

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE SERVICES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

TUESDAY 9 JULY 2013

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE & RESOURCES

Report prepared by Paul Riley

1. USE OF 2012 13 REVENUE UNDERSPEND

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 To consider proposals presented by officers and members for the use of the 2012/13 revenue under spend along with the balance of unused under spend from 2011/12.

1.1.2 The total value for use is £0.558m and proposals totalling in excess of £2.3m have been received and are presented to the Committee for consideration.

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Finance & Resources

1.2.1 That the Committee recommends to the Leader of the Council for approval the sums set out in column L "Proposed Award" in Appendix A to this report. Alternatively that the Committee agrees other proposals from the Appendix to a maximum value of £0.558m.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 During 2012/13 the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered proposals for the use of a £1.1m under spend from the 2011/12 revenue account. Proposed schemes supported the delivery of the Council's key priorities and did not create an ongoing revenue cost to the Council.

1.3.2 Recommendation was made by the Committee and approved by the Leader of the Council to spend £0.83m of the under spend. Due to the lengthy process and commencement of the call for proposals so late in 2012/13 all schemes that were approved have commenced during 2013/14.

1.3.3 At its meeting on 15 May 2013 the Cabinet considered a report on the Revenue Outturn for 2012/13. This reported a revenue under spend of £0.275m and Cabinet noted that a further request for proposals to use the revenue under spend could be made along with the balance unused from 2011/12 of £0.283m.

1.3.4 Criteria for the 2012/13 under spend proposals was set more specifically:

- A. Support the decent place to live priority, the outcomes from this priority are set out in the strategic plan as:
 - Decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures.
 - Continues to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the Borough.
 - Residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced.
- B. Demonstrate community/neighbourhood level involvement and engagement
 - "A community" has multiple definitions but the purpose here is to ensure that the scheme is focused on people who live in a specific area or a group of people that have a common purpose or need.
- C. Provide a sustainable local environmental benefit or improvement
 - Preference will be given to proposals where there will be a lasting benefit i.e. reducing future maintenance/cleansing costs, enabling the community to look after their local amenity spaces (this could be especially effective where the ownership of the land is not clear) and where the scheme does not put an additional burden on current resources such as staff and equipment owned by the Council.
- D. Require small amounts of funding.
 - Small schemes will ensure that the resources can be put to greater number of benefits and control costs. The value will not be a criterion for rejecting a scheme that is otherwise of high priority.

1.3.5 As a result of the request a large number of proposals were received and debated, 49 proposals were finally set out for consideration and these are presented in **Appendix A** to this report. Following feedback

from the previous review by Overview and Scrutiny a numbering system has been used in the Appendix to make referencing individual proposals easier during the debate. In addition the Columns have been lettered to enable referencing. Each column provides the following information:

- A. Row number
- B. Head of Service or Councillor responsible for bid
- C. Brief title description
- D. Details of each proposal in one paragraph
- E. Sum of money requested
- F. Average scoring against criteria (completed by three heads of service and averaged):
 - 0 points for no match
 - 1 point for partial match
 - 2 points for full match
 - Maximum score 6, as there were three criteria for bidding
- G. The percentage of the total available funding that the sum requested represents (this is because the request asked for smaller schemes to enable the money go further)
- H. A commentary regarding why a bid has not been considered even though it may fit the criteria i.e. alternative funding available.
- I. Officer proposal for the funding of schemes

1.3.6 The evaluation and funding proposals that have been provided by officers in columns F to I of Appendix A have been completed to give a starting point for debate. It is recommended that the Committee consider the proposals as set out in the attached Appendix and the evaluation by officers and make a recommendation to the Leader of the Council.

1.3.7 Members may wish to note:

- The scheme given a line 8 of the Appendix "Mote Park Community Engagement project" was submitted as more than one proposal, the variation being the period over which the current scheme is extended. Funding ranged from £88,940 for 24 months to £123,950 for 36 months. The officer proposal is only for a twelve month commitment.
- The scheme given at line 23 of the Appendix "Christmas Light Improvements" was submitted as more than one proposal, the variation being the type of lighting and Town Centre area covered by extending the lighting available. The officer proposal is for the lowest level of additional funding.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

- 1.4.1 The resources could remain in general balances but this would not proactively support the delivery of Council priorities. In addition balances remain healthy with a minimum of £1.5m more than the Council set minimum of £2m.
- 1.4.2 The Committee could request alternatives that have not been put forward as part of the request for proposals. Adequate time was given to all members and officers to bring forward schemes and it is not recommended that schemes outside of those brought forward during the process be considered at this stage.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.5.1 The target for these proposals is sustainable projects that support the Council's priority of a decent place to live and as such all proposals approved should support that priority.

1.6 Risk Management

- 1.6.1 The major risk is that the proposals put forward are not completed although money has been allocated. The most effective mitigation for this risk is monitoring of expenditure during the year for smaller scheme and appropriate project management for larger schemes. An outturn report identifying achievement of objectives can be provided to the Leader of the Council at the end of 2013/14.

1.7 Other Implications

1. Financial	X
2. Staffing	X
3. Legal	
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development	
6. Community Safety	
7. Human Rights Act	
8. Procurement	X
9. Asset Management	

- 1.7.1 The financial implications are set out in the body of the report. Proposals for £0.558m of expenditure are set out in the Appendix and this money will be taken from current revenue balances. Following this action an adequate level of balances will remain (in excess of the minimum set by Council).
- 1.7.2 Some of the proposals have staffing implications. In all cases they propose fixed term contracts and there should be no longer term employment issues as a consequence of any proposal.
- 1.7.3 Some proposals are above the threshold for procurement and the relevant officer will be required to act in accordance with the Council's constitution when procuring the goods or services.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Proposals for use of under spend 2012/13.