

## EXPENDITURE PLAN CONSULTATION

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The process and timetable for the Expenditure Plans for 2003/04 was included in the Financial Strategy approved by the Council in July 2002. The timetable included consultation with all Review Panels and Committees during November, and for any recommendations or comments arising from those meetings to be reported back to the Cabinet in December.
- 1.2 This report includes the comments that the members of the Review Panels and the General Purposes and Licensing Committee wish to make to Cabinet.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS/COMMENTS FROM PANELS AND COMMITTEE

#### 2.1 Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1.1 The bid for £6,500 for the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator is based on the post operating for 4 days per week. In addition to supporting the current bid, the Panel wish to see the role expanded to 5 days per week. Officers are in the process of costing the new proposals and will report orally at the meeting. In addition the Panel requested that the funding of this post be made permanent in order to ensure the on-going delivery of this service.
- 2.1.2 Investigate the possibility of additional revenue contributions towards the ongoing cost of CCTV.

#### 2.2 Economy and Planning:

- 2.2.1 Members expressed concern that the review into Town Centre Management had not yet been concluded and that no proposals were included within the expenditure plans. They expressed a wish that proposals are included before the 2003/04 budget is finalised.

#### 2.3 Environment:

- 2.3.1 No comments from the Panel

#### 2.4 Leisure Services:

- 2.4.1 The Panel agreed the proposed Revenue Expenditure Bids and Savings as set out in the report. However, the Panel has agreed to hold a special meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> December to receive

a presentation from local Citizens' Advice Bureaux on their request for additional funding, to include details of the proposed expansion of their services. Nevertheless, the Panel has expressed agreement with the Expenditure Plan proposal to provide a minimum sum of £31,000 in respect of additional salary costs, inflation and additional rental to be charged at New Milton for the forthcoming year.

## 2.5 Health, Housing and Social Exclusion:

- 2.5.1. The Panel expressed concern at the proposed savings in the Meals on Wheels subsidy that would result in an increase in the charge per meal of 20p (£2.25 to £2.45). The Panel agreed there was a need to look at a long-term financial strategy for the service and had thought that a Best Value Review was scheduled for 2002. The current funding arrangements whereby the District Council had to cover any funding shortfall as a result of the County Council's budget proposals, were not appropriate.
- 2.5.2 In terms of savings, the Panel agreed that contracts let under 'Care and Repair' would be closely monitored to ensure value for money.

## 2.6 Corporate and Finance:

### **Revenue Expenditure Bids**

- 2.6.1 Offices and Depot Maintenance (2003/04: £30,000)  
Recommended the Portfolio Holder consider deferring replacement of air conditioning units to later years wherever practicable, but without compromising Health and Safety and working conditions.
- 2.6.2. Freedom of Information Act – New Post (2003/04: £7,850)  
Recommended that the Portfolio Holder look in more detail at necessity for this post, and explore feasibility of covering using capacity elsewhere.
- 2.6.3. Cover For Union Duties (2003/04: £16,800)  
Panel Requested report to IRC, this Panel and Cabinet on breakdown of duties covered, together with consideration of how this related to other employees undertaking union work.

### **Revenue Expenditure Savings / Increased Income**

- 2.6.4 Luncheon Vouchers (2003/04: -£21,000)  
Noted that this figure was an assumption and no formal agreement yet reached.

### **New Savings Proposed by Panel**

- 2.6.5. Subscription to Regional Assembly

Recommended to immediately cease any subscription payments and report back to Panel on future need.

- 2.6.6 Community Consultation Budget  
Recommended that budget be reduced to £10,000 per year.

### **Capital Expenditure Bids**

- 2.6.7 Town Hall Lymington (2003/04: £10,000)  
Recommended to delete proposed installation of Photovoltaic system

- 2.6.8. Claymeadow Depot (2003/04: £20,000)  
Recommended that the Portfolio Holder explore cheaper solutions.

- 2.7 General Purposes and Licensing Committee:

- 2.7.1 No comments from the Committee

## **3. EMPLOYEE SIDE COMMENTS**

- 3.1 The Employee Side Representatives have been consulted on the current proposals and have offered their comments.
- 3.2 The Employee Side accept this is a very difficult and challenging time for the Council in financial terms and would look at the Council to protect employees' employment within this Council. They also recognised certain savings have to be made. With negotiations from Employer and Employee Side, that could be a way forward.
- 3.3 The Employee Side have concerns with any recommendations to cutting of services and Terms and Conditions in a situation that is already undermanned. Maximising extra income from tourism in the New Forest is a recommendation.

## **4. GRANT SETTLEMENT**

- 4.1 One of the key elements of the budget process is the amount of annual grant settlement comprising of National Non-domestic Rates and Revenue Support Grant contributed by the Government.
- 4.2 Whilst assumptions have been made in preparing the forecast for 2003/04 to 2006/07 included in the Expenditure Plan Proposals considered by the Cabinet in November, the actual settlement for 2003/04 will not be announced by the Government until mid December. This will be reported to Cabinet in the January meeting.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

5.1 Members of the Cabinet consider the comments made by the Panels and General Purposes and Licensing Committee.

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**Background Papers:**

Expenditure Plan Proposals  
Cabinet 6<sup>th</sup> November 2002