 2 – Implementation of the recommendation will make available an estimated £74,000 that can be used to address known public priorities by funding improvements in public transport.

2.21 Recommendation 3 – That £8,000 of the unallocated Public Priorities Fund should be contributed to the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Society.

2.22 Reasons 3 – There is no provision in the draft Revenue Budget for the Council to continue to support the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Society. Restoration of the canal will bring boats back into Derby, and is planned to create a 12.5 mile linear park suitable for many activities such as walking, fishing, cycling and horse riding.

Commercial Services

- 2.23 **Recommendation 4** – The Council should continue to participate in Britain in Bloom.
- 2.24 **Reasons 4** – The Commission considered that participation in Britain in Bloom has a beneficial effect on the economic diversity and viability of the City.
- 2.25 **Recommendation 5** – The draft Revenue Budget should be amended to include funding to implement the recommendations made by the Planning and Environment Commission as a consequence of their review of the Council's Tree Management Policy and the recommendations made by the Commission for improvements to the Parks Service.
- 2.26 **Reasons 5** – For the reasons given in the Commission's reports on its review of the Tree Management Policy and to improve the service delivered to the public.
- 2.27 **Recommendation 6** – The Commission recommends that reducing the number of grass cuts from 15 to 12 per year should not be considered as a further service budget proposal.
- 2.28 **Reasons 6** – Reducing the number of cuts per year would reduce the level of public satisfaction with the service.
- 2.29 **Recommendation 7** – The Commission recommends that:
- Crematorium charges should be increased by a maximum of 4%
 - Burial charges should be increased by a maximum of 10%
 - The cost of Cemeteries Grounds Maintenance (£274,000 per year) should be examined to see whether there are ways in which it can be reduced
- 2.30 **Reasons 7** – Commission members did not consider it reasonable to introduce an 11.7% increase in cremation charges when this side of the Bereavement Service was already making a significant profit. It was recognised that the Burials side of the Bereavement service was operating at a significant loss, but Members considered that this should be tackled by increasing burial charges and by seeing whether it was possible to reduce the cost of Grounds maintenance.

For more information contact:	David Romaine 01332 255598 e-mail david.romaine@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	Appendix 1 – Implications
List of appendices:	

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

15. As detailed in the draft Revenue Budget 2005/06 – 2007/08.

Legal

16. None arising from this report.

Personnel

17. None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

18. The recommendations contained in this report will have a beneficial impact on Derby people.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

19. This report links to the following of the Council's Corporate Objectives and Priorities for Change:

Corporate Objectives: Protecting and supporting people; Integrated cost effective services

Priorities for Change: Promoting the City; Removing traffic from City streets; Expanding recycling; Responding to people's needs

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Social Care and Health Commission



SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
31 January 2005

Report of the Chair of Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Commission

The Council's 2005/06 – 2007/08 Draft Revenue Budget

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That Scrutiny Management Commission consider and present the following recommendations of the Social Care and Health Commission on the draft 2005/06 – 2007/08 Revenue Budget to the Council Cabinet:
- a. The Commission supports the Council in its aim to reduce the number of Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements and recommends that the Council Cabinet develops a clear commissioning strategy for the next three years to obtain best value
 - b. The Council Cabinet reviews its strategy for reducing the number of looked after children as the current strategy is not progressing fast enough and poses potential risk on the budget
 - c. The Council Cabinet closely monitors the impact of budgetary pressures on Social Services budgets resulting from possible decommissioning of services within Supporting People.
 - d. Apart from monitoring the ten key threshold indicators, the Commission will also track and scrutinise the following indicators from the performance eye, which are in response to the service and financial strategy for social services:
 - i. AO/B11 Intensive homecare as a proportion of intensive home and residential care
 - ii. AO/B12 Cost of intensive social care for adults
 - iii. AO/B13 Unit cost of residential and nursing care for older people

- iv. AO/B17 Unit cost homecare for adults
- v. AO/C32 Older people (aged 65 or over) helped to live at home
- vi. AO/D55 Acceptable waiting times for assessments
- vii. CF/B10 Unit cost of foster care
- viii. CF/B8 Cost of services for children looked after
- ix. CF/L1 Children looked after per 1000 population
- x. CF/L1 percentage of looked after children in residential care

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Social Care and Health Commission considered the Social Services Department's Draft Revenue Budget Strategy 2005/06 to 2007/08 at its scheduled meeting on 24 January 2005.
- 2.2 **Recommendation a** - The Commission learned that the Council seeks to reduce the number of IFA placements from the current average of 43 to 40 by the end of March 2005 and 36 by March 2006. The Commission supports the Cabinet in its aim to reduce the number of placements with IFA's. However, based on the current rate of reduction it is estimated that there are still likely to be around 30 placements by March 07 and it will be some time before these are reduced to zero, if we achieve them at all. Since the all the current IFA placements are spot purchased and these can be significantly more expensive than negotiating a longer term arrangements, it is recommended that the Cabinet develops a commissioning strategy for the purchasing placements from the IFA's to obtain better value for money, whilst it continues to reduce the numbers.
- 2.3 **Recommendation b** - The number of looked after children declined steadily from a high of 523 in 1996/97 to 388 in 2001/02 and has remained around 385 since. These figures are higher than the average for comparable authorities, although their averages are beginning to edge closer to Derby's. As the budget is based on the expectation that the number of looked after children will continue to decrease further, if this was not achieved, it will begin to increase pressure on the children's and family budget. It is recommended that the Cabinet review its strategy for reducing the number of looked after children.
- 2.4 **Recommendation c** - The Draft Revenue Budget identifies budgetary pressures on the Supporting People budget managed by the Policy Directorate. Since Supporting People works closely with social services,

any changes resulting from decommissioning of its services will have a knock on affect on social services. The Commission recommends that the Council Cabinet monitor the impact on Social Service resulting from the pressures on Supporting People budgets.

- 2.5 Recommendation d** - Members were asked to identify aspects of the budget, which they could track and scrutinise using the performance eye. It is considered that the Commission will to continue to monitor the ten key threshold indicators, which could affect the annual social services ratings and also ten additional indicators to reflect the strategic objectives for the Social Services Department.

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Social Services Budget Summary

Appendix 1

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None arising from directly this report.

Legal

2. None arising from this report.

Personnel

- 3 None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

4. Recommendations concerning the Council's Revenue budget have the potential to be of benefit to all Derby people.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

5. The Council's Revenue Budget relates to all the Corporate Objectives and Priorities for Change.

Summary of the Commissions' Recommendations

Community Regeneration Commission	
<p>Recommendation 1 In addition to the £100k extra proposed for the Community Safety Partnership, partly to maintain the current burglary reduction scheme, a further £100k should be provided from the public priorities fund, or elsewhere, to expand the number of houses receiving target hardening measures from 110 homes per month to 190 per month.</p>	<p>Reasons 1 The present level of funding allows about 1,300 households to benefit from target hardening measures per year. The Commission welcome the Cabinet's proposal provide £100k to the Community Safety Partnership partly to ensure the current level of service continues. Recommendation 1 would allow over 900 <i>extra</i> households to also benefit. This was the first preference of the public for service enhancement. Apart from the direct benefit to those additional 900 individuals or families there is also the dividend that the Council will have been seen to have listened to and responded to public opinion.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2 £70k should be provided from the public priorities fund, or elsewhere, to unfreeze and fill the two vacant Area Panel Managers post.</p>	<p>Reasons 2 With regard to Recommendation 2, Area Panels were instituted locally as part of the new governance arrangements adopted following the Local Government Act 2000. They provide a direct link between the Council and the citizenry and have proved popular with the public and elected members. The intention had been to have one Panel Manager for each Area Panel.</p>

Culture and Prosperity Commission	
Recommendation 1 To seek the views of the Social Care and Health Commission on the potential health impact on the local community of stopping the funding of the Normanton Park sports zone officer.	Reasons 1 The Commission was concerned about the potential health impact on the local community of stopping the funding of the Normanton Park sports zone officer.
Recommendation 2 To provide the Culture and Prosperity Commission with details of usage, location and the associated costs of any playgrounds, sporting facilities or other recreational areas in the City considered for closure and receive the Commission's subsequent comments.	Reasons 2 By a majority decision the Commission considered that Council Cabinet should not approve the closure of any sports, recreational or play facilities without first considering the comments of the Culture and Prosperity Commission.
Recommendation 3 To allocate some of the £700k 2005/06 public priority fund to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Make provision for facilities where needed in the City for street sports such as hockey and skating. v. Allocate £5k to counteract the inflationary effects on the book fund for which no provision has been made. vi. Provide a £20k grant fund for organisations that benefit all sections of the community by promoting arts and cultural activities across the City. 	Reasons 3 To address areas where the Commission is aware that there are currently deficiencies or a lack of provision.
Education Commission	
Recommendation 1. By a majority decision the Commission recommended that for the year 2005/06 the central education budgets efficiency savings should be limited to 2.5%.	Reasons 1 Members were of the opinion that the below average size of the LEA placed a heavy burden on staff and that it did not have the capacity to meet challenges in the future. Members were of the view that by reducing the efficiencies for 2005/06 from £918,000 to £550,000 it might be possible for the authority to reduce some of the pressures on staff.

Planning and Environment Commission	
Recommendation 1 That £70,000 of the unallocated Public Priorities Fund should be allocated to cover the operating costs of the Proof of Age card scheme during the 12 month period April 2005 to March 2006.	Reasons 1 The Proof of Age card scheme has the potential to significantly reduce the purchase of age restricted items by underage customers and thereby to reduce the problems resulting from such purchases. Much excellent work has been done so far in this field by the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Division and this will be lost if funding ceases in March 2005.
Recommendation 2 That city centre car parking charges be increased to the levels set out in Appendix 10 on page 129 of the draft Revenue Budget with the proviso that the increase in income, over and above that which would have been received had the car parking charges in Appendix 9 on page 128 been imposed, is used to fund improvements in public transport in Derby.	Reasons 2 Implementation of the recommendation will make available an estimated £74,000 that can be used to address known public priorities by funding improvements in public transport.
Recommendation 3 That £8,000 of the unallocated Public Priorities Fund should be contributed to the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Society.	Reasons 3 There is no provision in the draft Revenue Budget for the Council to continue to support the Derby and Sandiacre Canal Society. Restoration of the canal will bring boats back into Derby, and is planned to create a 12.5 mile linear park suitable for many activities such as walking, fishing, cycling and horse riding.
Recommendation 4 The Council should continue to participate in Britain in Bloom.	Reasons 4 The Commission considered that participation in Britain in Bloom has a beneficial effect on the economic diversity and viability of the City.
Recommendation 5 The draft Revenue Budget should be amended to include funding to implement the recommendations made by the Planning and Environment Commission as a consequence of their review of the Council's Tree Management Policy	Reasons 5 For the reasons given in the Commission's reports on its review of the Tree Management Policy and to improve the service delivered to the public.

and the recommendations made by the Commission for improvements to the Parks Service.	
Recommendation 6 The Commission recommends that reducing the number of grass cuts from 15 to 12 per year should not be considered as a further service budget proposal.	Reasons 6 Reducing the number of cuts per year would reduce the level of public satisfaction with the service.
Recommendation 7 The Commission recommends that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crematorium charges should be increased by a maximum of 4% • Burial charges should be increased by a maximum of 10% • The cost of Cemeteries Grounds Maintenance (£274,000 per year) should be examined to see whether there are ways in which it can be reduced 	Reasons 7 Commission members did not consider it reasonable to introduce an 11.7% increase in cremation charges when this side of the Bereavement Service was already making a significant profit. It was recognised that the Burials side of the Bereavement service was operating at a significant loss, but Members considered that this should be tackled by increasing burial charges and by seeing whether it was possible to reduce the cost of Grounds Maintenance.

Social Care and Health Commission	
<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>The Commission supports the Council in its aim to reduce the number Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements and recommends that the Council Cabinet develops a clear commissioning strategy for the next three years to obtain best value</p>	<p>Reasons 1</p> <p>The Commission supports the Cabinet in its aim to reduce the number of placements with IFA's. However, based on the current rate of reduction it is estimated that there are still likely to be around 30 placements by March 07 and it will be some time before these are reduced to zero, if we achieve them at all. Since the all the current IFA placements are spot purchased and these can be significantly more expensive than negotiating a longer term arrangements, it is recommended that the Cabinet develops a commissioning strategy for the purchasing placements from the IFA's to obtain better value for money, whilst it continues to reduce the numbers.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>The Council Cabinet reviews its strategy for reducing the number of looked after children as the current strategy is not progressing fast enough and poses a potential risk on the budget</p>	<p>Reasons 2</p> <p>The number of looked after children declined steadily from a high of 523 in 1996/97 to 388 in 2001/02 and has remained around 385 since. These figures are higher than the average for comparable authorities, although their averages are beginning to edge closer to Derby's. As the budget is based on the expectation that the number of looked after children will continue to decrease further, if this was not achieved, it will begin to increase pressure on the children's and family budget. It is recommended that the Cabinet review its strategy for reducing the number of looked after children.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>The Council Cabinet closely monitors the impact of budgetary pressures on Social Services budgets resulting from possible decommissioning of services within Supporting People.</p>	<p>Reasons 3</p> <p>The Draft Revenue Budget identifies budgetary pressures on the Supporting People budget managed by the Policy Directorate. Since Supporting People works closely with social services, any changes resulting from decommissioning of its services will have a knock on affect on social services. The Commission</p>

	recommends that the Council Cabinet monitor the impact on Social Service resulting from the pressures on Supporting People budgets.
<p>Recommendation 4 Apart from monitoring the ten key threshold indicators, the Commission will also track and scrutinise the following indicators from the performance eye, which are in response to the service and financial strategy for social services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) AO/B11 Intensive homecare as a proportion of intensive home and residential care ii) AO/B12 Cost of intensive social care for adults iii) AO/B13 Unit cost of residential and nursing care for older people iv) AO/B17 Unit cost homecare for adults v) AO/C32 Older people (aged 65 or over) helped to live at home vi) AO/D55 Acceptable waiting times for assessments vii) CF/B10 Unit cost of foster care viii) CF/B8 Cost of services for children looked after ix) CF/L1 Children looked after per 1000 population x) CF/L1 Percentage of looked after children in residential care 	<p>Reasons 4 Members were asked to identify aspects of the budget, which they could track and scrutinise using the performance eye. It is considered that the Commission will to continue to monitor the ten key threshold indicators, which could affect the annual social services ratings and also ten additional indicators to reflect the strategic objectives for the Social Services Department.</p>

DRR 28 January 2005