

Report to Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel

Date of meeting: 12 February 2009

**Subject: Revised Estimate for 2008/09 and Estimate
for 2009/10**



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Committee Secretary: M Jenkins (Democratic Services Assistant) Ext 4607

Recommendation:

That, the Revised Estimate for 2008/09 and Estimate for 2009/10 for Planning Services, be noted.

Key Points

1. The total portfolio budget, original estimate, for 2008/09 now shown as £2.744m, with revised 08/09 £2.502m and 09/10 £2.940m. A reduction of £136,000 on the published 08/09 budgets has resulted from the exclusion of Countrycare and inclusion of Environmental Co-ordination, both as a result of directorate/portfolio holder changes. The year on year increase on the amended figures of £196,000 is primarily due to a higher level of DDF spending in 2009/10, as this has increased from £427,000 to £644,000.
2. Growth Items – There are no net changes to CSB as this only moves (£7,000) between the years. High level of DDF spending in 09/10, with £432,000 allocated to the Local Development Framework. In view of the costs of lost planning appeals in 08/09 a contingency of £100,000 has been included in the DDF for 09/10.

Detailed Comments

3. Direct Services – There was a net increase of £123,000, year on year, due to work on the Local Development Framework. This is a vast project for the service and in total £1.137million of DDF has been allocated to the LDF to the end of 2011/12. In the revised estimates for 2008/09 Forward Planning also has £66,000 of DDF for design briefs for Loughton Broadway and Epping. The other increase worth noting is on Economic Development where two vacant posts have been filled.
4. Regulatory Services – There was a net increase of £73,000, year on year. An increase has been seen in the number and cost of planning appeals and this has been reflected in the shift in recharges. This has caused a reduction in the Development Control budget but an increase in the Planning Appeals budget. This budget has also been increased by the inclusion of the £100,000 contingency for appeal costs mentioned earlier.
5. The Building Control Ring Fenced account is also shown in this section. This account is required to break even on a rolling three-year basis. To achieve this it is necessary to increase fees by 8% from April 2009, as the account is currently in deficit.
6. Support & Trading Services – There was a net decrease of £23,000, year on year, which was not significant and no CSB growth items.