

CABINET – 5 JANUARY 2009

REVENUE BUDGET 2009/10 - BUDGET UPDATE

The Cabinet is requested to give consideration to the following extracts from the minutes of two meetings and in particular the content highlighted in bold:

CABINET MEMBER - TECHNICAL SERVICES – 28 JANUARY 2009

109. WINTER SERVICE 2008/09 - PROGRESS REPORT

The Cabinet Member considered the report of the Planning and Economic Regeneration Director advising of the current situation with regard to the 2008/09 Winter Service Budget; and indicating that a decision on this matter was required to ensure that the Cabinet Member was fully aware of the budget implications of the service.

The report detailed the current policy for gritting carriageways and footways; that in Sefton, 209 miles of carriageway, representing 35% of the highway network, were treated each time the gritting procedure was instigated on a route hierarchy structure; that the approved annual budget for the 2008/09 Winter Service was £441,000; but however, due to the prolonged cold spell over the Christmas/New Year period, by 5 January 2009 a total of £439,000 had been spent on gritting.

The report concluded by indicating that other Merseyside districts were experiencing similar budgetary implications; that the areas covered and performance standards associated with the Winter Service Policy had been developed from guidance on statutory requirements, best practice and local knowledge; and that over recent years the budget had been broadly sufficient to cover costs, with any limited overspend associated elsewhere within Technical Services budgets.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report on the Winter Service 2008/09 be noted;
- (2) all Members be advised of the Winter Service Policy, including non accedence to requests for service over and above that approved in the policy;
- (3) further consideration of 2008/09 budget issues be progressed based on regular reviews of service demands;
- (4) a report on the 2008/09 service provision, summary of requests received for additional service and with a subsequent review of the policy be submitted to the Cabinet Member - Technical Services in due course;

- (5) **due to the extreme weather conditions in December 2008, the stress on the Technical Services budgets and the forecast overspend on the current gritting budget, the Cabinet be requested to look favourably on funding any overspend on the Winter Services budget from the Council's balances as part of the budget setting process; and**
- (6) the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environmental Services be requested to report to all Area Committees seeking their views on funding additional Winter Service over and above the current policy and thereafter report back to the Cabinet Member.

JOINT MEETING OF PARTY GROUP LEADERS AND AREA COMMITTEE CHAIRS - 29 JANUARY, 2009

4. STREET NAMEPLATES

Further to Minute No 3, the meeting considered a further briefing note by the Assistant Technical Services Director on the current position concerning the withdrawal of the highways budget for the maintenance of street nameplates and the transfer of the maintenance responsibility to each Area Committee as part of the Council's decentralisation agenda. The note indicated that the Cabinet Member – Technical Services had expressed a wish to find a permanent solution to this issue.

AGREED:

- (1) That each Area Committee be requested to fund the cost of any replacement nameplate which needs to be undertaken as a matter of urgency from its grant aid budgetary allocation for the appropriate Electoral Ward, for the remainder of the current financial year; and
- (2) **That the Cabinet be requested to consider the reinstatement of the highways budget for the maintenance of street nameplates (at a cost of £30k) during the budget setting process for 2009/10.**