

COUNCIL CABINET 21 FEBRUARY 2006

MINUTE EXTRACT

268/05 Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting

The Council Cabinet considered a report from the Director of Resources updating the Cabinet on developments since the consultation budget was launched including:

- details of the final Government Grant settlement for 2006/7
- comments on feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Commissions
- an updated position for service budgets following the consultation document produced in January 2006
- a statement of reserves held by the Council.

The report would provide the basis for Council Cabinet to formulate its final recommendation to Council on 1 March 2006 consistent with its aim to set a council tax at or below inflation levels.

Decision

To recommend Council:

1. To note the final local government finance settlement announcement.
2. To approve for 2006/7 the departmental estimates and associated virements and use of reserves included in Appendices 2 and 4, incorporating the proposals listed in sections 4 and 6, subject to further recommendations of Council Cabinet at a special meeting arranged for 4.45pm on 1 March 2006.
3. To note the latest 2005/6 budget monitoring position provided in Appendix 8 of the report.
4. To approve the measures proposed to manage budget risks in 2006/7 and in future years, set out in section 11.
5. To note the budget plans for 2007/8 and 2008/9 set out in this report for budget planning purposes and their indicative status.
6. To approve the incorporation of specific grants and income as shown in Appendix 4 of the report, into the detailed budgets and in doing so authorise the relevant Chief Officers to publish any required notices and implement any increases in fees and charges that are consistent with the budget proposals.

7. To authorise the publication of the requisite notices in accordance with the provisions of Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
8. To note the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Commissions.

The Council Cabinet's response to the Planning and Environment Commission's recommendations were included in Appendix 6 of the Council Cabinet report and are summarised here:

Recommendation / Comment	Response
<p>1. The Planning and Environment Commission recommends:</p> <p>a. That cremation fees are increased by £25 in addition to the 2.25% above inflation increase that is proposed in paragraph 3.5.1 of the draft Revenue Budget document.</p> <p>b. That the income derived from the £25 increase in cremation fees is ring-fenced and used to off-set the cost of the mercury abatement equipment that the Council is required to install at the crematorium</p>	<p>A separate report will be prepared regarding the mercury abatement requirements during 2006/7 to consider what actions are appropriate.</p>
<p>2. The Planning and Environment Commission recommends that the report on the Council's use of energy, which was requested by the Council Cabinet member for Environment and Direct Services following her meeting on 6 December 2005 with the Planning and Environment Commission, is completed in time for its conclusions to be considered as part of the Council's 2006/07 Revenue Budget process.</p>	<p>The report is due to be completed prior to the start of the financial year, but not in time to consider its impact on the current budget.</p> <p>Any financial implications will be considered once the report is available.</p>