

Clarify at 5 Improvement

That the case management and time recording improvement is Legal Services

I would be grateful if you could confirm once these amendments are in place.

Regards

Gill

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From: Mandy Wilson

Sent: 29 November 2007 17:24

To: Jim Inch

Subject: Budget Pack - Text re Review of Legal Services

The following is the text for the Budget Pack as requested regarding the Review of Legal Services.

A Review of Legal Services Division is currently ongoing, focussed on securing adequate and sustainable funding for this core service which provides all legal advice and support to this Council and its Joint Boards, both corporate and functional. Members will note from the funding charts, income and expenditure levels that this service requires to generate income consistent with its spending on salaries and is largely not revenue funded, no suitable budget being available within this Department. This creates a general budget pressure for all legal work for which there is no income stream. I am committed and remitted by Council to bring back an early Report which will secure new opportunities for funding and recharge , substituting for the current system which is not fit for purpose for a service which is not revenue funded. At present, Members should be advised of and fully aware of the current resource level within this Division which is described by the Council Solicitor as being at or beyond critical. Increasingly, departments will require to take responsibility, as some already do , for funding their service requirements.

Regards

Gill

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From: Mandy Wilson On Behalf Of Gill Lindsay

Sent: 29 November 2007 17:13

To: Jim Inch

Subject: Budget Pack/Prioritisation

17/12/2007

WED00000595\_0001

Jim,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this at SMT today.

As advised at the meeting, I am concerned to note that information provided below for the budget pack has still largely not been included and the acute levels of current resourcing have not been highlighted despite my repeated requests to explain the positioning to members. I have once again reviewed the current budget pack and my comments are as follows:

#### Legal Services Review

P4 - 'The reviews of the Council Secretary and Legal Services Divisions will provide opportunity for Divisional Rationalisation'

P21 1.5.1/P23 1.5.3 Range of Efficiency Reviews including review of the relationship of Council Secretary and Council Solicitor

P57 Improvement - Legal Services Review - Improved performance in respect of product delivery.

In terms of the above, at present the Divisional Management Team, Staff and Unions have been advised that the current review of the division is to address funding which is inconsistent with the above references throughout the budget pack. The next financial year will not bring both savings and improvements.

#### District Court

P13 1.3.2 Outlines the transfer of the District Court and loss of grant funding from the Scottish Government, however at P31 there is no adjustment to the Division's revenue budget contribution to allow for this and at P32 the Division has an income target for the District Court.

It is essential at this stage that the budget pack reflects the actual position for the division in terms of revenue budget allocations and income targets. I appreciate the narrative that Jane has provided, however, this still appears inconsistent to me.

#### Income

P13 1.3.3 Client Charges - Licensing Fees

There is a risk that the urgent review of public entertainment fees requested by the Regulatory Committee will result in the fee being reduced or frozen. This requires to be included as a budget pressure.

P32 1.8.3 Table 25 There is a provision for an increase in Licensing income in each financial year. Elected Members have been increasingly concerned in terms of increases in licensing fees and it is a risk at this stage to include an increase in income which may not be attainable particularly as the scope to increase fee income is further limited by recent licensing legislation.

#### Additions

CHS indicator details could be included at P44 4.1.5 Statutory Performance Indicator comparisons with other councils.

#### P57 Improvement

Legal Services - Introduction of Case Management and Time Recording System

Systems development to streamline business and financial processes.

#### P58 Influencing Factors

#### 6.2 Financial

No revenue funding or budget in place to fund core legal services.

Resourcing currently at an acute level with a risk services may require to be procured externally at additional cost to the Council.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that my previous comments and those detailed above are now to be included in the budget pack or advise on any aspects which you disagree with or would like to discuss further. I will be available at any time throughout my leave to follow this issue during this time. I would like to personally approve any additional text regarding the current

17/12/2007

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