

ENVIRONMENT REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

Report By: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

Purpose

1. To advise Members of the financial position for the Environment Programme Area budgets for the period to 31st July 2006. The report lists the variations against budget at this stage in the year.

Financial Implications

2. It is expected that all Environment directorate budget variances will be contained within the overall 2006/07 Revenue Budget for Environment.

Considerations

3. The detailed report on Budget Monitoring is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.
4. The total Environment Budget for 2006/07 has increased from the amount reported to the last meeting of the Committee, which was £25,754,000 to £26,576,350. This is mainly due to revision of Central Support budgets.
5. The net Budget for 2006/07 incorporates budget of £413,000 brought forward from 2005/06 in Planning in relation to Planning Delivery Grant (£209,000) and Conservation projects (£104,000) and in Highways & Transportation in relation to Street Lighting (£100,000).
6. In overall terms the Environment Budgets are expected to come in budget. Although Planning Fee and Car Park income is being closely monitored any variation on budget due to these income streams will be handled corporately, in line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Management Strategy.

Environmental Health and Trading Standards

7. The spending on these services is being managed within budget except for the additional costs incurred in relation to the clean up operation at Cadbury's factory. A funding application has been lodged with the Food Safety Act Fighting Fund which, if successful, will mitigate the forecast overspend of £33,000.
8. Based on the latest information on volumes, the Waste Disposal P.F.I contract expenditure is currently expected to break even.

Highways and Transportation

9. The Highways budgets continue to be under considerable pressure in relation to road maintenance including verge and drainage maintenance, street cleansing and public toilets. Every effort will be made to contain spending within the budget,

10. Budget adjustments have been made to incorporate the additional pressures on Winter Maintenance £200,000, Street Cleansing £100,000 and Public Conveniences £100,000. Roads maintenance budget has been reduced by £400,000 in order to meet these pressures.
11. Also, the income budget for Car Parking has increased by £200,000 and the resulting additional expenditure budget will be used to meet Public Transport costs in accordance with the Local Transport Plan Strategy.

Planning

12. Although during the first 4 months of the year Planning Fee income is slightly exceeding it's budget, current forecasts based on income patterns in previous years and the possible impact of the introduction of Design & Access Statements indicate that it is likely that Fee income will fall £130,000 below target. Fee income will be closely monitored throughout the year and reductions in expenditure budgets will be made where possible to maintain expenditure within budget.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for 2006/07 be noted subject to the comments which members may wish to make.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified.