



Belfast City Council

Report to: Health and Environmental Services Committee

Subject: **Efficiency Programme**

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Relevant Background Information

As part of the Council's Efficiency Programme, the Health & Environmental Services Department has identified potential savings of £215,000 to be included within the departmental revenue estimates for 2011/2012. This level of Departmental savings is considered necessary in order to achieve the total Council targeted savings of £1.7M in 2011/2012 and as such the Department has considered a number of possible options for making the savings.

The potential areas for savings are summarised in table 1 below and it is proposed to generate these from areas across the department. More detail on the proposals is given in the narrative below.

Table 1
Departmental Efficiency Savings 2011/2012

Budgetary Challenge	£20,000
Income Generation	£47,000
Procurement	£30,000
Service Reviews	£118,000
Total	£215,000

The **budgetary challenge** reductions of £20,000 could be generated from the realignment of supplies and services budgets in Cleansing Services and the training budget in the Environmental Health Service. This will have an impact, but it is felt that this can be managed so that it does not significantly affect service delivery.

The £47,000 of **additional income** could potentially be generated from the proposed introduction of charges for the collection of bulky household waste, which is a service that the council currently provides free of charge. Detailed information on this proposal is included in a separate report as introducing such a change is dependent on a Committee decision taken with knowledge of the full facts.

Improvements in **procurement** could generate an anticipated £30,000 of savings, including further reductions in kennelling costs through the collaborative contract arrangements with Carrickfergus Borough Council and reduction in the Waste Management communications programme and schools education contract. The Waste Management Service will work closely with Corporate Communications to limit the impact of the £15,000 reduction in the communications programme on the behavioural change message and the service will also utilise revised implementation arrangements during the contract extension period to negate the impact of the £5,000 reduction in the schools education contract.

The anticipated £118,000 of **service review** savings could be generated through the following proposed actions:-

- Cleansing Services and Environmental Health reductions in overtime budgets by a total of £29,000. This will impact on the capacity of the services to respond to specific requests from local communities or off schedule action, however it is considered necessary in this financial climate.
- Changes to shift patterns of staff at Recycling Centres could generate further savings in overtime costs of £74,000. A separate report is being presented on this proposal as it has implications in terms of opening hours.
- Environmental Health could reduce the current number of annual student placements from two to one, which would generate savings of £7,700. (This was reduced from four in 2008/09)
- Environmental Health Service could also cease payment of the annual contributions to "The Dogs Trust" (£5,000) and "Bee Safe" (£2,300) in 2011.

In addition to the savings identified above, the department will continue to analyse and challenge actual expenditure against the budget in 2010/2011 and ensure that any additional savings which will continue in 2011/2012 are included with the 2011/2012 revenue estimates.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the efficiency savings to be included in the revenue estimates for Health & Environmental Services Department for 2011/2012.

The Committee is also asked to approve the following specific actions in relation to the efficiency programme:-

- Cessation of the annual funding contributions to the "Dogs Trust" of £5,000 during 2011/12
- Cessation of the annual funding contribution to "Bee Safe" of £2,300 during 2011/12
- Reduction in the number Environmental Health student placements from two to one in 2011/2012

The Committee is also asked to note that the proposal to introduce a £5 charge for the collection of bulky household waste and to change Recycling Centre opening hours are included in separate reports to be presented by the Head of Cleansing Services and the Head of Waste Management.