



St. Helens Council

Town Hall, St. Helens, Merseyside, WA10 1HP

Telephone: 01744-456249 (Sharon Dickinson, Support Officer)

Rainhill Ward Committee *Public Meeting*

Agenda

Date: 24th January 2007
Time: 7.00pm
Venue: Rainhill Village Hall

Membership:

Councillors: De'Asha, Doyle, Glover
Co-opted Members: Mrs. A. Perry (Community Empowerment Network)
Lucia Forber (Helena Housing)
Constable Mike Platt (Merseyside Police)
Councillor W. M. Wood (Parish Council)

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3. Declaration of Interests from Members
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 - b. Environmental Project Fund - Update 7
5. Public Question Time
6. Local Issues – Ward Profiles
(Ward Members are asked to bring the Ward Profiles provided at the last meeting, for further discussion)
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11. Imagine St. Helens Project
12. Date of the Next Meeting – 14th March 2007

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Item 2: Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Rainhill Ward Committee

At a meeting of this Committee held on 22nd November 2006
at Rainhill Village Hall

(Present)	Cllr M Doyle Cllr S Glover Cllr J De'Asha Cllr W M Wood (Parish Council) Ms L Forber (Helena Housing) Constable M Platt
(Also Present)	Nick Dyer (St Helens Council) Julie Fox (St Helens Council)
(Not Present)	Mrs A Perry (Community Empowerment Network) Chief Inspector Waive Sharon Dickinson Sue Lightup

For the benefit of those who had not previously attended, Cllr Doyle explained the format of the meeting and underlined the key priorities as involving the community in decisions about their ward and encouraging an open question and answer session between the council and residents. Introductions were made around the table.

- 1. Apologies.**
Apologies were made on behalf of Mrs Perry, Chief Inspector Waive, Sharon Dickinson and Sue Lightup. Cllr Doyle reinforced the importance of regular attendance and asked that a representative from the CEN could be present at the following meeting.
- 2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the previous meeting on 27th September 2006.
- 3. Declarations of Interest from Members**
No declarations of interest were made.
- 4. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting**
Cllr Doyle stated that the only reference he wanted to make was to a question posed at the previous meeting about car parking charges for the Village Hall. He did not want this to become a regular topic for question as it is on private property but did want to update the Committee and public that the charges had been reduced between the hours of 7pm and 7am.

Cllr Doyle underlined the importance of inviting the right individuals to the meeting, ensuring they are happy to represent the appropriate body and that that body is happy to be represented by that individual. Cllr Doyle has also approached schools in response to a previous question about youth representation and states that at present, they do not want representation on the Ward Committee.

Nick Dyer reminded all that nominations were still welcome for representation on the Committee and that any suggestions would be put through the process for selection. He stated that all suggestions for faith groups are to come through Shine and that the

chamber was currently talking to the council about who could represent the business community of Rainhill.

5. Public Question Time

Cllr Doyle again reinforced the importance of the public being able to ask questions at this session. He explained that the questions must be –

- * Within the remit of local authority,
- * That they must be concerning Rainhill and that
- * They must not be defamatory, frivolous or offensive.

He also explained that he would not cover old ground on questions previously raised and would only consider such discussion if there was new information to add on the subject. Nick Dyer added that if the Committee were unable to answer any of the questions posed, they would be taken back to the Council and forwarded onto the appropriate person for a response. He opened the floor to the public who wanted further clarification on the role and format of the Ward Committees as neither had previously attended.

Cllr Doyle explained that the Ward Committees were taking a disciplined but flexible approach and that as there was a lot of investment and work happening in Rainhill over the foreseeable future, it was important to engage the public in exactly what was happening.

6. Chief Constable's Annual Report

Both the Chief Constable's Annual Report, and the annual report for St Helens were shown to the Committee and audience.

7. Community Safety Ward Report

Cllr Glover began the discussion by asking if Rainhill had considerably less crime than other areas. Constable Platt confirmed that the main concerns in Rainhill are to do with theft of and from vehicles, possibly due to quantity of expensive cars, people continuing to leave valuables on display and the proximity of the motorway and Linkway.

A new scheme is now in place by the police to warn vehicle owners if they have left valuables on display by contacting them directly. Constable Platt also stated that further initiatives in place were to do with reducing speeding in the area and making sure police were more visible and approachable to all sectors of the community. Traffic Community Support Officers were also making their presence felt in enforcing fixed penalty notices for illegal parking.

Cllr Doyle also commented that the alley gate programme had been successful and although there had been relatively few requests for gates, those that had been fitted had greatly improved the area.

The Committee agreed that it was important for residents' quality of life to be reassured that the fear of crime in this area exceeds the actual threat.

Cllr Doyle concluded that the report (also available on the internet and in written copy) is generally good news for the area and showed his appreciation for all the preventative work being done by the police.

8. Environmental Protection Planned Schemes

Cllr Doyle discussed the subject of the demolition of run down flats at Warburton Hey. Ms L Forber confirmed that Helena Housing is into the second round of consultation with residents and that some have already willingly found alternative accommodation and vacated the premises. If all residents are in agreement, the proposal is to begin at the front and as each building becomes vacant, demolish it and work backwards. All residents in surrounding houses have also been consulted and Helena is currently gathering all feedback.

Cllr Doyle felt this was a good decision and would greatly improve that area.

9. Environmental Fund Proposals

Cllr Doyle explained that £30,000 that has been dedicated to Environmental Schemes and that it was important for each Ward to decide how that money is best spent. He urged the public not to use the money for duplication of what the council is or should be doing already, but instead to add value to the Rainhill area.

- * Mr M Halliday of Ellon Avenue suggested that some of the money be used for a project on the pond on Mill Lane, near Manor Farm. He explained that he and many local parents take their children along to feed the ducks, but that there was no real walkway and that the railings were in disrepair. He also suggested that the pond be dredged to clean it up. Mr G Dobson of Mill Lane then asked for clarification if the money is to be spent on particular areas or if it is to improve the general environmental state of Rainhill. Cllr Doyle suggested that the Committee will give preliminary approval for the proposal and that it will be forwarded to the Estates Section to clarify ownership of the property. He would like a preliminary assessment of the cost of the project and states this is exactly the sort of value added project he wants to see the public putting forward. Cllr Wood agreed to take this proposal back to the Parish and see if they will also support the project and possibly offer some joint funding.

Nick Dyer stated that his understanding was that the money *had* been ring fenced from the existing environmental budget and reminded the committee that although approval has been given to put the proposal forward, they must all go through the Environmental Protection Department to ensure they meet with the appropriate criteria.

Mr G Dobson asked if there would be upkeep money for any of these projects as it would be a shame for the investment to go to waste several years down the line and Cllr Doyle responded that there would only be consideration of projects that did not have a "revenue tail".

At this point, Mr G Dobson felt that he had no specific projects that he wanted to discuss but would return with them in a later meeting if appropriate.

- * Cllr Wood raised a proposal for matched funding from the Parish Council to replace the fencing on the border of Old Lane and Warrington Road and has obtained 3 quotes for that work. Ward Committee agreed that it was a safety issue, it did affect the appearance of the area in a very busy spot and it would benefit the young people and families using the play area. This proposal received preliminary agreement from the Ward Committee to be passed to the Environmental Protection Department for consideration.

Resolved that:

- 1) Lead officer to seek clarification of the origin of the money and the purpose of the proposals and feed back in the following meeting.**

10. Building Ward Profiles

Cllr De'Asha began the conversation by stating how interested he was in the age profiles in Rainhill and how this would become a priority for Social Services in the future.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Cllr Doyle concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance. He confirmed that the next meeting would be held on the 24th January 2007 and encouraged Mr G Dobson to bring his proposals forward at the next meeting or perhaps in advance, so there would be time for researching costs etc before the next meeting. He reminded everyone that the money was there for spending and should be used to keep Rainhill at its best.

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Item 4a: Matters Arising

Ward Committees November Issue Log

Ward	Customer Name	Enquiry	Action Taken
Rainhill	DOYLE M (CLLR)	Cllr raised the issue at Ward Committee 22/11/06 that the fence at the junction between Warrington Road and Rainhill Road (Rainhill) has been broken for some time and could it be replaced. (Possibly an Arena property).	LETTER SENT TO RIVERSIDE HOUSING REQUESTING THEY REPAIR THE DAMAGED FENCING. ALSO SENT AN E-MAIL TO CLLR DOYLE INFORMING HIM THE COUNCIL CANNON ENFORCE THAT THEY CARRY OUT REPAIRS. HIGHWAYS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE FENCE.

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Item 4b: Matters Arising

Ward Committee Environmental Project Fund – Progress Report

	Original Schemes
	New Schemes
	Possible Schemes from Issues raised by Public

Rainhill					
Scheme Suggestion	Consider Further Reject x	Reason for Refusal	Technical Appraisal Required	Financial Costing	Committee Approve/Reject
1. Replacement of the perimeter fencing to the Old Lane Playing Field on junction of Old Lane and Warrington Road					✓

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Item 7: Update on Environmental Protection Planned Schemes

Ward	Location	Scheme	Works to be undertaken	
			Nov 2006 – Jan 2007	Feb 2007 – Apr 2007
Rainhill	<u>Highway Maintenance Schemes</u>			
	Longton Lane (parts)	Carriageway Resurfacing		✓
	A57 Warrington Road (The Crescent - Holt Lane & Longton Lane Jct) - parts	Carriageway Resurfacing		✓
	Rainhill Road (Elderswood - Eltonhead Road)	Carriageway & Footway Resurfacing		*
	Stephen Way	Carriageway Resurfacing		✓
	Stour Avenue	Carriageway Resurfacing		✓
	Weaver Avenue	Carriageway Resurfacing (with footway)		✓
	Warrington Road Service Road (No. 734-758)	Carriageway Resurfacing		✓

Ward	Location	Scheme	Works to be undertaken	
			Nov 2006 – Jan 2007	Feb 2007 – Apr 2007
	Weaver Avenue	Footway Reconstruction	In progress	
	St James Road	Micro-Asphalt (Ralumac)		✓
	Mooreway (parts)	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Dunbeath Avenue	Carriageway Sealing		✓
Rainhill (Cont'd)	<u>Highway Maintenance Schemes</u> (Cont'd.)			
	St James Mount	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Fawley Road	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Caxton Road	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Norbury Fold	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Thorndyke Close	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Marley Close	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Ashton Avenue (Dunbeath Avenue - Oakston Avenue)	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Lawton Road	Carriageway Sealing		✓

Ward	Location	Scheme	Works to be undertaken	
			Nov 2006 – Jan 2007	Feb 2007 – Apr 2007
	Owen Road	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Chatsworth Road (parts)	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Batey Avenue	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Horwood Avenue	Carriageway Sealing		✓
	Millom Grove	Carriageway Sealing		✓
Rainhill (Cont'd)	<u>Traffic</u>			
	Warrington Road (A57) outside Rainhill High School	Upgrade existing pelican crossing to a puffin crossing		✓
	<u>Bridges Schemes</u>			
	Stoney Lane Bridge	Urgent concrete repairs required to edge beams		✓
	<u>Civic Pride & Community Spaces</u>			
	Two Butt Lane Play Area	Refurbish and relocate play area		✓
	Warburton Hey Play Area	Refurbish/replacement play equipment		✓

Carriageway Resurfacing Scheme

In a carriageway resurfacing scheme the top layers of the road surface will be removed. Manhole covers and gully grates and frames will be set to new levels. The road surface will be regulated if required, and a new surface course will be laid. Road markings will be replaced on completion of the works.

Carriageway resurfacing is undertaken when the road surface has become cracked, rutted or has started to break up. The new surface protects the underlying layers from water penetration, strengthens the road construction and gives an improved ride for vehicles.

Footway Reconstruction Scheme

In a footway reconstruction scheme existing kerbs will be taken out if defective and replaced with new. The surface of the old footway will be broken out and regulated with stone sub-base. Bitmac base course and wearing course will then be laid.

Footway reconstruction is undertaken when the condition of the footway has deteriorated to such an extent that surface dressing or slurry seal would prove ineffective. A reconstructed footway should not require attention for a further 15 years.

Carriageway Sealing

When a carriageway is to be sealed, any defective areas will be excavated and patched with bituminous material. A bituminous slurry seal, approximately 6mm thick will then be spread over the surface of the carriageway.

This makes the surface impervious, stopping rainwater penetrating into the structure of the carriageway, causing deterioration. Sealing the carriageway also helps to arrest any further disintegration of the surface, extending its life by up to 10 years.

Micro Asphalt

This is similar to carriageway sealing with a larger aggregate and is used as an intermediate process when the road condition is too poor to use slurry seal but not bad enough to warrant resurfacing.

* May be deferred due to proposed Utility Works and awaiting confirmation

Item 9: Community Safety Update

TACKLING CRIME AND DISORDER IN ST HELENS – WARD UPDATE RAINHILL WARD

Survey Results

In 2006 two crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour surveys were undertaken. In July the Council's Peoples Panel were surveyed and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), as part of its 2006/07 Annual Report, surveyed all households. The findings from the two surveys showed that:-

- Most people consider crime and anti-social behavior to be important issues;
- 71.5% of those that responded felt very or fairly safe in the area where they lived;
- 36.7% considered that they were very or fairly well informed; and
- 42.3% had a high perception of anti-social behaviour in the area where they live.

Regarding anti-social behaviour, the following were seen as very or fairly big problems:-

- | | |
|---|-------|
| • Teenagers hanging around on the street | 52.6% |
| • Rubbish and litter lying around | 47.2% |
| • People using or dealing drugs | 44.3% |
| • Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage | 42.5% |
| • People being drunk or rowdy in public places | 38.8% |
| • Nuisance neighbours or loud parties | 17.3% |
| • Abandoned or burnt out cars | 6.1% |

The information obtained from the surveys will be used to determine future priorities for the Council and its Partners on the CDRP.

Ward Initiatives

Responding to community issues

In response to residents concerns over inconsiderate and dangerous parking around Whiston Hospital, Merseyside Police has teamed up with the hospital to encourage visitors to use the multi-storey carpark. Over the last 3 months, over 550 Fixed Penalty Notices (£30 fines) have been issued to motorists that have parked their vehicles illegally in the surrounding roads. An Experimental Order is in place on the Cartmel Drive Estate, adjacent to the hospital, to alleviate parking problems. The Experimental Order states that no vehicles are to enter the estate between the hours of 9.00am – 9.00pm, except for permit holders and for access to off-street premises. Additional waiting restrictions have also been introduced on Stoney Lane.



Parking Issues and Child Safety

Community Support Officers Maureen Duffy and Ken Dearing have been carrying out high visibility patrols around the schools in Rainhill responding to concerns over parking outside school gates, particularly during the busy dropping-off and picking-up periods during the day.

The problems of obstructions and incidents involving children narrowly escaping injury within the car park and around the school gates are on the increase. This is obviously a cause for concern and Officers have been engaging with visitors to the school and asking them to follow safety advice including parking a short distance away from the school entrance, parking on the same side of the road as other parked cars and not opposite them, be mindful of the residents in the area and try not to obstruct driveways, never park on or opposite the yellow zig-zag markings on the road and never park where a school crossing patrol is operating.

Police will continue to monitor the situation and action will be taken if there are any future breaches of safety.

Borough-Wide Initiatives

Beat the Bogus Caller



Striking images of St Helens are being featured in a calendar to raise awareness of distraction burglaries and help prevent them happening. Merseyside Police, St Helens Council and United Utilities have teamed up to publish the 'If in Doubt, Keep Them Out' 2007 calendar. Each month, the calendar highlights a seasonal message about bogus caller crime prevention and includes telephone numbers of organisations that offer help to older and vulnerable people, who are often targeted by such offenders.

A limited supply of calendars is available from St Helens Police Station or by contacting Karen Webster on 0151 777 6021.

Tackling Drugs in St Helens



Merseyside Police in St Helens, in partnership with St Helens Drug and Alcohol Team, is continuing its total war on drugs and taking illegal drugs off the streets. Over the last 12 months, we have made over 520 arrests for drug related offences, executed over 70 drug warrants, received over 230 calls to the Dedicated Hotline and Crimestoppers with information about drug activity and over 950 people have accessed drug treatment.

In addition, an innovative interactive education programme has been rolled out in all secondary schools across the borough, providing advice about the misuse of drugs (including alcohol and tobacco) and the harm they can do as well as providing support for young people and their families. Look out for the forthcoming marketing campaign on buses and billboards in January.

Alcohol Free Zone Consultation

St Helens Council's Safer and Stronger Communities Team are consulting over proposals to extend alcohol free zones to cover most of the Borough. Two years ago, an 'alcohol free zone' was declared in the Town Centre which made it an offence for anyone to drink alcohol after being required by a police officer not to do so. Police have the power to confiscate and dispose of alcohol and it is an arrestable offence to fail to cooperate, without reasonable excuse, with a police officer's request.

St Helens Council Executive agreed to launch a full consultation as part of its crime and disorder strategy, part of which is to cut alcohol related crime. The consultation includes the public, businesses, schools, licensed premises, councillors and parish councillors. The results of the exercise, which will run in January 2007, will be reported back to the Council's Executive.

Any extension of the 'alcohol' order will not impose a blanket ban on public drinking but will clarify the powers of police officers to enable them to better tackle crime and anti social behaviour associated with public drinking. It will not affect drinking in licensed premises and will not cover rural areas.

Useful Contacts

Merseyside Police

Your Neighbourhood Inspector is Don Blackburn and your Neighbourhood Sergeant is Allan Pennington

0151 709 6010 – NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER (general enquiries, speak to Neighbourhood Officers)

999 – EMERGENCY

0800 555 111 – CRIMESTOPPERS (providing information about crime in your area anonymously)

Further information can be found by logging on to our website – www.merseyside.police.uk

St Helens Council

Tel: **01744 456789**

Email: contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk

Further information can be found by logging on to our website – www.sthelens.gov.uk

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Item 10: Council Budget Consultation

Dear Ward Committee Members,

Consultation on the Council's Budget Proposals for 2007-2008

I am writing to you, as a key stakeholder within the Borough, to seek your views on our proposals for next year's budget.

A detailed report is attached, however, below I have set out the key issues contained within the proposals.

Key Factors Affecting the Budget

The Council receives a significant level of funding from Central Government in the form of a general revenue support grant. This has seen an increase of 3% for 2007-2008. This compares to a national increase of 3.7%.

Schools funding is now given separately and can only be used for designated schools related purposes. This is to increase by 4%.

Service demands, particularly in Social Care for Children and Adults continues to increase year-on-year.

The Council has again met its targets for Efficiency savings set at 2.5% of gross spend and has plans to achieve similar level of savings in 2007-2008.

Key Budget Proposals

To provide £350k of additional funding for Adult Social Care.

To earmark £900k of funding to support the implementation of a Children's Care Strategy.

To provide £350k of additional funding to continue environmental improvements in the Borough.

To provide £1,500k of investment to improve the living environment of the Borough, our communities and our neighbourhoods.

To extend the Alleygating initiative further committing to a rolling programme of annual investment of £500k.

To implement an Empty Homes Strategy to address the problem of long term empty properties.

To invest £481k in enhancing the Car Park provision within the Town.

To invest £31m in Capital projects in 2007-2008.

To establish a process for the effective control of the £150m investment in Secondary Schools to be provided under the "Building Schools for the Future" initiative and to ensure that the learning experience of our students gives them best opportunities, through quality provision of facilities, services and support, to meet their individual potential.

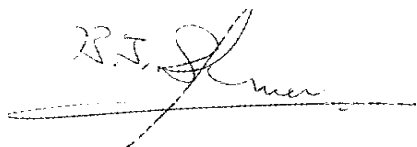
To set a Council Tax increase of 2.5%

As you will be aware this is the first budget under our new administration. I have based this budget on the principles of reflecting the Communities needs and aspirations and fulfilling the promises made at the start of the year. It meets the statutory responsibilities placed on the administration and maintains a sound financial basis for the delivery of services. As you will see extra funding has been provided in key areas including Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Environmental improvements across the Borough. Further funding has also been provided to reduce crime by extending the alleygating scheme. I intend to work closely with all partners to improve the quality of life for the residents of the Borough and make it a better place for people to live, work and spend their leisure time.

Your comments would be most welcome and if you would like to meet to discuss the proposals please contact me and I will arrange this.

However could you please ensure that any comments are received by the Council before Wednesday, 7 February 2007.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Spencer', written over a horizontal line.

Councillor Brian Spencer
Leader of the Council

Proposals for the Council Budget 2007-2008

Consultation Document

Please ensure your comments are received
by Wednesday, 7th February 2007



St.Helens Council

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Executive

10 January 2007

BUDGET REPORT 2007-2008

1. Introduction

1.1 The Executive, at its meeting on 13 December 2006, considered the outcome of the 2007-08 Revenue Support Grant Settlement and made key decisions on the final Portfolio cash limits.

Those decisions were:-

- (a) agree the additional amounts for Children & Young People (£0.9m) funded from Service Modernisation Fund;
- (b) agree additional permanent increases for Adult Social Care and Health (£0.35m) and Environmental Protection (£0.35m);
- (c) to require Portfolios to absorb the revised budget pressures highlighted in the report.

1.2 This report seeks approval to the revised Portfolio Spending Plans, revisions to the balances position, agreement, in principle, to the Council Tax increase for 2007-2008 and approval to the Capital Investment Programme.

2. Revenue Budget 2007-08

2.1 Listed below are the revised cash limits following the decisions made at the Executive on 13 December 2006.

Portfolio	2006-07 £M	2007-08 £M
Children & Young People	30.014	30.519
Adult Social Care & Health	41.114	42.216
Urban Regeneration & Housing	2.079	1.762
Environmental Protection	24.442	22.040
Corporate Services	7.668	6.984
Culture, Sport & Heritage	8.229	8.253
Safer Communities	3.894	3.117
Levies	19.609	21.098

2.2 These limits have been revised since the last report to take account of:-

- (i) Revised Capital Charges;
- (ii) Virements;
- (iii) Executive Decisions.

However, there is only a minor effect on the Council's financial position.

2.3 The Portfolios have re-drafted their Portfolio Budget Strategy Statements and Service

Plans in line with the revised cash limits. These are given at Appendix 1.

2.4 Further adjustments may be required following confirmation of specific grants, central recharges and the final Revenue Support Grant announcement.

3. Projected Balances Position

3.1 The projected earmarked balances as at 31 March 2008 are given below:-

	£M
Affordable Housing	0.200
ICT Development Fund	0.158
Service Development Fund	1.930
Service Modernisation Fund	2.287
Gershon Efficiency Fund	1.600

3.2 General Balances are projected to be £5.484m by 31 March 2007. These reflect the receipt of Local Authority Business Growth Initiative payments of £0.948.

3.3 The Council is moving into a period of uncertainty caused by the Comprehensive Spending Review to be undertaken by Central Government in 2007. This could affect the level of funding, both general and specific, the Council will receive from 2008-09. Ministers have indicated that they are expecting a significant reduction in funding levels for Local Government and have stated that it could result in a nil increase in Revenue Support Grant. At this stage the financial model has not been adjusted to take account of these views, however, the level of balances will need to reflect this uncertainty as part of the risk assessment when setting the overall level of general balances.

4. Capital Investment Programme

4.1 The Council agreed a three year Capital Programme for 2006-07 to 2008-09 as part of the budget approval in March 2006. This made assumptions in relation to the available resources to support the Programme.

4.2 The Executive established specific principles for the use of prudential borrowing and the use of capital receipts. These are given below.

Prudential borrowing should only be used in the following areas:-

- (a) on the basis of invest to save where the income or savings are greater than the cost of borrowing;
- (b) where individual services can fund the costs of borrowing from their existing cash limits.

The use of Capital Receipts should be judged against the following criteria:-

- (a) they should be used to generate income or reduce expenditure which is greater than the loss of investment income;
- (b) they should generate an asset with equal or greater real terms value to the value of capital receipts being used;
- (c) they should be used to support schemes of a strategic nature;

- (d) they should be used to meet legislative requirements when no other source of funding is available.

4.3 Under the new Prudential System the Council, in making its capital investment decisions, must have explicit regard to option appraisal, asset management planning, strategic planning for the Authority and achievability of its forward plans. Potential new schemes for 2005/06 and beyond have been subject to a robust appraisal and prioritisation process taking into account a range of factors, including:-

- (i) statutory basis of scheme;
- (ii) benefits of the scheme;
- (iii) ability to lever in additional funds;
- (iv) risk assessment;
- (v) links to Community Plan, etc.

4.4 There are a number of new schemes recently included in the current year's programme which involve significant spend and have an impact on future years programmes. These are:-

- (i) Extension of the Alleygating Programme (£1.5m)

This is a rolling programme of £500k per year to continue the initiative to promote safer communities.

- (ii) Enhancements to Car Parking Network (£0.579m)

This would add to and upgrade the Car park provision within the Town.

- (iii) Implementation of an Empty Homes initiative (£0.1m)

This involved the purchase and resale of empty properties in the Borough which are having a detrimental affect on communities, neighbourhoods and individuals. The initial capital investment will cover the first purchases. The proceeds from the sale of these properties will be recycled to maintain the strategy in the long term.

- (iv) Three Year Programme of Environmental Initiatives (£1.5m)

A programme of environmental improvements will be supported to address those issues which will improve the living environment of neighbourhoods and communities. The programme will support the Restorative Justice Policy.

- (v) Car Parking at Taylor Park (£0.052m)

The significant investment in Taylor Park in recent years has generated a major increase in usage and this has caused parking issues both within and around the park. It is proposed to extend car park provision within the park to alleviate these problems.

4.5 It is also proposed to utilise prudential borrowing to support other initiatives subject to a detailed business case and affordability criteria being met. These will involve the use of additional income or generated savings to fund the cost of the borrowing.

These are:-

(i) Developments in Leisure Facilities (£3.35m)

These should improve the Leisure offer within St. Helens and increase activity within the Town to support the healthy living agenda.

(ii) Additions to the Corporate Property Portfolio (£2.91m)

Rationalisation of the Corporate Property Portfolio to reduce future rental costs.

(iii) New Digital Communications Infrastructure (£0.5M)

This will allow both voice and data to be transmitted within the same network. This will improve reliability of communications and generate ongoing cost savings.

4.6 It must be stressed that the schemes listed at 4.5 will only progress if they are financially viable and be subject to future reports to the Executive.

4.7 The Council has recently received confirmation that it will be included within 'Wave 5' of the Building Schools for the Future programme. Whilst the detail of the financial support and the consequences for the Council are not known at this stage, the implementation of Building Schools for the Future will have a massive impact on the Council's Asset Management Plan. These are currently being considered and will be reported as soon as they are known. The BSF programme will require consideration of the development of an Academy. It will be necessary to develop and submit an expression of interest to the DFES in the new year.

4.8 The Capital Programme for 2007-08 to 2009-10 therefore consists of existing commitments plus new schemes to take up the Single Capital Pot resources and other notified resources and those schemes in Section 4.4 above. This is attached at Appendix 2 and can be summarised as follows:-

Portfolio	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000
Corporate Services and External Affairs	315	0	0
Environmental Protection	2,645	500	500
Transport	7,084	4,360	3,750
Children and Young People	15,851	11,313	7,340
Culture, Sport & Heritage	536	0	0
Urban Regeneration	188	491	50
Housing	5,488	3,211	3,211
Social Care and Health	421	315	315
Safer Communities	603	500	500
TOTAL	33,077	20,690	15,666

Portfolio	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000
Source of Funding			
Supported Borrowing	5,282	4,494	4,494
Unsupported Borrowing	1,086	0	0
Grant / Other	21,868	14,705	9,122
Capital Receipts	3,847	1,491	2,050
Revenue Contribution	1,014	0	0
TOTAL	33,077	20,690	15,666

5. Council Tax Level

5.1 The Table below gives the summary budget position for 2007-08. However, there are still factors which remain outstanding:-

- (a) the Government has not yet completed its consultation on the Revenue Support Grant Settlement and therefore the figures remain provisional;
- (b) the levying bodies have not submitted their requirements formally to the Council;

	2007-08 £M	2008-09 £M	2009-10 £M
Total Spend	135.098	139.065	143.202
<u>Less</u> RSG/Business Rates	(74.998)	(76.873)	(78.795)
Income from Council Tax (based on 2.5% increase)	(60.315)	(61.823)	(63.368)
Balance	(0.215)	0.369	1.039

5.2 The Council Tax for St. Helens (Band D) in 2006-07 was £1,062.36. In addition the Precepts for Police and Fire add £177.28 making a total of £1,239.64.

5.3 The Table below gives St. Helens' relative position in comparison to other Councils:-

Comparison Average Band 'D' Tax Level	Position 2001-02	Position 2002-03	Position 2003-04	Position 2004-05	Position 2005-06	Position 2006-07
All Councils excluding Police, Fire and Parish Precepts	27th out of 352	64th out of 352	163rd out of 352	190th out of 352	209th out of 352	247th out of 352
All Councils including Police, Fire and Parish Precepts	9th out of 352	27th out of 352	122nd out of 352	204th out of 352	236th out of 352	273rd out of 352
'Unitary' Authorities excluding Police, Fire and Parish Precepts	13th out of 82	19th out of 82	30th out of 82	30th out of 82	35th out of 82	42nd out of 82
'Unitary' Authorities including Police, Fire and Parish Precepts	8th out of 82	10th out of 82	20th out of 82	31st out of 82	40th out of 82	46th out of 82

5.4 A 2.5% increase would add £26.56 to the Council Tax. However, Precept increases for Police, Fire and Parishes would be in addition to this amount.

6. Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that:-

- (a) the Portfolio Strategy Statements and Service Plans be approved;
- (b) agree the Capital Investment Programme for 2007-2008 to 2009-2010;
- (c) propose an 'in principle' Council Tax increase of 2.5%.

IAN ROBERTS

Assistant Chief Executive (Finance)

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Telephone (01744) 456022

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following list of documents were used to complete this report and are available for public inspection for four years from the date of the meeting, from the Contact Officer named above:-

Budget Working Papers

Children & Young People's Services Portfolio

Budget Strategy Statement 2007/08

1. The proposed budget for Children and Young People's Services is set out in the attached summary statement. Various known and forecast changes have been taken into account in planning the budget, including pay awards, inflation and demographic changes.

2. **The Schools Budget**

Items of expenditure that are defined as being within the Schools Budget are funded from the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant which was introduced on 1 April 2006. In 2007/08 it is estimated that the DSG will be £100.562m although the actual grant receivable will be determined by the Authority's total pupil numbers as at January 2007. Approximately 90% of the DSG is delegated to schools and the main aspects of the 2007/08 settlement are:-

- minimum per pupil funding increases of 3.7% for all schools;
- additional funds for personalised learning (£455k);
- additional funds for practical learning (£107k).

3. **The Central Budget**

The Central Budget comprises those aspects of the Education Service which are not defined as being within the Schools Budget, together with Children's Social Services. This budget is cash limited by the Authority, and the cash limit for 2007/08 is £30.519m. This includes an additional £900k which the Council has made available to the CYPS Portfolio in 2007/08 to address particular pressures in respect of Children's Social Services.

The main budget pressures that have been accommodated are as follows:-

- costs associated with a rise in the number of looked after children;
- increased numbers of young people at the age of 16 who require support as they leave care;
- the provision of financial assistance under the 1989 Children's Act to families in order to reduce the likelihood of those children being placed in care;
- home to school transport costs arising from the extension of free entitlement under the Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- Information and Communication Technology costs particularly those associated with the Authority's responsibilities in respect of the Children's Information Sharing Index.

The key actions associated with the budget strategy are as follows:-

- the Child Placement Strategy, agreed in January 2006, is fundamental to dealing with the financial pressures arising from the increase in the number of looked after children. Additional foster carers have been recruited and the recruitment campaign continues; foster care rates have been increased; the potential for procuring more in-borough residential placements is being explored; and all out of borough residential and foster care placements are to be reviewed and assessed;
- family support services are to be reviewed with the intention that a dedicated family support team is established. This should enable more preventative work to be undertaken with families to enable them to stay together;
- the planned increase in the number of children's centres in 2007/08 will extend the provision of services to families and children. The delivery of multi-agency support to the most vulnerable children and families will be a high priority and is another aspect of the preventative support intended to reduce the number of looked after children;
- an initiative has been approved by the Schools Forum whereby four new link social worker posts will be created to work closely with schools to support vulnerable children. The cost of this will be met from the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant;
- a rigorous review of specific budget pressure areas eg Children's Act and Leaving Care payments is being undertaken. This may include a change in the criteria for the release of funds in order to alleviate budget pressures;
- a Use of Resources exercise is underway which will focus on particular unit costs which appear to indicate that St Helens spends relatively highly in comparison with its statistical neighbours. Detailed analysis will be undertaken in order to determine whether any service efficiencies can be identified.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	<u>2006/07 Revised No.</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate No.</u>
		<u>2006/07 Revised £M</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate £M</u>			
SCHOOL FUNDING	The 'Schools Budget' falls outside mainstream funding, and is now funded via the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). 2006/07 budget provision represents underspent Standards Fund match funding brought forward from 2005/06. The DSG will reduce in real terms in 2007/08 as pupil numbers fall.	0.557	N/A	Pupil Numbers: - Nursery (F.T.E.) - Primary - Secondary (11 to 15) - Special Number of Schools: - Nursery & Primary - Secondary - Special Pupil/Teacher Ratios (not including class sizes of 30, Standards Fund, and Standards Grant funded teachers): - Primary - Secondary - Special	660 14,352 10,902 310	581 14,081 10,666 290 55 10 3 24.5:1 15.5:1 5.8:1
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT	Includes a proportion of costs relating to new accommodation	2.722	2.923			

Service Area	Significant Service Changes	Budget		Service Volume Measures	2006/07 Revised No.	2007/08 Estimate No.
		2006/07 Revised £M	2007/08 Estimate £M			
PREMATURE RETIREMENT AND REDUNDANCY COSTS	2006/07 includes additional one off provision funded from 2005/06 underspend.	1.955	1.694			
SCHOOL CONTINGENCIES	Now part of 'Schools Budget'.	N/A	N/A			
STRATEGIC CENTRAL SERVICES	Includes a proportion of costs relating to new accommodation.	0.832	0.901			
SUPPORTING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED	Includes a proportion of costs relating to new accommodation.	0.561	0.526	Number of Statements of SEN	768	653
ACCESS TO SCHOOLS	2006/07 budget reduced due to capitalisation of major repairs and resulting transfer of revenue budget to capital programme.	5.659	6.8767	Pupils receiving free transport. Pupils taking meals in school: - paid (primary & special) - free (primary, secondary & special) Number of meals provided Pupils in receipt of Clothing and Footwear Allowance	1,700 6,634 4,580 1,461,670 6,408	1,700 6,359 4,580 1,364,912 6,500
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FOR NON - SCHOOL SERVICES	Includes a proportion of costs relating to new accommodation.	1.603	1.587			

Service Area	Significant Service Changes	Budget		Service Volume Measures	2006/07 Revised No.	2007/08 Estimate No.
		2006/07 Revised £M	2007/08 Estimate £M			
PRE SCHOOL EDUCATION (incl. Play)	2006/07 budget include balances brought forward in respect of children's centres.	0.598	0.240	Number of free education places taken up	2,926	3,029
ADULT EDUCATION		0.001	0.001	Number of enrolments on adult education courses	2,832	3,000
FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION		0.001	0.001			
SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS		0.496	0.503	Number of student loans	2,700	2,688
OTHER EDUCATION SERVICES		0.245	0.249			
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	2006/07 includes one off allocation of £700K, removed in 2007/08. 2007/08 includes the cost of budget pressures relating to LAC, together with the effect of control measures	14.834	15.068	% of Children Looked After in foster care or placed for adoption % of expenditure on children in need but not looked after	82 32%	82 32%
RED BANK CHILDREN'S HOME		-0.050	-0.050	Number of open unit places taken up	9	9
TOTAL		30.014	30.519			

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Adult Social Care & Health Portfolio

Budget Strategy Statement 2007/08

1. Background

The Health and Social Care Budget Strategy Statement was reported to Executive on 27 September 2006. This Statement identified a significant budget gap between the available budget for 2007/08 and beyond, based on the allocated cash limits, and the projected demand.

The key cost drivers, which account for the increased demand on social services spending, are:-

- Pay Award, which is assumed to be 2 ½%, compared to a cash limit increase of 2% and pay increments due to the implementation of Equal Pay ;
- Some additional demographic pressures, above the £1million which was added to the 2006/07 cash limit to fund demographic growth for 2006/07 and 2007/08;
- Cost pressures on the residential and nursing home budgets due to both higher than expected costs the Department makes for quality under its Contracting for Quality Scheme (over 60% of the care homes with which the Department commissions services now achieve a maximum 5* rating) and the transition costs of running our own Elderly Peoples homes below maximum occupancy whilst purchasing alternative placements in the independent sector.
- Above inflation pressures within the independent sector due to the impact of the national minimum wage, recruitment difficulties, energy costs increases and more demanding legislative requirements, amongst others.
- Supporting People Income. The Supporting People programme will reduce the amount of income for learning disability services by £900,000 from 2007. The Adult Social Care and Health Department has built into its projections a contingency of £450,000 to account for any potential costs it may have to pick up.
- The Department has yet to receive any confirmation of specific grant funding from 1st April 2008 and so has prudently included the potential loss of specific grant funding in its projections.

The September report outlined the overall approach to addressing the budget gap. This report explains the detailed proposals for ensuring that the Portfolio is able to continue to provide for and improve services whilst managing within available resources.

2. **Budget Position**

- 2.1 In the previous Executive Report setting out an analysis of the key Social Care pressures in the Portfolio's Budget Strategy Statement the budget position showed a budget gap for 2007/08.
- 2.2 In addition, further analysis has revealed that there are a significant number of young adults with learning and or physical disabilities who will be transferring from Children's Services to Adult Social Care and Health in 2007/08. 21 young adults are expected to transfer over at some stage in 2007/08 at a cost of £350,000. The full year effect of this will be approximately £430,000.
- 2.3 The potential budget gap therefore, was as follows:-

Table 1

	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000
Additional Demands	1,470	2,285	3,389
Supporting People	450	450	450
Transitions Costs	350	430	430
Total Potential Budget Gap	2,270	3,165	4,269

- 2.4 Since this date, the Department has been working with learning disability providers and undertaking individual impact assessments to try and finalise the impact, if any, of the Supporting People reductions on the Department's budget. As a result of this work, supported by service modernisation funds, there will be no impact of the Supporting People reductions on the departmental budget for 2006/07 or 2007/08. The Department is continuing to seek to find further savings to identify what, if any, impact there will be on the Department's budget in 2008/09 and beyond.
- 2.5 In addition, the Executive at 17th December have agreed that the additional transitional costs of young people transferring to Adult Social Care and Health from the Children's budget will be funded by a permanent increase in the Department's cash limit of £350,000.
- 2.6 The adjusted potential budget gap, before departmental actions is therefore as follows:-

Table 2:

	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000
Budget Gap, as previously reported	2,270	3,165	4,269
Supporting People	(450)	(450)	(450)
Transitions Costs - Additional Cash Limit	(350)	(350)	(350)
Revised Potential Budget Gap	1,470	2,365	3,469

2.3 Strategy to Address Budget Gap

The strategy presented to Executive in September 2006 outlined a number of activities, which aim to address the budget gap over the next 3 years based on a continuation of the Department's Modernisation Strategy and linked to the Council's Community Plan. In addition, the Council has been mindful of the seven outcomes for Adult Social Care in the White Paper "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say" and will be incorporating these into its Adult Plan.

Previous Years Long Term Budget Options

A Review of the Procurement of Key Services

As Adult Social Care and Health has increased the level of services commissioned and procured from a mixed economy, and continues to disinvest from directly provided services, it needs to enhance its role as a commissioner of services, including partnerships with the PCT, 5 Borough Trust and Supporting People.

The Department currently commissions more than £30 million of services across the independent and voluntary sector. This represents over 50% of the Department's controllable budget and more than 65% of service delivery.

In addition to the volume of services which the Department commissions, it also needs to manage key developments within the health and social care market.

A number of key pieces of work relating to procurement activity have either been undertaken over the last 12 months or are in the process of being completed. The Department has invested in a new senior post within the Department whose remit will be to manage the procurement role, and achieve both improvements and cashable efficiency savings. The new post holder will be expected to achieve efficiency savings to the value of 5% of services currently purchased (which have not recently been subject either to a tendering process or some other form of Value for Money scrutiny.) This will generate savings of £300,000. In future years cumulative savings of a further £100,000 per annum will be expected.

Eligibility and Levels of service

The final report from the consultant who has completed a review of eligibility and levels of service has now been produced but has not yet been agreed by the Executive. This is due in the New Year.

In summary the report concludes that the Department has operated reasonably in the way it has operated its current Fair Access to Care (FACs) banding criteria.

However the report proposes changes in the way that Band 3 services, defined as services for those with moderate needs within the FACS banding criteria, should operate in the future.

Key changes include less directly provided services and more use of sign posting and encouraging individuals to access, and pay for, their own Band 3 provision. Sitting alongside this will be appropriate investment in preventative services to ensure that such a strategy does not result in more individuals being admitted to services at the critical end of the needs spectrum.

Examples of how this may work in the future may include increased use of self assessment and Direct Payments; investment in third sector agencies to deliver on the prevention agenda; increased usage of new assistive technology developments; the development of local Independent Living Centres, and more focus on positive risk management. These developments are incorporated into the Departmental Modernisation Strategy.

Such a strategy will not achieve cashable budget savings but will result in non cashable efficiency savings in the future, by reducing future demand on limited adult social services.

The final conclusions and recommendations of the report are being drawn up and will be presented to Executive in the New Year.

3. Final Spending Plans 2007/2008

In addition to the above, the Department has eight key actions which it intends to take, which will target key performance areas, support the modernisation agenda and the Adult Plan and achieve a balanced budget.

3.1 Residential Services and Extra Care Housing

The continued reprovision of Council residential care will result in investment in the higher performing Extra Care Housing.

Full year savings are expected to be £600,000. The Council had already budgeted in 2006/07 for the savings from this reprovision as part of its three year budget strategy.

3.2 Reviewing the Provision of Domiciliary Care

The Department is continuing to reduce the proportion of domiciliary care hours delivered by the in-house personal care service. Throughout 2007/08 it is expected that there will be a further reduction in the number of personal care assistants directly employed by the Council, due to posts becoming vacant and not being recruited to, thereby further adjusting the split of domiciliary care provision, from 15% in house, 85% independent sector in 2006/07, to 12% in-house, 88% independent sector in 2007/08.

In addition to the reducing numbers of personal care assistants the Department will be considering how best to deploy the remaining personal care management in order to ensure resources are deployed most effectively, throughout the organisation. It is agreed that this work will be completed before the end of 2006/07 so achieving full year savings in 2007/08.

The above actions will generate a further £300,000 savings in 2007/08.

3.3 Travel and Transport Policy

A fundamental review of the Department's travel and transport arrangements has been undertaken and which will be presented to Executive in the New Year. The updated travel and transport policy will promote greater social inclusion by encouraging the use of independent travel.

3.4 Transitions

The Department recognises the importance of investing appropriately in getting its Transitions Protocol right as a key cost pressure for the Department is the additional costs/demands from young people with profound and complex disabilities as they move into Adult Services. Expected costs for 2007/08 are £350,000 which the Executive has agreed to fund through a permanent increase in the Department's cash limit.

However the pressure from young people with disabilities moving from Children's services to Adults services is continuing to grow each year. The full year effect of the 2007/08 intake in 2008/09 is expected to be £430,000. In addition in 2008/09, there is expected to be a similar level of transfer again as more young people move into adult services.

This is a pattern which is expected to continue each year.

In order to address this a Transitions protocol has been introduced between Adult and Children Services. This is not expected to release any cashable savings in the short term but it is hoped that it will help manage increased demand in future years.

A request has been made for additional funding from the Gershon Fund to fund an additional 1.5 transitional workers for a period of nine months. The work of the transitional workers is expected to reduce future years transitional costs by £100,000.

3.5 Telecare Strategy

A Telecare Strategy has been developed, utilising the pump priming available from the Assistive Technologies grant.

The Telecare strategy will incorporate all forms of assistive / preventative technologies which are now available in the market or which are being in the process of being developed. Examples of the use of assistive technologies include bed sensors, epilepsy alert sensors, the Careline scheme, mobile alarms and door sensors.

The Telecare Strategy will focus initially on increasing the take up of the 'lifeline' type service in line with Government demand.

Assistive technologies have already been used successfully in several instances within supported living schemes and it is hoped to significantly extend the use of these new technologies in the future.

Appropriate use of assistive technologies can, in some instances, reduce levels of staffing - for example the removal of some waking nights within the supported living scheme. It can also sometimes prevent admissions into permanent residential or nursing care, through overnight monitoring.

The Telecare Strategy is expected to release some small cashable savings of £58,000 in 2007/08. It is hoped however that more significant gains will be made in future years due to reduced demand for direct support staff, where assistive technologies is a more cost effective substitute.

The Telecare Strategy Delegated Executive Decision has recently been produced. As the Strategy is developed the Department will have more information on the future levels of both cashable and non-cashable gains from the developments within the assistive technology market. These will be incorporated into future Budget Strategy Reports.

3.6 The Domino Group - A Place to Live

Within Vulnerable Adults, the Department will continue its strategy of developing cost effective supported tenancies, using the insight gained from joint working on the Supporting People reviews, and bringing service users back in borough (A Place to Live). This work will also link into some of the other departmental strategies such as a review of procurement, the Telecare Strategy, a review of the Supported Living Service, and the development of self-directed care.

Savings of £160,00 have previously been built into the Budget Strategy for returning individuals with complex needs back into borough. In addition the work of the 'A Place to Live' group will assist in achieving the procurement savings previously highlighted, and will help generate savings associated with assistive technologies.

3.7 The In-House Supported Living Service

A major review of the Supported Living service is ongoing. All service users have had their needs reassessed. Some service users are now using assistive technologies, coupled with reduced staffing support. Active reviews of levels of support packages, in consultation with care managers is ongoing. The service is also looking at securing management efficiencies and several more service users will be moved on from the Supported Living Service to more independent living, which will release budget savings.

There is currently a shortage of capacity within this service to undertake the volume of work required to successfully manage the transfer of a significant number of service users to the independent sector. Accordingly the Department will be making a bid to the Council's Gershon fund to progress this work as quickly as possible. This process will also be supported by the arrival of the new procurement post holder in February.

Savings of £155,000 have previously been built into the Budget Strategy for achieving savings within the Supported Living Service. Significant additional savings will be achieved by moving some service users onto more independent living - this will support the achievement of the procurement targets previously mentioned.

3.8 Self-Directed Care

Key to the Government's White Paper 'Our Health Our Care Our Say' is the development of self directed care. Key aspects of self directed care include self assessment, the increased use of Direct Payments, the use of Independent Living funds and the development of individual budgets.

The Department has challenging performance targets relating to the take-up of Direct Payments. Achieving these targets will achieve savings of £65,000, reflecting an, on average 15% reduction in unit costs. The Budget Strategy also proposes 5 individuals pilot the 'In Control' individual budget process, again with projected savings of 15% on average package costs of £50,000, thereby achieving full year savings of £40,000.

Success with these pilots will lead to increased usage of In Control in the future with an increase in future years of associated savings.

3.9 General Savings

There are an additional number of actions which apply across all service areas, or situations which have arisen and which will ensure that the Department achieves a balanced budget as follows:-

- The Department recognises that independent sector providers experience above inflation price increases each year due to increases in the national minimum wage, energy costs, insurance premiums and registration requirements. However, the Department will robustly challenge all price uplifts which are greater than the Retail Price Index (RPIx). Letters will be sent out to all providers shortly

advising them of the need to achieve efficiency savings to fund inflation increases above RPIx. Any provider who does not accept this may have a full service and contract review which may result in the service being decommissioned and provided by another provider. This will release savings of £300,000 in 2007/08, although it is unlikely these savings will be sustained into future years.

- The Department has undertaken a full review of its property register which contains the details of the properties of services users who are in residential care and whose properties are waiting to be sold to pay for their care. Significant increases in property prices in recent years and a re-evaluation of the properties will result in the potential for a greater proportion of residential and nursing home fees to be funded by service users, and achieving additional income of £260,000.

3.10 The above actions will result in a balanced budget for 2007/08.

Table 3

	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000
Revised Potential Budget Gap	1,470	2,365	3,469
Procurement Savings	-300	-400	-500
Adjusting the Balance of Provision For Residential Services	-300	-300	-300
Reviewing the Provision of Domiciliary Care	-300	-300	-300
Travel and Transport Policy	-25	-25	-25
Transitions	0	-100	-100
Telecare Strategy	-58	-58	-58
Direct Payments	-60	-60	-60
In Control	-10	-40	-40
Capping Inflation	-300	-300	-300
Property Income	-190	-190	-190
Amended Budget Gap	0	592	1,596

3.11 Table 4 below outlines the summary position. This demonstrates a balanced budget position for the Portfolio for 2007/08. There remains a projected budget gap in future years due primarily to continued demographic growth, and continued above inflationary pressures from the independent sector providers.

Table 4

	2006/07 £'000	2007/08 £'000	2008/09 £'000	2009/10 £'000
Forecast Requirements	41,114	42,215.5	44,269	46,361

Estimated Cash Limit	41,114	42,215.5	43,677	44,765
Revised Budget Gap	0	0	592	1,596

- 3.12 However, in addition to the above, there is a risk of losing significant grants to the value of £4 million from 2008/09 as there is no confirmed funding after this date. This will have a significant impact on the delivery of services.
- 3.13 The Council is supporting the Local Government Association in its campaign with Central Government regarding the need for additional funding particularly in relation to elderly provision. In addition the Council has raised its concerns with regard to the potential reduction or cessation of specific grant funding.

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ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH PORTFOLIO

		<u>Budget</u>				
<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	2006/07 Revised £M	2007/08 Estimate £M	<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	2006/07 Revised No.	2007/08 Estimate No.
Older People	<p>Develop Extra Care Housing as an alternative to residential /nursing care and promote people's independence</p> <p>Support more older people to live at home</p> <p>Modernise 'In House' Services - EPHs, Personal Care and Careline</p>	24.581	25.079	<p>Admissions to residential/nursing home care per 10,000 population aged over 65</p> <p>Number of Households receiving intensive Home Care per 1000 population over 65</p> <p>Older People (aged 65 or over) helped to live at home</p>	<p>98 (282 people)</p> <p>20 (576 houses)</p> <p>134 (3855 people)</p>	<p>97 (280 people)</p> <p>21 (619 houses)</p> <p>134.5 (3870 people)</p>
Adults with Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment	<p>Modernise respite care</p> <p>Adjust market mix to achieve reduced unit costs</p>	4.206	4.247	Adults with physical disability helped to live at home per 1000 population aged 18-64	7.7 (835 people)	7.9 (860 people)
Adults with Learning Disabilities	<p>Modernise respite care</p> <p>Adjust market mix to reduce unit costs</p>	9.040	9.652	Adults with learning disability helped to live at home per 1000 population aged 18-64	3.2 (350 people)	3.2 (360 people)

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	2006/07 Revised £M	2007/08 Estimate £M	<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	2006/07 Revised No.	2007/08 Estimate No.
Adults with Mental Health Needs	Modernise respite care Reprovide day services and increase capacity of Outreach Services Review Section 117 aftercare packages	2.872	2.820	Adults with mental health needs helped to live at home per 1000 population aged 18-64	4.0 (440 people)	4.3 (460 people)
Other Adult Services		0.255	0.257	-		
Service Strategy		0.160	0.161	-	-	
Total		41.114	42.216			

Urban Regeneration Portfolio
Budget Strategy Statement 2007/08

1. The 2007/08 budget for Urban Regeneration and Housing is set out in the attached budget summary statement. This has been prepared by taking account of all service requirements and various known changes including:-
- inflationary increases in respect of Pay and Prices
 - other agreed adjustments to cash limits.

	2007/08 (£000's)	2008/09 (£000's)	2009/10 (£000's)
Base Budget	4,180	1,762	1,794
Prior Year Adjustment		0	0
Pay Awards	113	115	118
Price Increases	116	118	120
Increased Income	(181)	(186)	(190)
Reallocate Support Cost	230	(15)	(15)
Other Adjustments	(2,696)	0	0
Revised Cash Limits	1,762	1,794	1,827

2. **Budget Strategy Pressures**

The above figures do not necessarily reflect the full costs of the inflationary increases, in these instances it has been necessary to find the additional costs from within existing cash limits.

These additional costs, e.g. increased pay awards, have now been included within the attached budget, together with any other previously identified service pressure, and the details are shown below:-

2.1 **2007/08 Pay Awards & Increments**

As part of the budget strategy the Council have allowed for a 2.0% increase in respect of pay awards, in reality the actual pay award is anticipated to be nearer to 2.5% and services have had to absorb these additional costs within their approved cash limits. This results in additional costs of £28,000 for Urban Regeneration.

In addition to the pay award, staff will receive incremental increases and this is anticipated to be around £60,000 for 2007/08. The total pressures that have had to be absorbed in respect of staff pay for 2007/08 is around £88,000.

2.2 **Local Development Framework**

In previous years there were specific one off resources allocated to enable the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) to be completed, this has now been succeeded by the Local Development Framework which is ongoing and requires Local Authorities to produce "a folder of local development documents" that outlines the spatial planning strategy for the local area. This involves commissioning consultants to undertake one off pieces of work and is forecast to require resources of around £102,000 in 2007/08 and a further £164,000 in 2008/09. The programme of work

has been reviewed and these works are essential in order that we can meet our statutory requirement.

2.3 Energy Costs

Members will be aware that energy costs have risen by way in excess of inflation and this will inevitably have an impact in respect of all the buildings running costs, we have used 20% as an indicator, and this results in increased costs of around £42,000 above and beyond the allowed inflationary increase allowed for 2007/08. The actual increase relates to public buildings, car parks and market halls.

2.4 Choiced Based Lettings

The Choice Based Lettings scheme was introduced earlier this year, it is a new method of allocating social housing in which applicants choose the available property rather than wait for a property offer. The scheme is administered by Helena Housing, but due to the changes around the lettings process requires increased advertising and more support to applicants. The increased costs of operating the scheme are shared between Helena Housing and the Council on an equal basis. Other Housing Associations operating in the Borough contribute to meeting the Council's costs on a cost per property basis. However, there is anticipated to be a shortfall of around £38,000 in both the current financial year, and 2007/08.

2.5 Planning Delivery Grant

Due to our high standards of service in planning, we have been receiving a reward grant each year, which has been used to reinvest in the service, to ensure continual improvement. During the current financial year we received a total of £352k, of which most has been committed in terms of ongoing staffing costs. We have recently received notification of our 2007/08 allocation and this has been reduced by £205,000. This means we have had to identify resources of around £180,000 to fund the existing staffing costs.

The level of Planning fees are set by Central Government and have not been increased since 2005/06, this was a significant increase, around 17% on average, it was hoped that the reduced grants would be offset by an increase in the level of planning fees but this has not been forthcoming.

As can be seen above we have had to absorb budget pressures of £450,000 to ensure a balanced budget, in order to do this we made the following adjustments.

2.6 Price Increases.

The budget strategy currently allows price increases for all supplies & services budgets at the rate of 2.0%, this is regardless of whether there is any increased costs in terms of contractual arrangements. It is proposed that price increases will only be added to budget headings where there is a contractual requirement for a price increase. There is currently £116,000 allowed for price increases, the policy identified is expected to realise around £65,000 which will be used to balance the Portfolio budget rather than increase supplies & services budgets.

2.7 Market Service Charges

During 2006/07 we have entered into negotiations around the level of service charges from the landlords of St. Mary's Market, it is anticipated that we realise savings of around £69,000 during 2007/08. This will not have any direct impact on the service delivery, although any savings may have been used to invest and enhance the current service.

2.8 Car Park Charges

We have recently approved an increase in car parking charges, the increase is above inflation and is intended to encourage people to either use public transport or ensure better uses of the current car parking provision. 2007/08 will realise the full year effects of this increase and it is forecast that we will realise an additional £48,000 in car parking income. Obviously this is dependant on the usage levels continuing at the current levels, but this will be kept under review once the increase has been introduced.

2.9 Property Portfolio.

The Estates function has continued to review the Authority asset base in an attempt to ensure we are making the most of all its assets, the base figure in respect of the industrial property rental income has not been reviewed for a number of years. Due to a number of lease renewals it is hoped that we will realise an additional £50,000 from rental income and the base budget will be amended from 2007/08 to help fund the other pressures. In the event of any void properties this may present the Portfolio with further budget pressures, but this will be monitored.

The Estates function has been involved in negotiating around the sales of any Council assets, with the purchaser reimbursing these costs. We have only ever had a nominal budget (£32,000) in for these fees, we are proposing to increase the fee budget by a further £38,000 to reflect the levels of fees being realised. Although this should not cause any problems in 2007/08 with the programme of land sales we have, once the land sales have ceased, this may cause budget pressures on the Portfolio.

2.10 Planning Fees

Despite there being no increase in the scale of planning fees, the volume of applications has continued to exceed expectations due to the continued development opportunities within the Borough. This is anticipated to continue during 2007/08 with the increased volume of new house builds allowed as part of the Regional Spatial Strategy. As a result of this we have increased the planning fee target by around £160,000, this should be achievable during 2007/08, but without any increase in the planning fee levels will present budgetary pressures during 2008/09 onwards.

By implementing the proposed changes identified above we have delivered a balanced budget for 2007/08, so long as our forecasts materialise.

2.11 Christmas Lights

This Christmas will be the third year of use for the Town Centre Christmas lights, we originally entered into a 3 year contract, in which we purchased the lights but paid an annual fee in respect of storage, installation and maintenance, this contract will finish in January 2007 and we will need to go to tender for future years.

2.12 High Cost Service Areas

Planning & Building Control is deemed to be a high cost service when compared with our family group of Authorities, this is mainly due to the fact that the figures used are gross figures, and do not take account of our recent heavy investment within planning due to our success in obtaining Planning Delivery Grant.

3. Non Service Specific Budget Pressures

3.1 Gershon targets have been set for each Portfolio, and these were based on the following criteria:-

- defined high cost services determined by comparisons with similar Councils;
- defined low performing services determined by comparing relative scores within national performance indicators to the average achieved by similar Councils;
- controllable budgets which will ensure back office functions are subject to the efficiency agenda.

3.2 Once the target has been achieved and a balanced budget set, any further efficiencies are available to be used for reinvestment within the Portfolio, and can be used to redirect funding towards the Portfolio's priorities. The target for the Urban Regeneration and Housing Portfolio is £331,000 of which £166,000 is cashable.

URBAN REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	<u>2006/07 Revised No.</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate No</u>
		<u>2006/07 Revised £M</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate £M</u>			
General Fund Housing		1.644	1.572	Number of customers receiving advice from Housing Advice Centre Number of Loans processed Number of Grants processed	1,590 110 350	1,654 110 350
Supporting People		0.020	0.021			
Building Control		0.327	0.332	Number of applications processed	1,290	1,290
Development Control		0.569	0.577	Number of application processed Number of Enforcement complaints	1,650 640	1,700 620
Planning Policy	Planning delivery grant may be reduced	0.856	1.064			
Economic Development	The LEGI programme will be in its second year	-0.994	-1.400	Number of Companies locating in the Borough with the assistance from Inward Investment Team Number of jobs created from new Companies	30 180	30 180
Parking Services		-0.355	-0.564	Average income per space	£617	£635

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	<u>2006/07 Revised No.</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate No</u>
		<u>2006/07 Revised £M</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate £M</u>			
Transport Planning	Decriminalisation of parking will be introduced around October 2007	0.155	0.160			
Public Buildings		-0.143	-			
TOTAL		2.079	1.762			

Environmental Protection Portfolio

Budget Strategy Statement 2007/08

1. Budget Pressures

1.1 The budget for Environmental Protection is based on the Draft Budget Strategy report presented to Executive in June 2006 and the Budget Report presented on 13 December 2006.

1.2 The statement has been prepared against a cash limit of £22.040m. Budget pressures have been identified of £0.7m. A Gershon Efficiency target has been set of £0.589m (at least £0.295m of which must be cashable savings).

1.3 Inflationary Pressures

Although the Cash Limit included an allowance for the pay award of 2%, a settlement of 2.5% is predicted. A budget pressure of £60,000 has therefore been included.

Inflation on some of the Highways Construction contracts will be significantly above the 2% allowed. The impact of construction costs inflation is estimated at £250,000. Increases in energy costs for Street Lighting will be reflected in additional costs of £200,000.

1.4 Other Budget Pressures

A challenge to the Trade Waste and Skip Hire Service exists. Tipping fees have increased each year, above inflation but, increases in fees and charges to service users have affected take-up of the service.

Falling school rolls and adverse publicity about food quality at a national level means the market for provision is much tighter. The new food quality will have a negative impact of £35,000 on the service.

A reduced demand for Security Services will result in a budget pressure of £35,000.

2. Key Actions Required to Operate Within the Cash Limit

2.1 The Department continues to review its budgets on an ongoing basis to identify any areas where efficiency savings can be identified for resource prioritisation. Various supplies and services, training and car allowance budgets have been reviewed together with slippage targets and efficiencies of £30,000 identified.

2.2 The budget strategy includes proposals for a review of fees and charges above the 2.5% inflation projected and this should yield £36,000.

2.3 It is proposed to contain the inflationary budget pressures relating to Highways and Street Lighting at source, this will however impact on the programme of planned schemes.

2.4 The recycling services have managed to increase the number of properties covered

and types of collection offered, without taking up all of the assumed level of borrowing, thus producing a saving of £73,000. The kerbside collection service will be reviewed. Efficiencies from the tendering for the composting of green waste are anticipated.

- 2.5 The Trade Waste and Skip Hire service has been reviewed and an exit plan established. It is anticipated that proposals will improve the budget situation by £56,000.
- 2.6 The School Meals service reviewed by the Budget Overview and Scrutiny Panel is almost complete. Proposals arising from this will be developed for 2007/08.
- 2.7 The metrology laboratory based at Rivington currently provides a service to the 5 Merseyside Authorities and is jointly funded. A review of the current facility and alternative provision is being investigated, which may result in a cost saving, yet to be quantified.

3. High Cost Services

- 3.1 Highways Services has been identified as a high cost service based on analysis of spend against the cost driver of Km of road, however, spend per head of population is below the comparator Authorities average. Construction inflation and energy costs of £350,000 were absorbed as part of the budget strategy for 2006/07 with a further £450,000 identified for 2007/08. This must be set in the context of a maintenance and energy budget of £4.7m.
- 3.2 Street Cleansing although identified as a high cost area, is a high priority for the Council. Consequently additional resources have been provided from 2004/05 onwards through the funding for Civic Pride to improve cleanliness of the Borough. This skews any comparative performance measurement of the service, against family council groups.
- 3.3 Trading Standards has been identified as a high cost service with an allowed budget of £693,000 (67% of which relates to employee costs). The service is linked closely with Environmental Health and taking the two services together the cost per head would be just below the average. To keep Trading Standards in line with the average budget it would need to be reduced by 30%. The service has a key role to play in reducing anti social behaviour through enforcement of age restricted products, e.g. alcohol, knives and glue. The budget has been reduced from last year by approximately £50,000 through efficiencies in staffing and supplies and services budgets. Further reductions would result in a reduced level of service.

4. Gershon Efficiency Targets

- 4.1 Some of the proposals identified under Section 2 can be included as Gershon efficiencies. An efficiency statement on meeting the set targets is being prepared.

5. Service Improvements

5.1 In recent years the Council has supported environmental improvements through the use of the Service Modernisation Fund. In the Budget Report presented to Executive on 13 December 2006, approval was given to continue the support for environmental improvements by providing £350,000 on a permanent basis. This has been included in the Budget Summary Statement.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PORTFOLIO

<u>Service Area/Description</u>	Budget		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	2006/07 Revised No.	2007/08 Estimate No.
	2006/07 Revised £M	2007/08 Estimate £M			
Environmental Health	1.325	1.414	No. of Investigations/ Visits	3000	3000
			No. of Treatments	4500	4500
			No. of Stray dogs collected	400	400
Consumer Protection	0.717	0.693	No. of Visits	1000	1000
			No. of Queries/ Complaints	3000	3000
Parks & Open Spaces	5.239	3.213	No. Of Parks	14	14
			Area of Parks & Open Spaces	720ha	720ha
			No. Of Allotment Sites	13	13
			No. Of Childrens Play Areas	51	51
			No. Of Skateparks	3	3
			No. Of Multi-use Ball Courts	13	15
			No. Of Visitor Centres/ Ranger Bases	5	5
			No. Of Bowling Greens	8	8
			No. Of Tennis Courts	11	11
			No. Of Football /Rugby Pitches	39	39
			No. Of Changing Accommodation	8	9
			No. of Friends Groups	6	8
			No. of Green Flag Awards	4	6
No. of Ranger Events	204	204			
Waste Collection	3.696	3.381	Kgs of Waste collected per head of population	459	470
			Percentage of total household waste recycled	21.5	22
Street Cleansing	2.447	2.156	Kilometres of Road swept	720	720
			No. of Gullies cleaned	33000	33000

<u>Service Area/Description</u>	Budget		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	2006/07 Revised No.	2007/08 Estimate No.
	2006/07 Revised £M	2007/08 Estimate £M			
Cemeteries & Crematorium	0.103	0.097	No. of Burials No. of Cremations	900 2100	910 2150
Environmental Initiatives	0.087	0.087			
Highways & Street Lighting	10.012	10.074	No. of Carriageway Resurfacing schemes No. of Footway Reconstruction Schemes No. of Street Lighting Schemes	46 27 2	42 25 2
Traffic Management & Road Safety	0.896	0.908	No. of School Crossing Patrols	58	58
Direct Services	(0.097)	(0)			
Licensing	0.017	0.017	Number of LA 2003:- Premises Licences Personal Licences Other Licences incl. Hackney/Private Hire	543 735 1716	550 750 1745
Total	24.442	22.040			

Corporate Services & External Affairs Portfolio

Budget Strategy Statement 2007/08

1. The 2007/08 budget for the Corporate Services & External Affairs Portfolio is set out in the attached budget summary statement. This has been prepared by reviewing all service requirements and any known changes that will affect the 2007/08 budget together with various known changes, including:-

- Inflationary increases in respect of Pay & Prices
- Other agreed adjustments to cash limits.

The Council's budget strategy is quite clear in that any additional inflationary, demand or legislative pressures must be absorbed within the agreed cash limits. This statement sets out those pressures and details how they have been funded.

2. The following increases have been allowed in respect of adjusting cash limits, and the overall impact of this is shown in the Table below:-

Pay Awards	2.0%
Price increases	2.0%
Increased income targets	2.5%

	2007/08 (000's)	2008/09 (000's)	2009/10 (000's)
Base Budget	6,801	6,936	7,078
Prior Year Adjustment		0	0
Pay Awards	305	311	318
Price Increases	135	138	141
Increased Income	(56)	(58)	(47)
Reallocate Support Cost	(249)	(249)	(249)
Revised Cash Limits	6,936	7,078	7,241

3. From discussions with budget managers and knowledge of the service there are no service specific budget pressures apart from the potential for an increased pay award above and beyond what has been allowed for as part of the budget strategy.

4. 2007/08 Pay Awards

As part of the budget strategy the Council have allowed for a 2.0% increase in respect of pay awards, in reality the actual pay award is anticipated to be more like 2.5% and this is what we have allowed for within all staffing budgets. Services have had to absorb these additional costs within their approved cash limits and this equates to additional costs of £76,000 for Corporate Services.

5. Benefits Administration Grants

We have received a Benefit Administration Grant allocation of £89,000 less for 2007/08, and this reduced funding has had to be absorbed within the Benefits service. They have introduced a number of new ways of working which will reduce the costs for 2007/08, these include, cash office closures, introduction of scanning technology and have ensured that we deliver a balanced budget.

6. Price Increases

Currently price increases are applied across all supplies & services budgets at the rate of 2.0%, this is regardless of whether there is any increased costs in terms of contractual arrangements. We have only applied the 2.0% increase to budget headings where there is a contractual requirement for a price increase. This has realised the £76,000 required to absorb the anticipated shortfall in pay awards.

7. High Cost Service Areas

From the statistical analysis that was carried out, there were two service areas identified as being high cost when compared with our family group of Authorities. They are Housing & Council Tax Benefits Administration, and Council Tax Collection Costs. Further work has been done in reviewing both these areas, and although we do spend more than neighbouring Authorities, the additional spend is to improve specific aspects or develop new services and is funded through additional grant monies. The statistical analysis is based on returns submitted that only look at gross costs and do not take account of any grants received.

8. Non-Service Specific Budget Pressures

6.1 Each Portfolio is given a Gershon target in order that the Authority can meet their overall target. These are set on the basis of three factors:-

- defined high cost services determined by comparisons with similar Councils;
- defined low performing services determined by comparing relative scores within national performance indicators to the average achieved by similar Councils;
- controllable budgets which will ensure back office functions are subject to the efficiency agenda.

6.2 The target for Corporate Services is £127,000, of which £64,000 is cashable. Full details of all areas that will be reviewed as part of the Gershon agenda are currently being prepared.

CORPORATE SERVICES AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS PORTFOLIO

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	2006/07 Revised No.	2007/08 Estimate No
		2006/07 Revised £M	2007/08 Estimate £M			
Local Tax Collection	The cashiers function will transfer to Libraries	1.712	1.817	Number of bills raised	185,000	187,000
Registrars of Births, Deaths & Marriages	The Regulatory Reform Order requires that the registrars come under the Local Authority, rather than the Registrar General. Changes in income expected in 2006/07	0.161	0.160	Number of Certificates issued	4,000	4,000
Elections		0.304	0.312	Number of people on Register	136,815	136,800
Emergency Planning	Reintegration of Emergency Planning role within Local Authority, increased FSS to accommodate costs	0.192	0.196			
Local Land Charges	The effect of personal searches will need to be monitored	-0.292	-0.297			
Social Inclusion		0.045	0.046			
Corporate Management		1.970	2.002			
Democratic Representation & Management		1.608	1.639			
Service Management & Support		0.867	0.000			

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	2006/07 Revised No.	2007/08 Estimate No
		2006/07 Revised £M	2007/08 Estimate £M			
Non-Distributed Costs		1.101	1.109			
TOTAL		7.668	6.984			

Culture, Sport & Heritage Portfolio
Budget Strategy Statement 2007/08

1. The 2007/08 budget for the Culture, Sport & Heritage Portfolio is set out in the attached budget summary statement. This has been prepared by reviewing all service requirements and any known changes that will affect the 2007/08 budgets.
2. The following increases have been allowed in respect of adjusting cash limits, and the overall impact of this is shown in the table below:-

Pay awards	2.0%
Price increases	2.0%
Increased income targets	2.5%

	2007/08 (£000's)	2008/09 (£000's)	2009/10 (£000's)
Base Budget	10,282	8,253	8,436
Portfolio Changes	(1,790)	0	0
Pay Awards	120	123	125
Price Increases	88	89	91
Increased Income	(61)	(63)	(64)
Reallocate Support Cost	(79)	34	34
Other Adjustments	(307)		
Revised Cash Limits	8,253	8,436	8,622

3. From discussions with budget managers there are a number of pressures that will need to be addressed as part of the budget process. The details are shown below, together with details of how the pressures will be managed.

4. Service Specific Pressures

4.1 2007/08 Pay Awards

As part of the budget strategy the Council have made provision for 2.0% increase in respect of pay awards, although it is anticipated that the actual pay award will be nearer 2.5% in line with the recent Teacher's pay award. This results in additional costs of £30,000 across the Portfolio and this will have to be contained within the approved cash limits.

4.2 Leisure Services Employee Costs

Over the last two years there has been a continuing trend of long term sickness, which has made it increasingly difficult to manage employee budgets. The majority of posts within Leisure Services are front line service delivery, and any absences can have implications in terms of the health and safety of customers. This is kept under review, and will be managed by redirecting resources from budgets already identified to enable further investment in the service.

4.3 Energy Costs

Members will be aware that energy costs have risen by significantly more than inflation over recent months, and it is forecast that this will continue into 2007/08. The 2006/07 base budget for energy costs is £225,000 and with the cumulative effect of the recent rise in energy costs, the likely pressure will be around £45,000 in 2007/08. Efforts are being made to minimise this by ensuring future investment is energy efficient, and also representations have been made to the Property Asset Group requesting that an Energy Officer be appointed to ensure the Authority is making best use of all energy consumption. In the meantime budgets will be increased, but this will be funded by a reduction in the planned maintenance budgets.

4.4 Community Sports Coaches

This coaching programme aims to deliver fundamental movement literacy skills training to young people (aged 5 – 9 years) and is funded through external grants and contributions, during 2005/06 there were 1020 sessions, with over 18,000 children attending. Part of the external funding ceases during 2007/08, but in order to ensure that we can continue with the programme during 2007/08 we will meet the shortfall of around £20k from within Recreation and Sport Division of service. This will be achieved by a combination of increased income, and reduced costs in certain areas, but will not have any effect on the front line service delivery.

In 2008/09 all the external funding will have ceased, and we will need to identify a further £40k, to ensure that the programme can continue. We will seek to identify additional external funding, or plan to address the pressure from within the Portfolio to try and ensure continuation of service provision.

4.5 Capital of Culture Programme

A programme of events is currently being prepared to compliment the 2008 Capital of Culture, although there is an expectation that all the Merseyside Authorities will have their own programme running alongside the main event in Liverpool. We will need to work up proposals for a St. Helens programme, and this will be dependant on identifying sufficient resources from within the currently agreed cash limits, it is envisaged that this will come from any Gershon savings realised within the Portfolio during 2007/08.

5. Actions To Address Pressures

Although a number of pressures have been identified, and each division of service has sought to manage their own pressures from within their current budgets, the one area that needs to be managed across the Portfolio is the likely increase around pay awards. This amounts to £30,000 and in order to ensure a balanced budget we propose to make the following adjustments.

5.1 Price Increases.

Currently price increases are applied across all supplies & services budgets at the rate of 2.0%, this is regardless of whether there is any increased costs in terms of contractual arrangements. It is proposed that 2.0% will only be added to budget headings where there is a contractual requirement for a price increase. There is currently £88,000 allowed for price increases, the policy identified is expected to realise the £30,000 which is required to ensure a balanced budget.

5.2 High Cost Service Areas

As part of the statistical analysis Culture, Sport and Heritage is deemed to have one area of high cost, in the Library service. A thorough review of the Library service is currently being undertaken to investigate the reasons behind our costs when compared with our family group of Authorities, and if necessary propose a course of action to reduce the costs.

6. Non Service Specific Budget Pressures

6.1 Gershon targets have been set for each Portfolio, and these were based on the following criteria:-

- defined high cost services determined by comparisons with similar Councils;
- defined low performing services determined by comparing relative scores within national performance indicators to the average achieved by similar Councils;
- controllable budgets which will ensure back office functions are subject to the efficiency agenda.

6.2 Once the target has been achieved and a balanced budget set, any further efficiencies are available to be used for reinvestment within the Portfolio, and can be used to redirect funding towards the Portfolio's priorities. The target for the Culture, Sport and Heritage Portfolio is £226,000 of which £113,000 is cashable. A programme of efficiency reviews will be agreed and details reported to Members.

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CULTURE, SPORT AND HERITAGE PORTFOLIO

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	<u>2006/07 Revised No.</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate No.</u>
		<u>2006/07 Revised £M</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate £M</u>			
Rights Advice		0.312	0.317			
Cultural & Heritage		0.830	0.831			
Recreation & Sport		2.779	2.733	Number of Users Overall	972,492	947,391
Community Centres	Further enhancement of Community Centres, with Peter Street being fully operational after a major refurbishment	0.280	0.368			
Library Service		3.798	3.774	Number of Libraries Number of Books Issued Number of Visits Cost per Visit	13 1,550,000 894,500 £4.25	13 1,500,000 894,500 £4.35
Grants & Donations		0.230	0.230	Ordinary Grants Discretionary Rate Relief (No. of Organisations)	50 137	50 137
TOTAL		8.229	8.253			

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Safer Communities Portfolio

Budget Strategy Statement 2007/08

1. The 2007/08 budget for the Safer Communities Portfolio is set out in the attached budget summary statement. This has been prepared by reviewing all service requirements and any known changes that will effect the 2007/08 budget. The budget strategy is quite clear in that any additional inflationary, demand or legislative pressures must be absorbed within the agreed cash limits, and we have worked within these guidelines in preparing the budgets for 2007/08.
2. The following increases have been allowed in respect of adjusting cash limits, and the overall impact of this is shown in the table below:-

Pay awards	2.0%
Price increases	2.0%
Increased income targets	2.5%

	2007/08 (£000's)	2008/09 (£000's)	2009/10 (£000's)
Base Budget	975	3,117	3,152
Portfolio Changes/Other Adjustments	2,036	0	0
Pay Awards	12	13	13
Price Increases	25	26	26
Increased Income	(7)	(7)	(6)
Reallocate Support Cost	94	3	3
Capital Charges	(18)		
Revised Cash Limits	3,117	3,152	3,188

3. Service Specific Pressures.

3.1 General Service Provision

The work undertaken by the Safer Communities Team is becoming an increasingly higher priority for residents of St. Helens. Despite only having a relatively small base budget, which predominantly supports staffing costs, the high profile successes are often down to an increase in funding via external grant regimes, or one off contributions through additional Council's investment. This in itself presents the service with a budget pressure, as we are very reliant on one off contribution of funding to support the delivery of services or initiatives. Examples of such schemes include Operation Panther, provision of a restorative justice worker, additional portable CCTV provision and street lighting projects.

If we are to continue delivering the current range of Safer Community activity, we will need to seek out additional sources of funding, or consider either reconfiguration of the service or closer integration with existing mainstream services and/or sources of funding.

A number of posts within the Team are also funded through external grant regimes, the posts include:-

Drug & Alcohol Action Team
ASB Co-ordinator
Young People Substance Misuse Team
Various Admin Support Posts
Youth Offending Team Posts

This accounts for 27 posts and amounts to funding of over £800,000, current funding is secured until March 2008. We are currently working closely with Government agencies to clarify future funding allocations as soon as possible.

There is always an element of uncertainty around externally funded posts, and although we have secured funding for the next financial year (2007/08), there remains a budget pressure from March 2008 until we have received confirmation of further funding.

3.2 Criminal Justice Intervention Programme

The CJi team is currently part funded by NRF, this funding agreement was due to cease in March 2007, but we have managed to get an extension to the NRF funding until the end of March 2008. It has been intimated by GONW that the DIP Main Grant for 2007/08 may be reduced by as much as 5%. A number of services currently contracted out to a service provider will be brought back in-house in order to increase effectiveness and also reduce costs.

3.3 Youth Offending Service

This service is re-locating from Alexandra House to the YMCA Beacon Building, Tickle Avenue and Parr Stocks Fire Station. The service is reliant on grants and contributions from Partners. STAMP, the St. Helens Alternative Motor Vehicle Project, is currently funded through NRF and a range of funding contributors including an allocation from the Pupil Referral Unit. YIP is funded by the Youth Justice Board with match funding being provided from mainstream Youth Service funds. Both projects will continue in 2007/08 and if budgets allow following the implementation of the Youth Service review, YIP provision will expand across other areas of the Borough.

3.4 Youth Service

The move of Youth and Sports Development Services to the Beacon Building, agreed as part of a broader co-location strategy, will increase premises costs by approximately £33k. Redirecting resources that arise as a result of the ongoing review of the existing Youth Service budgets will meet these increased costs.

4. Non Service Specific Budget Pressures

4.1 Gershon targets have been set for each Portfolio, and these were based on the following criteria:-

- defined high cost services determined by comparisons with similar Councils;
- defined low performing services determined by comparing relative scores

within national performance indicators to the average achieved by similar Councils;

- controllable budgets which will ensure back office functions are subject to the efficiency agenda.

4.2 Once the target has been achieved and a balanced budget set, any further efficiencies are available to be used for reinvestment within the Portfolio, and can be used to redirect funding towards the Portfolio's priorities. The target for the Safer Communities Portfolio is £2,000 of which £1,000 is cashable. A programme of efficiency reviews will be agreed and details reported to Members.

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SAFER COMMUNITIES PORTFOLIO

<u>Service Area</u>	<u>Significant Service Changes</u>	<u>Budget</u>		<u>Service Volume Measures</u>	<u>2006/07 Revised No.</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate No.</u>
		<u>2006/07 Revised £M</u>	<u>2007/08 Estimate £M</u>			
Community Safety Unit		1.673	0.823	Number of problem drug mis-users entering treatment British Crime Survey Comparator Crimes	1,062 11,039	1,137 10,359
Youth & Youth Offending Service		2.197	2.266	Number of multiple contacts with Young People Number participating on Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme	45,000 1,100	45,000 1,100
Magistrates' Courts & Probation		0.024	0.028			
TOTAL		3.894	3.117			

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ASPIRATIONAL 2007/08 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

COMMITMENTS AND NEW STARTS

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2007/08 Commitments based on existing funded Programme

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>	<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
	<i>Total £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsupp-Orted Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designated Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Cowley Language College	4,500	750					3,750	4,500	Targeted Capital Fund
Computers for Pupils	368						368	368	
Devolved Formula Capital(06/07)	1,023						1,023	1,023	
LEA Capital Repairs	884					884		884	
Modernisation	750	439					311	750	
New Pupil Places	319	319						319	
Rainhill High MUGA	482						482	482	
General Sure Start Schemes	2,266						2,266	2,266	
City Learning Centres	40						40	40	
Lansbury Bridge	50						50	50	
Childrens Social services	117	64			53			117	
Strategic Technologies	115						115	115	
Lyme New Build	2,148	629					1,519	2,148	1319 Modn.; 200 New Pupil Place
Cemeteries & Crematorium	1,450			1,000	450			1,450	
Memorial Instability Remediation	200				200			200	
Hardshaw Park	240				240			240	
Sherdley Park	200				200			200	
Libraries Mgt Info System	86			86				86	
Parr Leisure Centre Refurbishment	450						450	450	NRF
Town Centre Focal Point	1,004	20			656		328	1,004	315 ERDF; 13 SRB
Blackbrook Diversion	460						460	460	Transport Grant
South Windle Regeneration	802				240		562	802	RHP (07/08)
One Stop Shops	315				315			315	
Linkway & Inner Ring Road Ph.4	150				150			150	
Junction Lane Bridge	80					80		80	
Atlas Street	50					50		50	
Housing Assistance grants	200						200	200	RHP (06/07)
Gypsy & Traveller Site	928						928	928	
Affordable Warmth	95						95	95	
Adult Social Services	106		106					106	
Totals	19,878	2,221	106	1,086	2,504	1,014	12,947	19,878	

2007/08 Single Capital Pot Allocations

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>			<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
	<i>Commit- Ments B/fwd £000</i>	<i>2007/08 New Starts £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsupp- Orted Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designated Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Commitments Carried Forward from Previous Years	19,878		19,878	2,221	106	1,086	2,504	1,014	12947	19,878	
<u>Main Plans</u>											
<u>Children & Young People</u>											
Schools Devolved Formula Capital		2,228	2,228						2,228	2,228	
Schools Access		244	244	244						244	
Modernisation		49	49						49	49	
New Pupil Places		112	112	112						112	
Youth Capital Fund		103	103						103	103	
Childrens Social Services		102	102	32					70	102	
<u>Highways & Transportation</u>											
Bridge Strengthening		405	405	405						405	
Structural Maintenance		1,201	1,201	1,201						1,201	
Cycling		154	154	154						154	
Walking		150	150	150						150	
Safer Routes to Schools		125	125	125						125	
Urban Traffic Control		130	130	130						130	
Local Safety Schemes		180	180	180						180	
Traffic Management & Signs		89	89	22					67	89	
Street Lighting		100	100						100	100	
Traffic Calming & Home Zone		130	130						130	130	
Environmental Safety Schemes		96	96						96	96	
Travel Wise / Travel Plans		18	18						18	18	
Traffic Studies		20	20						20	20	

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>			<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
	<i>Commit- Ments B/fwd £000</i>	<i>2007/08 New Starts £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsupp- Orted Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designated Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Duke Street Corridor		200	200						200	200	
A570 Bleak Hill Road		50	50						50	50	
C/fwd	19,878	5,886	25,764	4,976	106	1,086	2,504	1,014	16,078	25,764	
B/fwd	19,878	5,886	25,764	4,976	106	1,086	2,504	1,014	16,078	25,764	
<u>Highways & Transportation (contd.)</u>											
A570 Elton Head Road		30	30						30	30	
Rail Port Access		58	58						58	58	
Hall St./Shaw St. Pedestrianisation		50	50						50	50	
Community Transport		20	20						20	20	
Integrated Transport Schemes		524	524						524	524	
Detrunking schemes		1,610	1,610						1,610	1,610	
<u>Housing</u>											
Housing Enabling Fund		75	75						75	75	Reg. Hsg.Pot (RHP)
Fuel Poverty		50	50						50	50	RHP
Housing AssistanceGrants - General		450	450						450	450	RHP
Housing AssistanceGrants - Priority		400	400						400	400	RHP
Housing Assistance Loans		500	500						500	500	RHP(200) /NRF(300)
Clearance & Enforcement		200	200						200	200	RHP
Disabled Facilities Grants		1,688	1,688						1,688	1,688	RHP(500)/SCG(668)/ Helena (520)
Adult Social Services		315	315	89	111				115	315	
Totals	19,878	11,856	31,734	5,065	217	1,086	2,504	1,014	21,848	31,734	

2007/08 Proposed New Schemes

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>			<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
	<i>Commit- Ments B/fwd £000</i>	<i>2007/08 New Starts £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsupp- Orted Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designate d Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Commitments and Single Capital Pot Allocations	19,878	11,856	31,734	5,065	217	1,086	2,504	1,014	21,848	31,734	
<u>New Schemes</u>											
Alleygates		500	500				500			500	
Ground Condition Surveys		50	50				50			50	
Empty Homes Initiative		100	100				100			100	
Car Park at Clifton Street		138	138				138			138	
Taylor Park Additional Parking		55	55				55			55	
Environmental Initiatives		500	500				500			500	
Totals	19,878	13,199	33,077	5,065	217	1,086	3,847	1,014	21,848	33,077	

ASPIRATIONAL 2008/09 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

COMMITMENTS AND NEW STARTS

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2008/09 Commitments based on existing Programme and 2007/08 New Starts

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>	<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
		<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsup- ported Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designated Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Cowley Language College	6,825	750					6,075	6,825	
Town Centre Focal Point	56	6					50	56	
Devolved Formula Capital (06/07)	1,023						1,023	1,023	
Blackbrook Diversion	610						610	610	
South Windle Regeneration	170						170	170	
Alleygates	500				500			500	
Ground Condition Surveys	50				50			50	
Environmental Initiatives	500				500			500	
Totals	9,734	756	0	0	1,050	0	7928	9,734	

2008/09 Single Capital Pot Allocations

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>			<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
	<i>Commi- Ments B/fwd £000</i>	<i>2008/09 New Starts £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsupp- orted Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designated Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Commitments Carried Forward from Previous Years	9,734		9,734	756	0	0	1,050	0	7,928	9,734	
<u>Main Plans</u>											
Schools Devolved Formula Capital		1,728	1,728						1,728	1,728	
Schools Access		244	244	244						244	
Modernisation		949	949	439					510	949	
New Pupil Places		442	442	442						442	
Childrens Social Services		102	102	32					70	102	
Local Transport Plan		3,694	3,694	2,381					1,313	3,694	
General Fund Housing		2,391	2,391						2,391	2,391	RHP
Disabled Facilities Grants		650	650						650	650	SCG
Adult Social Services		315	315	89	111				115	315	
Totals	9,734	10,515	20,249	4,383	111	0	1,050	0	14,705	20,249	

2008/09 Proposed New Schemes

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>			<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
	<i>Commit- Ments B/fwd £000</i>	<i>2008/09 New Starts £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsupp- Orted Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designate d Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Commitments and Single Capital Pot Allocations	9,734	10,515	20,249	4,383	111	0	1,050	0	14,705	20,249	
<u>New Schemes</u>											
New Car Park Hardshaw St.		114	114				114			114	
Central St. Car Park Extension		327	327				327			327	
Totals	9,734	10,956	20,690	4,383	111	0	1,491	0	14,705	20,690	

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ASPIRATIONAL 2009/10 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

COMMITMENTS AND NEW STARTS

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2009/10 Commitments based on existing Programme and 2007/08 New Starts

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>	<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
		<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsup- ported Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designated Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Cowley Language College	3,125				1,000		2,125	3,125	
Alleygates	500				500			500	
Ground Condition Surveys	50				50			50	
Environmental Initiatives	500				500			500	
Totals	4,175	0	0	0	2,050	0	2,125	4,175	

2009/10 Single Capital Pot Allocations

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>			<i>Funding</i>							<i>Comments On Grants/ Other</i>
	<i>Commi- Ments B/fwd £000</i>	<i>2009/10 New Starts £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Single Capital Pot £000</i>	<i>SCE(R) Ringfenced £000</i>	<i>Unsupp- orted Borrowing £000</i>	<i>Capital Receipts £000</i>	<i>Designated Revenue Sources £000</i>	<i>Grants and Other £000</i>	<i>Total £000</i>	
Commitments Carried Forward from Previous Years	4,175		4,175	0	0	0	2,050	0	2,125	4,175	
<u>Main Plans</u>											
Schools Devolved Formula Capital		1,728	1,728						1,728	1,728	
Schools Access		244	244	244						244	
Modernisation		1,699	1,699	1,189					510	1,699	
New Pupil Places		442	442	442						442	
Childrens Social Services		102	102	32					70	102	
Local Transport Plan		3,750	3,750	2,387					1,363	3,750	
General Fund Housing		2,561	2,561						2,561	2,561	
Disabled Facilities Grants		650	650						650	650	SCG
Adult Social Services		315	315	89	111				115	315	
Totals	4,175	11,491	15,666	4,383	111	0	2,050	0	9,122	15,666	



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