

PERFORMANCE, RESOURCES AND ASSETS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4TH FEBRUARY 2008 at 6.05 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Malik (Vice Chair in the Chair);
Councillors Franks, Saleem and Titmuss.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Harris.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillors Akbar, Kiansumba and Pantling.

2 UPDATE OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS (REF: 7)

The Democratic Services Officer circulated an extract of the Executive decision sheet for 7th January 2008 at which a reference from the Committee had been submitted in relation to the 'Called In Decision (EX/270(v)/07) Performance and Finance Monitoring'. The circulated decision sheet showed the Executive's decision in relation to the Committee's reference.

Resolved: That the update of Executive Decisions (Ref: 7) be noted.

3 BUDGET SCRUTINY (REF: 8)

The Director of Scrutiny presented the report on Budget Scrutiny (Ref: 8) advising that the purpose of the report was to provide the Committee with information about the budget for services within their remit.

He drew Members attention to the Scrutiny Protocol (Appendix A to Ref: 8) and advised that the Customer and Corporate Services Department was the service area to be scrutinised. He reminded the Committee that they would be meeting on the 6th February 2008 to discuss the overall budget and strategy.

The Head of Corporate Finance and Procurement advised that, as previously stated by the Portfolio Holder for Finance (Councillor Harris) at the December meeting, the savings proposed by officers would not be considered, he confirmed that they had not been considered and therefore had not been incorporated into the Green Book.

The further advised the Committee of the following changes to budget proposals since their last budget meeting on 13th December 2007:

TYPE	PROPOSAL REF:	PROPOSAL	EXPLANATION
New Growth Item	Corp003G	Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR)	Revenue & Benefits - £80k – the rationale – low rate

			<p>previously compared with other local authorities. Active Luton and Leisure Trust entitled to discretionary rate relief (DRR) = 2 organisations with the ability to apply for DRR – and a number of smaller organisations in need of the support of DRR.</p> <p>Efficient way of Council providing support.</p> <p>75% DRR provided by government; 25% DRR provided by Council.</p> <p>Extra government support if support via organisations via DRR.</p>
Saving		Reduction in Matrix Operating Costs	£20k reduction – removed
Saving	CCS805S – CAM (Capital and Asset Management)	Various including outcome of end to end review and restructure of CAM	Proposed saving in 2008/09 was £158k now removed.
Saving	CCS807S – Corporate Finance	Reducing borrowing costs, improving interest, reducing MRP	Saving £1.2m treasury management reduced by £1m as reduction in interest rate. The Committee were advised at the December meeting that this would need to be reviewed in the light of interest rates.
Saving	CCS808S – HR	Outcome of HR end-to-end review and reorganisations	Saving for 2008/09 was £73k now £0 – as review yet to be completed.
Saving	CCS824S – CAM	Building Cleaning Contract – Procurement exercise	Following re-tender of building cleaning contracts - saving to the General Fund and the HRA Fund.

The Head of Corporate Finance and Procurement drew Members attention to the following items within the Capital Programme:

ITEM NO:	PROJECT NO:	DETAILS OF PROJECT	EXPLANATION
37	ZNB***	Energy Conservation (to be funded from prudential borrowing)	Improvement to property to achieve energy conservation. This would be subject to a business case demonstrating that it would cover the cost of borrowing.
43	ZN***	Office of the future pathfinder (to be funded from prudential borrowing)	This would be subject to a business case demonstrating that it would cover the cost of borrowing.
52	ZNT***	Telephone Switch Upgrade (to be funded from prudential borrowing)	This would be subject to a business case demonstrating that it would cover the cost of borrowing.

Resolved: That the information submitted in relation to services and service budgets be noted.

(Note: The meeting ended at 6.35 p.m.)