

## REPORT OF POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

(Meeting held 16 February 2000)

### 1. CAPITAL AND REVENUE ESTIMATES 2000/2001 (OWN BUDGET) (REPORT A) (MINUTE NO. 119)

The Committee has considered revised Capital and Revenue Estimates for 1999/2000 and draft Capital and Revenue Estimates for 2000/2001. Estimated gross capital expenditure in 1999/2000 is £54,000 and for 2000/2001, £5,000. The revised Revenue Estimates for 1999/2000 amount to £2,393,080 which is an increase of £102,500 (4.5%) from the original budget.

The original Revenue Expenditure estimates for 2000/2001 is £2,441,220 which is £150,640 (6.6%) more than the original budget for 1999/2000.

The estimates have been carefully considered by the Committee, which recommends their approval.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

***That the revised Capital and Revenue Estimates for 1999/2000 and draft Capital and Revenue Estimates for 2000/2001 be approved.***

### 2. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT ESTIMATES 1999/2000 (REVISED) AND 2000/2001 (REPORT B) (MINUTE 120)

The Committee has considered the Housing Revenue Account 1999/2000 (revised) and 2000/2001 Estimates together with proposed increases in rent, charges and fees, as recommended by the Housing Committee.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

***That the Housing Revenue Account revised estimates for 1999/2000 and estimates for 2000/01 be approved on the basis that:-***

- (i) the rents of Council dwellings be increased by 7% with effect from 3 April 2000;***
- (ii) a 5% increase be applied to service charges for sheltered housing schemes with effect from 3 April 2000 and that Council Tax be recovered in accordance with current policy;***
- (iii) service charges in respect of hostels for homeless households be increased by 2% with effect from 3 April 2000, and that Council Tax be recovered in accordance with current policy;***
- (iv) rents of Housing Revenue Account garages be increased by 10p per week for 2000/01 (plus VAT for garages rented to non-Council tenants) with effect from 3 April 2000;***
- (v) the service of the appropriate notices be authorised.***

### **3. GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2000/2001 (REPORT C) (MINUTE NO. 121)**

The Committee has considered and recommended approval to revisions to the General Fund Revenue Budget for 1999/2000 and also the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2000/2001.

Members noted that the Government was undertaking a fundamental review of the future financing of Local Authority Capital and Revenue Expenditure and the publication of comprehensive draft proposals was anticipated later during this year. It was further anticipated that new arrangements would be fully implemented by 2002/2003. Nevertheless, it seemed unlikely that District Councils generally would gain as a result of the review and it would be necessary to continue to run the finances of this Council prudently. Capping criteria under the reserve powers to be introduced by the Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions would be introduced only after local authorities had set their budgets for 2000/2001 and would replace the current crude capping controls.

During the current year, the Council has repaid approximately £13.95m worth of debt and further redemptions would be made as opportunities arose. It was estimated that the net interest earnings would increase by approx £600,000 to £1.3m as a result of the reduction in charges to service the debt.

The proposed budget for 2000/01 was based on the Council's actual expenditure for 1998/99. The budget included a new feature which was the £400,000 provision set aside in respect of the anticipated Dibden Bay planning application. This would increase the total provision to £460,000

The major opposition group presented an alternative set of proposals, which would have led to expenditure of £15.824m and a Council Tax of £99.73 in respect of Band D properties. However, the Committee recommends that the General Fund Budget for 2000/2001 be set at £15.997m with a Council Tax level on a Band D property of £102.28. This represents a reduction of 22p on the current year.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) That the revised General Fund revenue budget for 1999/00 as shown in Appendix 1 to the Report be approved in the sum of £15.960 million;**
- (b) That the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2000/01 be approved at £15.997 million, giving a Council Tax of £102.28 on Band D properties; and**
- (c) That approval be given to transfer £400,000 in 2000/01 to the Dibden Bay planning application provision from the general reserve.**

### **4. CAPITAL ESTIMATES 1999/2000 AND 2000/2001 (REPORT D) (MINUTE NO. 122)**

The Committee has considered estimated Capital Expenditure on Housing and other services for 1999/2000 and 2000/2001. The other services estimates are based on the Expenditure Plans approved by the Council in November 1999.

It was noted that the District Auditor's advice had been taken into consideration with respect to balances which would be substantially reduced in the period up to 2003/2004.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) *That the Housing capital estimates of £4.679m for 1999/2000 and £5.100m for 2000/01 be approved;*
- (b) *That the Other Services capital estimates of £2.439m for 1999/2000 and £3.246m for 2000/2001 be approved; and*
- (c) *That the estimated expenditure on leased assets of £1.193m for 1999/2000 and £1.619m for 2000/2001 be approved.*

**5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT (REPORT E) (MINUTE NO. 123 (1))**

The Committee has considered the Council's borrowing limits for the financial year 2000/2001.

**RECOMMENDED:**

*That in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Council's borrowing limits for 2000/2001 be determined as follows:-*

**Overall Borrowing Limit** - *£60m, of which not more than £15m is payable at variable interest rates; and*

**Short Term Borrowing Limit** - *£25m*

**6. BEACON STATUS (REPORT J) (MINUTE NO. 125)**

The Committee has considered the results of the Council's applications for Beacon Status. It was noted that this Council was one of only three authorities to have attained Beacon Status in respect of more than one service area and was the only Shire district to receive more than one Beacon Award. One award has been made in respect of the Council's application in its own right for "Modern Service Delivery – Housing and Council Tax Benefit Administration". The second award was for the Council as a key partner with Hampshire County Council and others for "Dealing with Waste".

The Council's success will be fully reflected in the Councils Local Performance Plan, Forest News and other publications.

**7. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND THE COUNCIL'S KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 1999/2000 AND KEY TARGETS 2000/2001 (REPORT K) (MINUTE NO. 126)**

The Key Achievements for 1999/2000 and Key Targets for 2000/2001 have been agreed.

The Key Achievements and Key Targets will be approved for inclusion in the Local Performance Plan and other documents.

**8. CHAIRMANSHIP AND VICE-CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE COUNCIL  
(MINUTE NO. 127)**

The Committee has considered nominations for the above offices, pursuant to Standing Order 47.

**RECOMMENDED:**

***That, at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 15 May 2000:***

- (a) Cllr Rice be nominated for election as the Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year; and***
- (b) Cllr Miss Drake be nominated for appointment as the Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.***

**9. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS (REPORT L) (MINUTE NO. 129)**

The Committee has agreed that no changes are required to the Council's current practice of nominating members to various community associations in the district.

A suitable nomination for membership of the Lyndhurst, Emery Down and Bank Community Association in place of Cllr Mrs Wyeth, following her resignation, is required from the Council.

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MODERNISATION WORKING PARTY –  
27 JANUARY 2000 (REPORT M) (MINUTE 131)**

The Committee has considered a number of recommendations from the Modernisation Working Party.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) That the overall scheme, including interim arrangements for the new structures, be introduced on a trial basis and be approved by the Council in September 2000;***
- (b) That the timetable and action plan submitted to the Modernisation Working Party be adjusted to provide for (a) above;***
- (c) That the principles underpinning the way forward be approved;***
- (d) That a new member structure be approved, providing for:***
  - (i) The appointment of a Cabinet with a Leader; and***
  - (ii) Further consideration being given to the structure of the Cabinet, including whether members of the Cabinet and their portfolios are determined by the Council or by the Leader;***
- (e) That further reports on arrangements for implementation of the new structures (including proposals for the role of backbench members) be submitted to future meetings of the Modernisation Working party and the Policy and Resources Committee;***

- (f) *That a fundamental review of members' allowances be undertaken; and*
- (g) *That Central Services Committee be requested to establish a panel of external advisors, including representatives from the business community and academics, to review members allowances and to report urgently on proposals for implementation of a new scheme of allowances which recognises the work undertaken by all Councillors.*

**11. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EMPLOYEE STRUCTURE SUB-COMMITTEE – 26 JANUARY 2000 (REPORT O) (MINUTE NO. 134)**

The Committee has considered a report which contains proposals as to changes to the Council's establishment.

Members confirmed the decision to terminate the employment of the holders of post nos. DCO002 and DLS001 on the grounds of redundancy and to make all the consequent arrangements. In addition, post no. DLSO028, currently designated "Principal Solicitor" has been redesignated as "Head of Legal and Democratic Services" with immediate effect.

**12. DELEGATIONS AND PROPER OFFICERS PROVISIONS (REPORT P) (MINUTE 136)**

Members considered changes to Delegations and Proper Officers appointments required as a result of decisions taken at minute 134.

***RECOMMENDED:***

***That the current Delegations and Proper Officers responsibilities be amended to reflect the Council's new approved structure, in accordance with the attached Appendix 1, with effect from 1 March 2000.***

**13. AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS (REPORT Q) (MINUTE NO. 137)**

Members have considered changes to the existing Standing Orders required as a result of decisions taken at minute 134.

***RECOMMENDED:***

***That the current Standing Orders as to Meetings and Procedures be amended to reflect the Council's new Officers Management structure in accordance with the attached Appendix 2, with effect from 1 March 2000.***