

Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting 12 November 2012

1. Attendance

Members:

Alderman David Browne
Cllr Clare Hanna
Cllr Maire Hendron
Cllr Jim McVeigh
Cllr Lee Reynolds

Officers:

Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources
Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects
Trevor Wallace, Financial Accounting Manger.

Apologies

Cllr John Kyle
Cllr Tim Attwood
Cllr Deirdre Hargey

1. Revenue Estimates and Rates

The Director of Finance and Resources provided an overview of the financial performance of the Council at the end of Quarter 2. He highlighted a forecast under spend of £1.2m which was within the 3% tolerance, that staff were currently working with LPS to get a realistic rate income forecast. Based on these figures the general reserves would be increasing from £11.4 m to £13.6m by 31 March 2012.

The Director also highlighted the use of the unallocated waste plan money to specified reserves for specific events in future years.

The Director of Property and Projects highlighted issues around the investment programme re first year delivery in relation to recruitment, planning and partnerships. He also identified projects that were nearing completion.

The Chief Executive indicated he would like to have a Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting in the New Year to enable members to be provided with a detailed update on the implementation of the Investment Programme.

In relation to 2013/14 Revenue Estimates, the Director of Finance and Resources indicated that at present there was a £1.1m or 0.86% rate increase, mainly due to increases in uncontrollable costs. The Chief Executive indicated there was a potential this year to consider a 0% increase, but this would require further challenge to the departments. Members indicated that this scenario should be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

2. Social Investment Fund

The Director of Property and Projects talked to a report on the Social Investment Fund. He identified clinics were being held on Thursday 15th November. He reported that the Steering Groups were working through the long lists and were targeting the end of December for completion.

He identified there would be a need to work with Castlereagh and Newtownabbey where there is an overlap in SIF zones.

He pointed out the OFMDFM were discussing with the Council the possibility of using the Council as a delivery vehicle for SIF projects.

3. Political Use of Community Centres

The Chief Executive highlighted a report to go to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the political use of Community Centres. He reminded members of the rationale as to why this was originally put in place. The report is asking Council if it wishes to remove this restriction or continue with it in place.

4. Date of Next Meeting

To be Confirmed