

Mayor And Cabinet			
Report Title	Comments of the Public Accounts Select Committee on the Revenue Budget Savings Proposals 2010/11		
Key Decision	No	Item No.	
Ward	All		
Contributors	Public Accounts Select Committee		
Class	Part 1	Date	4 November 2009

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report informs the Mayor and Cabinet of the comments and views of the Public Accounts Select Committee, arising from discussions held on the Revenue Budget Savings Proposals 2010/11 at the Committee's meeting on 22 October 2009.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Mayor is recommended to note the views of the Public Accounts Select Committee as set out in section three of the report.

3. Public Accounts Select Committee Views

- 3.1 On 22 October, the Public Accounts Select Committee considered the Revenue Budget Savings Proposals 2010/11. The Committee considered the written report; the written supplementary evidence tabled at the meeting; and verbal evidence from Executive Directors and other officers at the meeting.
- 3.2 The Committee noted the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as presented in their referral to the Committee, and considered the additional information provided by officers at the request of that Committee.
- 3.3 The Public Accounts Select Committee would like to make the following comments on the proposals:

CYPO2 – Fostering and Adoption (£60k)

- 3.4 The Committee notes the concerns of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee around the potential impact that the limiting of support for individual carers might have on the recruitment and retention of Lewisham Foster Carers; and would like the Mayor to reconsider this officer proposal.

COM11 – Older Adults and Hospital (£200k)

- 3.5 The Committee notes that, at this stage, the proposal is to undertake a formal consultation on increasing the percentage of income assessed to calculate charges to users of the service; something required to take place before any decision to make the saving can be taken. The Committee feels that the proposal should not go

to consultation in view of the anxiety and uncertainty that this might cause to service users. The Committee does not support the savings proposal to be consulted on; and feels that the benefits of this saving should be reconsidered. In particular, consideration should be given to the extent to which the financial costs (the cost of consultation, benefit checks, re-invoicing etc) and social costs (anxiety and distress on the part of service users) of changing the charges, diminish the effects of the saving. In the view of the Committee these costs make the proposal to consult no longer worthwhile.

CUS02 – Environmental Enforcement (£73k)

- 3.6 Whilst the Committee feels that the restructuring of the Food Safety Team and the anticipated increase in efficiency was welcome, they would like consideration to be given to redirecting the savings achieved back into the service, in order to facilitate additional staffing.

CUS04 - Trading Standards & Street Markets (£27k) / CUS05 - Business Regulatory Services (£14k)

- 3.7 Similarly, the Committee feels that the savings achieved through proposals CUS04 and CUS05 should be redirected back to the services involved to facilitate additional staffing.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report per se, although the financial implications of accepting the Committee's recommendations will need to be considered.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to refer reports to the Mayor and Cabinet, who are obliged to consider them.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Revenue Budget Savings Proposals 2010/11 report – Officer Report to PAC (22.10.09)

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Charlotte Dale, Scrutiny manager (ext. 49534), or Kevin Flaherty, Head of Committee Business (ext. 49327).