

59/07 (1) - **Public Protection Business and Bereavements and Markets**

Business Units: The Cabinet Member (Public Protection and Rural Affairs) was invited to present the budget. He outlined the approach taken to the budget, the key issues and the key variations, the proposed efficiency savings and the main risks to the budget and advised that there was one potential growth item which related to the recruitment of a part-time Licensing Enforcement Officer within the Public Protection Business Unit. Major variations in relation to Bereavement and Markets included £20,000 for the pay award and new management arrangements, £18,000 for improved Waste Management, £9,000 for markets refuse, £7,000 for footpath repairs, £72,000 for movement in appropriation to Business Reserves and £75,000 for building management/business support and central transport and increased utility costs of £3,000 and increased income of £123,000 expected. The Public Protection budget incorporated £14,000 for the pay award and £16,000 income through increased gambling act fees. The Cabinet Member then detailed the efficiency savings which related to £16,000 cash savings for improved market operation and £6,000 cash savings in relation to Public Protection. Bereavement Services fees and charges had generally been increased by 5%, Public Protection by 4% and there had been no increase in Hackney Carriage fees. The main risks to the budget areas related to the loss of income and difficulties in replacing front line staff.

Questions were then invited. One Member queried what the £6,000 cash savings consisted of. The Cabinet Member advised that these savings related to reduced expenditure for items such as car allowances, insurance and overtime. In response to a query concerning the improved market operations which resulted in a £16,000 cash efficiency saving, the Cabinet Member reported that this had been due to improved management arrangements, improved recycling and an increase in fees. There was a discussion regarding the number of dog wardens and the practical nature of the work. It was confirmed that the mercury abatement work was completed and that there was an outstanding bill for £7,000 that was being queried. The cost of cremations and the anticipated efficiency savings were considered and it was also confirmed that entry into the Crematorium Awards of Great Britain would be considered.

Members agreed the budget.

(Six Members voted for the motion and there were four abstentions)

(5.33 pm - 5.50 pm)