

**Report to the Finance and Performance
Management Cabinet Committee**



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: FPM-021-2013/14

Date of meeting: 21 January 2013

Portfolio: Finance and Technology

Subject: Detailed Directorate Budgets 2013/14

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 2013/14 and make recommendations as appropriate.

Executive Summary

The report provides the draft General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budgets for the financial year 2013/14. 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 2013.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To give Members an opportunity to review and provide recommendations on the detailed budget 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 2012 with the presentation of the Financial Issues Paper incorporating the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). At that time it was identified that a savings target for 2013/14 of £0.25 million should be set. This has now been achieved through a number of savings such as the removal of vacant posts, amendments to the car leasing scheme and additional recycling credits to name a few. There have also been other savings found as in previous years as part of the budget process. Having said that savings of £400,000 in 2014/15 and 2015/16 with £200,000 in 2016/17 are still required and work to identify these is ongoing.

2. In late December the government support figure was confirmed at £6.050 million which is £313,000 below the figure estimated in the MTFS of £6.363 m. However with the CSB savings figure of £597,000 in 2013/14 and additional savings identified during this financial year the use of General Fund balances expected in 2013/14 is actually lower than expected.

3. The budgets are presented on a directorate by directorate basis and are shown 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 staff at the meeting to assist with any questions that members might have.

Resource Implications:

Proposed spending levels for the General Fund and HRA for the financial year 2013/14.

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 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 acceptable 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