

Report to Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: FPM-028-2010/11

Date of meeting: 17 January 2011

Portfolio: Finance and Economic Development.

Subject: Detailed Directorate Budgets 2011/12.

Responsible Officer: Peter Maddock (01992 564602).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That the committee consider the attached General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets for 2011/12 and make recommendations as appropriate.

Executive Summary:

The report provides the draft General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budgets for the financial year 2011/12. The budgets are presented on a directorate by directorate basis with accompanying notes highlighting areas where significant changes have occurred. They are presented to the committee to give an opportunity to comment and make recommendations prior to the budget being formally set during February 2011.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To give Members an opportunity to review and provide recommendations on the detailed budget in prior to adoption by Council.

Other Options for Action:

Other than deciding not to review the budget there are no other options.

Report:

1. The budget setting process commenced in September 2010 with the presentation of the Financial Issues Paper incorporating the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). It was clear at that time the 2011/12 budget process would be the most difficult for a number of years given the need to make savings in anticipation of Central Government cuts in support of Local Authority Expenditure.

2. In mid-December the expected reduction in government support was confirmed and as a result an updated MTFS has been produced and a detailed report on this and the settlement generally is elsewhere on the agenda.

3. The budgets are presented on a directorate by directorate basis and are attached at Appendix 1 to 7 (General Fund) and Appendix 8 (HRA). Within each pack there is a commentary on the budgets highlighting areas where either Continuing Services Budget (CSB) or District Development Fund (DDF) savings or growth have occurred and also where allocation changes have affected budgets.

4. Each budget is to be presented by the relevant Director with Portfolio Holders providing comments as appropriate. There will also be Finance Officers at the meeting to

assist with any questions that Members may have.

Resource Implications:

Proposed spending levels for the General Fund and HRA for the financial year 2011/12.

Legal and Governance Implications:

Agreeing budgets in advance of the financial year represents good financial management practice. The budget is a key element of income and expenditure management and forms the benchmark against which financial performance can be measured.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

The Council's budgets contain spending in relation to this initiative.

Consultations Undertaken:

The budget process includes consultations with Spending Officers and Service Directors, also this committee has previously had sight of the first draft of the CSB and DDF lists, an update on which is provided elsewhere on the agenda.

Background Papers:

Working papers held in Accountancy.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

Failure to set an appropriate budget in advance of the financial year would expose the Council to unacceptable financial management risks.

Equality and Diversity

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
None.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A.