
REPORT OF THE FINANCE & PROCEDURES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 SEPTEMBER 2005

1 CLOSURE OF ACCOUNTS 2004/05

- 1.1 This item of business was referred by the Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22 September 2005 to Full Council with a recommendation that the budget amendments identified in the report be agreed. A copy of the officer's report to the Committee is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.2 In its consideration of the variations to the budget, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the following:-
- The Works Account variance figure should have been shown as a favourable one by adding brackets.
 - All housing benefit payments now come from the General Fund.
 - Figures for rent allowances have to be estimated because the number of likely applications and the level of rents was unknown.
 - When closing the accounts, a reserve was created in relation to the subsidy grant paid as new legislation made the final grant payment uncertain.
 - With regards to weekly incorrect benefit, until recently housing benefit claims had been reviewed on an annual basis. However, they are now the subject of a pro-active review with appropriate adjustments being made that could produce incentive payments to the Authority.
 - Salary on-costs were included in the figure, such as National Insurance and Pension payments.
 - Electricity was paid on a monthly direct debit basis. In seeking new suppliers for electricity, the billing process was almost as important as the tariff for the supply of electricity.
 - In relation to housing rents and charges, due to the loss of key staff, it had been necessary to close the accounts on the best estimate available. In addition, a number of problems had been experienced with the stream of income into the Housing Revenue Account coming via the County Council in relation to 'supporting people' funding.

1.3 It is proposed that Council **RESOLVES**

That the budget amendments identified in the report be agreed. (HFS)

Sarah Fowler

Head of Administrative & Member Services

Background Papers:-

None

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