

HALLS, CEMETERIES & ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Date: Monday 14 September 2020
Title: Finance Report
Contact Officer: Town Clerk/RFO – Sharon Groth

Should Members have any queries about this report advance notice would be appreciated, in writing, by 5pm on the Friday before the meeting to allow for a full response at the meeting.

Background

Detailed income and expenditure statements for budgets which are the responsibility of this committee are enclosed. The period to which this reports relates is Period 4, 1 April 2020 to 31 July 2020.

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, the financial reports do not include the recharges from the Works, Agency or Central Support departments, nor does it include the salary information where this is directly attributable. The Town Clerk/RFO hopes to be able to calculate this information when she carries out the review of the annual budgets in October 2020.

Additionally, it has not been possible to provide a full written report, however at this stage in the financial year budgets are not expected to be overspent – but members are reminded that expenditure isn't necessarily incurred evenly over the course of the year.

COVID-19 – Additional Costs

Officers have worked hard to get facilities open when government guidance has allowed. Obviously, Cemeteries continued to operate, and did see an increase in burials although very few were in fact COVID related. Hirer's are slowly returning to the halls as restrictions are relaxed – and the Compliance Officer has worked with the Venue Manager on COVID-19 Risk Assessments as needed. This has significantly hit the Council's income and additional expense has been incurred with increased cleaning regimes, equipment etc.

Revenue Budget 2021/22 and Capital & Special Revenue Projects 2021/22

In line with normal Council procedures, the Town Clerk will shortly be commencing the annual review of all the Committees in order to prepare the revenue budget for 2021/22. Draft budgets are prepared based upon current activities and patterns of income and expenditure. Any additional revenue expenditure is considered separately as Revenue Growth items.

It is also normal practice that in the course of the budget cycle the council considers the Capital and Special Revenue budget to identify which projects or scheme are to be implemented and undertaken during the next financial year.

Whilst Members are encouraged to give consideration and put forward items to be included in next year's budget (and beyond), so that Officers can obtain costings accordingly, the Town Clerk would caution that given the current circumstances she will be looking to make savings in order to try and balance the current year's budget.

Furthermore, with COVID-19, Officers have not been able to progress many of the projects identified and budgeted for during the last budget setting cycle, these will be reassessed and possibly put into the preparation pool for further consideration at a later date.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The Committee receives financial reports in order to carry out its checks and balances, but ultimately the Council's Policy, Governance & Finance Committee has overall scrutiny of the Council's finances through Officer reports. This coupled with internal and external audits provides the Council with its assurances.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

This report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control, as it enables income and expenditure to be reviewed and compared with the Council's budgets.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and give consideration to any capital or special revenue projects for 2021/22 budget.