

Appendix B

Meeting: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 18 January 2011

Subject: Review of RIO (Revenue Income Optimisation Project) Sustainable Communities Business Cases

Report of: Cllr David McVicar, Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles; Cllr Budge Wells, Assistant to the Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles; Cllr Tom Nicols, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development; Cllr Ken Matthews, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Skills and Regeneration

Summary: The report and attached appendix provides Members with a summary of the income generation proposals put forward by the RIO project. It also provides the Directorate's response to these proposals and recommendations as to which could be pursued.

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Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Executive

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Council priorities affected by this paper are:

- creating safer communities; and
- managing growth effectively.

Financial:

The proposals in this report will generate an additional income of £69,400 in 2011/12 should Executive decide to approve them. This will contribute to the setting of a balanced Council budget. In a number of cases further development of proposals may lead to additional savings in 2012/13.

Legal:

The Council has various powers to charge for aspects of the services it provides. The general rule is that when it is carrying out a statutory duty the Council can only make a charge where there is specific power to do so.

Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 provides that when the Council is providing a discretionary service, it may charge for the service, provided the person receiving the service has agreed to its provision. Overall the income from such charges must not exceed the cost of the provision.

Risk Management:

Risks relating to service take-up and organisational reputation can be associated with increases to fees and charges that are perceived to be 'comparably' high. The key risks are:

- Subject to the level of increase (and in view of the current financial climate), services might become unaffordable to some members of the community, which may impact 'take-up' and therefore overall income levels. This may also impact on the Council's reputation.
- Those paying fees and charges perceive that a higher than expected increase on any given area will be used to cross-subsidise increased costs of other service areas arising from government budget cuts, and not to cover the direct cost of the service they receive. This again may present a reputational risk.
- Services subject to significant increases in fees might attract unfavourable media attention, which again could result in reputational damage to the Council.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None

Equalities/Human Rights:

In the main charges are being brought into line with the market place and in some cases will have a positive impact rather than negative. However, all charges need to be considered in a service context and if these are not part of an existing policy which has had an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken, and is not part of a current wider review of service or cross cutting efficiency area (i.e. libraries, building control policy, registrars review and Passenger Transport Review) then where the users are predominantly vulnerable people, EIAs will be undertaken before implementation so that the price and or criteria applied to payments (means testing) does not exclude those in greatest need.

Community Development / Safety:

None

Sustainability:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

To note the rationale behind the RIO proposals and the Directorate response to them. To recommend to Executive the scope for savings from these proposals.

Background

1. Central Bedfordshire has been working on a Revenue Income Optimisation project where the initial proposals identified the Council could benefit by many £100Ks savings over the next three years.
2. The project has been useful in identifying potential additional income streams for the Council and detailed business cases have been drawn up for developing proposals further in those areas with potential. Officers are in the process of refining those business cases to strengthen the proposals and assess them in light of known circumstances as applicable to this Council. There are 14 individual business cases and eight of these relate to Sustainable Communities business. Summaries of seven of these can be reviewed in Appendix A, attached to this report. Car Parking charges are handled in a separate report.

Summary of RIO Proposals and Directorate Response

The Summary is shown in the table on Page 4.

Conclusion

3. Based on a review of the Business Case in Appendix A, it is recommended that proposals to the value of £69,400 as summarised in the table on page 4 of this report be pursued.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Summary of RIO Sustainable Communities Proposals and Directorate Response

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

- RIO High level Business Case Summary (draft)
- Full copies of the business cases created by the RIO project are not provided but can be obtained from Priory House on request.

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands

RIO Proposals	Directorate Response	2011/12 Additional Base Budget Saving
Scores on the Doors Re-Assessments	Pursue	£3,800
Extension of Trading Standards Scheme	Pursue	£2,800
Increase Pest Control Charges - Domestic	Awaiting further analysis of figures	£0
Increase Pest Control Charges - Commercial	Not to Pursue	£0
Introduce Health and Safety Training Courses	Pursue	£2,800
CCTV – collaborating with other authorities	TBC – after detailed analysis of figures completed	£0
CCTV – monitoring services to more schools	TBC – after detailed analysis of figures completed	£0
CCTV – making more use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology	TBC– after detailed analysis of figures completed	£0
Introduction of Highways Licence Fees	Not to Pursue	£0
Introduction of a Roof Tax	Not to Pursue	£0
Introduction of pre-application charging by the Highways Development Control Team	Already being pursued in 11/12 savings	£0
Libraries – charging for internet usage	Awaiting outcome of review of the Library Service	£0
Libraries - room hire charges to be increased and charged uniformly	Awaiting outcome of review of the Library Service	£0
Libraries – event charging	Awaiting outcome of review of the Library Service	£0
Licences – increase prices of non-statutory	Pursue	£7,600
Licences – charging for pre-application advice	Pursue	£6,300
Pre-application planning advice charges	Already being pursued in 11/12 savings	£0
Analysis of CLG consultation on planning fees	Pursue – when outcome of consultation is fully understood	£0
Selling additional acoustic advice/expertise	Not to Pursue	£0
Bulky waste charges – first not free	Pursue – Table in Appendix A gives Directorate estimate	£17,800
Fridge/freezer charges – first not free	Pursue – Table in Appendix A gives Directorate estimate	£12,500
Charge for replacement bins	Pursue – Table in Appendix A gives Directorate estimate	£10,400
Charge for education visits	Pursue – Table in Appendix A gives Directorate estimate	£4,000
Charge for collection of contaminated bins	Pursue – Table in Appendix A gives Directorate estimate	£1,400
TOTAL KNOWN 2011/12 BUDGET SAVINGS		£69,400