

Report of the Director of Neighbourhoods

## **Ward Committee Budgets**

### **Summary**

1. This report informs Members of the amount of the base ward committee revenue and capital budget which was allocated in 2006/7. In response to a Council motion proposed by Cllr Potter at full Council on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006, Members are requested to consider the re-instatement of ward committee income budgets to the 2005/6 level.

### **Background**

2. At a meeting of full Council on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006, Cllr Potter put forward a motion (Ref 60) that: "...*Council request that budgets for ward committee funding be restored, making good cuts in this years budget*". The Lord Mayor subsequently exercised her constitutional authority under Standing Order 11(ii) and referred the above motion directly to the Executive "...*for an officer report on the financial implications of the proposal*". The Ward Committee budget for 2006/7 is as follows:

### **2006/7 Budgets**

- 3, Revenue

For the 2006/7 budget year the revenue budget was set at £733,570. This figure was £163,890 less than that allocated in 2005/6, due to the necessity to achieve a budget savings target, and an in anticipation of approx £70,000 savings to be realised from the letting of a new warden ranger contract. When staffing and other recharges (for example, asset rentals, other directorate recharges, ongoing revenue commitments on previous ward committee street lighting schemes etc) are deducted, this gives an available ward committee spend of £376,310. In July, the Leader of Council made an additional "one-off" allocation of £100,000 available for "street level services", of which £70,000 was devolved to Ward Committee budgets on a per capita basis. Taking this £70,000 into account, the revised 2006/7 available ward committee revenue budget is therefore £446,310.

## Capital

The total capital budget was £202,000 which, when recharges were deducted, gives an available ward committee capital spend of £175,000.

## Summary

4. Taking into account the additional £70,000 which was allocated to the ward committee budget in June 2006, the 2006/7 ward committee revenue budget cut was effectively reduced from £163,890, to £93,890.

On 16<sup>th</sup> January at a meeting of the Executive, as part of the 'Second Performance and Financial Monitor – 2006/7' report (Agenda item 6), a decision was made to reinstate the £70,000, again as a one- off for the financial year 2007/8, providing the Council budget does not return a year – end deficit. The minutes of that meeting state "*(xii) That, subject to sufficient year end underspends being available, £100k be earmarked for carry forward and use for ward committee budgets (£70k) and the local York Pride actions (£30k). REASON: ...To enable the continued funding of ward committees and York Pride neighbourhood activities at current levels, in view of the fact that the budget is predicted to out-turn at or better than the target level at the end of the financial year.*"

On the basis that this £70,000 is made available, then the base revenue budget for 2007/8 would remain at the level set for 2006/7

## **Options**

5. Option One: To reflect the motion put before Council on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006, an option is to restore the entire £163,890 reduction for the 2006/7/8 budget on a recurring, or non recurring basis.

Option Two: To restore partially the £163,890 reduction for the 2007/8 budget, on a recurring, or non recurring basis.

Option Three: To maintain the existing budget, which will give a 2007/8 budget of £733,570.

## **Analysis**

6. The amount of ward committee budget made available to members within each ward is on a per capita basis. Each ward has a different population, and therefore a different allocation. Expenditure is determined by the ward committee following consultation with residents. It is therefore not possible to analyse what impact a full, or partial re-instatement of funds would have.

## **Corporate Objectives**

7. Not applicable.

## Implications

- **Financial** the Director of Resources has stated that any decision to reinstate the Ward Committee budget cuts for 2007/8, either in full or in part, would need to be a self-balancing adjustment to the budget which has already been recommended to the Council by the Executive on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2007. Members would therefore need to advise officers accordingly on the source of the funding.
- **Human Resources (HR)** None
- **Equalities** None
- **Legal** None
- **Crime and Disorder** None
- **Information Technology (IT)** None
- **Property** None
- **Other** None

## Risk Management

8. Not applicable.

## Recommendations

9. Members are asked to consider the options in paragraph 5, and advise officers of any recurring or non recurring budget adjustment for 2007/8, together with the source of funding.

## Contact Details

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**Report Approved**

**Date** 17/01/2007

**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

Council Minutes 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006.

**Annexes :**

None