

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
THURSDAY 30th AUGUST 2007

Planning Delivery Grant 2007/08

OPEN	
COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME	A Better Environment
CORPORATE PLAN THEME	Managing the Local Environment
KEY PRIORITY	Development Assessment & Building Control
CABINET MEMBER	Cllr Stephen Clee
HEAD OF SERVICE	Head of Planning, Health & Environment
CONTACT OFFICER	Mike Parker Extension 2500 Mike.parker@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES	None

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet of the Planning Delivery Grant award for 2007/08 and to agree its expenditure.
- 1.2 To review the expenditure of previous years' Planning Delivery Grant.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to decide:

- 2.1 **that the 2007/08 Planning Delivery Grant award be noted and to agree its use within the Planning, Health & Environment Division within the following areas:**
 - IT projects
 - Extension of Conservation Assistant post
 - IT Consultant
 - Temporary additional officer resource
 - Miscellaneous
- 2.2 **that expenditure for previous years' Planning Delivery Grant be noted.**

- 2.3 that the Head of Planning, Health & Environment, in conjunction with the Cabinet member for Planning, Regeneration & Prosperity, be given delegated authority to vary monies between the areas of expenditure if necessary.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In July 2002 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) announced the introduction of investment in local authorities' planning resources through the new Planning Delivery Grant which originally made £350m available to local authorities between 2003 and 2006 to improve the delivery and performance of planning services. In 2004, the ODPM announced that an additional two years' Planning Delivery Grant was to be resourced up to 2008. The current award is therefore the final award of Planning Delivery Grant but the Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) have announced that the Planning Delivery Grant will be replaced by a New Housing & Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG), where the focus will be on the delivery of the Local Development Framework, but not ignoring the rest of the Planning Service and particularly performance on Development Control and to incentivise housing growth delivery. No doubt further information will be forthcoming as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. CLG are also currently considering raising planning application fees from April 2008 which will further assist with resourcing of the delivery of the planning functions.
- 3.2 Although Planning Delivery Grant is allocated towards any expenditure lawfully incurred by receiving authorities, it has been made clear in the past that monies have been allocated on the basis that they will continue to drive up performance in the delivery of planning functions, both in respect of Development Control and, more recently, with an emphasis on the implementation of the Local Development Framework.
- 3.3 In the first year of Planning Delivery Grant in 2003/04, Wyre Forest District Council was awarded £108,105; in 2004/05 - £158,086; in 2005/06 - £433,350 and in 2006/07 - £116,025.
- 3.4 In the 2007/08 award of Planning Delivery Grant monies has been allocated in two tranches; firstly the Council received £26,103 for its development control performance up to June 2006. The second, and recently announced tranche covered the period up to 31st March 2007 for which the Council received £127,913 for its development control performance, £22,634 for its plan making performance and £8,062 for its e-planning.

The second tranche is a provisional allocation only and may be subject to change, albeit only minor changes might be anticipated

- 3.5 As with the previous and more recent awards of Planning Delivery Grant, it is a requirement that a quarter of the grant must be spent or carried forward for capital only expenditure. The remaining three quarters may be used or carried forward for capital and revenue expenditure.
- 3.6 Previous years' Planning Delivery Grant has been spent in a variety of areas including:

- replacing Planning and Building Control back office software system
- supporting personnel resources in the Forward Planning team to deliver the Local Development Framework and to undertake a number of technical studies as part of the evidence base for the LDF
- supporting a three year Conservation Assistant post in support of the Council's Conservation Officer
- undertaking a Housing Needs Survey
- the introduction of DIP & Workflow within the Planning, Health & Environment Division
- a variety of other miscellaneous support across the Planning, Health & Environment Divisions' functions.

3.7 Proposed areas of expenditure for the 2007/08 award are as follows:

▪ IT related projects including: Innogistic and MVM integration with Anite (DIP & Workflow); 1APP, web based measuring tool; Innogistic V4 upgrade; GGP and OS Pictometry	£60,000
▪ IT consultant to assist in project management of DIP & Workflow project	£6,000
▪ Conservation Assistant – a 3 year appointment was made to this post which ends in 2009; given the extensive work programme for the Conservation Officer over the next few years, it is proposed to extend the length of this appointment by a further year	£29,470
▪ Temporary funding of additional officer resource to support existing teams	£35,000
▪ Miscellaneous small scale expenditure, e.g. digital cameras, recording equipment, equipment upgrades	£10,000
▪ To be allocated at a future date/future quarter capital expenditure	£44,242
TOTAL	£184,712

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 All of the expenditure will be met entirely from the Planning Delivery Grant of 2007/08.

5.0 LEGAL & POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal and policy implications arising from this report.

6.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Failure to bring forward the above expenditure will impact on the level of service delivery available through the Planning, Health & Environment Division.

7.0 CONSULTEES

Head of Financial Services
Leader of the Council

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Executive reports:
22nd April 2004,
1st October 2003
12th June 2003
20th March 2003
- Cabinet reports:
September 2004
April 2005
April 2006
- Planning Delivery Grant 2007/08 – Provisional second Tranche Allocations (23rd July 2007)

MP/JHL
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