

SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL

DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS

2009/2010

EXECUTIVE 22nd JANUARY 2009

1 Statutory Powers and Purpose of the Report

1.1 Statutory Powers:

Local Government Act 1972, Section 151
Local Government Act 1992
Local Government Act 2003

1.2 Purpose of the Report

To set out the Council's financial position over the medium term and to act as a framework for developing final budget proposals. These will include the appropriate level of council tax and service provision. The Executive's recommendations will be considered by full Council on 5th February 2009, when Government grants should be known with certainty.

1.3 Background

This report is one of the final stages of a process that started last summer with the identification of service and other financial pressures together with possible options for reducing expenditure. In December 2008, the Executive considered draft budget proposals together with the views of the Town and Parish Councils and Businesses.

1.4 The Executive made clear their intention to avoid any increase in council tax or car parking charges for 2009/10 and that a new bid of £46,000 for improved street sweeping be considered. This is in addition to the introduction of the concessionary residents' car parking trial previously agreed by Council. The Executive indicated that the budget be balanced by reducing contributions to reserves and setting SMT a savings target to be achieved from shared services and staff vacancy vetting. Since then the views of the Policy Development Groups and Scrutiny, have been sought and the minutes of those meetings will be circulated at the meeting.

2 Recommendations to Council on the 2009/2010 budget

a. That there is no increase in council tax for 2009/10.

b. That the following sums should be included in the overall budget:

	£
• Provision for inflation	500,000
• Existing bids approved in previous years	15,000
• External Interest receivable	930,000
• Reversal of capital charges and Pension charges (FRS17)	2,368,000
• Net contributions to Reserves	TBA

- c Savings of £493,550 as identified by the Corporate Management Team that are already achieved or can be implemented by managers be approved.
- d That an additional savings target to be achieved by the Senior Management Team from shared services and staff vacancy vetting of £50,000 over and above the existing target be approved.
- e That the Executive determine the amounts for bid items to be included within the Authority's budget.
- f That the Council should set its total net expenditure for 2009/10 at £TBA, subject to final confirmation of Government Grant. If the Government changes the Grant, delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director (Resources) to make a corresponding amendment to the contributions to Reserves to bring the total net expenditure back to that agreed by the Executive.
- g That the level of reserves as set out within Appendix F of this report and the assessment of their adequacy and the robustness of budget estimates be noted. (Section 7) This is a requirement of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- h That the minimum level of the General Reserve Balance be maintained to at least £1.5million.

3 **Introduction**

- 3.1 Budgeting is the means by which the Council brings together its plans to implement strategies, achieve key objectives, improve performance and to react to changes in service demands and available funds. Under the Local Government Act 1992, the Council is required to adopt a balanced budget and to set the council tax by 11 March of each year.
- 3.2 It is a particularly difficult year for preparing budgets with the economic situation changing daily. The banking crisis and general economic slowdown make forecasting very difficult and as discussed later in this report impacts on the Council in many ways; all negative.
- 3.3 This year we also have the uncertainty of Local Government Review hanging over the Council. This could be the our last budget as a District Council but the Secretary of State will not be making a decision about our future until March 2009 at the earliest, after we have finalised our 2009/10 budget. In the meantime we must plan as if South Hams District Council will continue to provide services in the area and set a sustainable budget.

- 3.4 The Medium Term Financial Strategy for the five years to 2013/2014 (Appendix A) has been developed to assist us in adopting a budget within a longer term prudent financial framework. The forecast summarises the financial impact of our goals and objectives and determines the sustainability of these plans. The annual budget is framed within the Medium Term Financial Strategy taking into account those activities included within service plans that contribute towards strategic objectives.
- 3.5 In addition to savings required for 2008/09 it is imperative that we plan for savings that are achievable over the coming two to five years. Budget shortfalls are forecast over the medium term and making efficiencies will be key to achieving a balanced budget. The Government's Spending Review included efficiency saving targets of 3% per annum for three years. If Local Government Review doesn't result in a Unitary Council the shared service agenda will increase in importance and additional effort and resources applied to deliver even more cost benefits and efficiencies. This will provide one of the few opportunities for district councils to save money without affecting the quality of front line services.
- 3.6 We have already put in place a number of partnership arrangements with Teignbridge District and West Devon Borough Councils and are currently exploring further opportunities for joint provision of services. The December meeting of the Executive approved a shared Revenue and Benefits Service with West Devon which is a major step forward and in future year's results in substantial efficiencies.
- 3.7 The Medium Term Financial Strategy shows budget gaps of approximately £700,000 in each of 2010/11 and 2011/12. This assumes a successful concessionary car parking trial and the subsequent cost falling on the base budget. The trial is being funded from reserves. This level of budget gap may require some difficult decisions to be made about the future of the services that we provide. It is extremely unlikely that shared services will generate enough savings to balance future budgets so we will have to look at other solutions to help solve the problem, including the level of services that we provide.
- 3.8 An important aspect of the budget process is budgetary control during the financial year. It is vital that budgetary control operates effectively at all times if maximum effectiveness is to be achieved. Monitoring of both income and expenditure will take place throughout the financial year with reports made to the Strategic Management Team and to The Executive.

4 The Core Budget and main issues for the Council in 2009/2010

- 4.1 The General Fund Summary together with the service budgets are presented within Appendix B. The appendix includes reserve contributions which are based on the 2008/09 accounting policies and changes to these assumptions are discussed in detail in section 5 of this report. Appendix C summarises the main reasons for the funding gap. This shows the core budget pressure of £922,000 before taking into account new bids, savings as identified by the Corporate Management Team or reduced contributions to reserves.
- 4.2 The service estimates have been prepared in accordance with the Best Value Accounting Code of Practice published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and approved by the Secretary of State as the appropriate accounting and budgeting framework for local authorities.
- 4.3 **Formula Grant (formerly Revenue Support Grant)** - The amount included in the budget for 2009/10 is the provisional announcement received in December and amounts to a £28,000 (0.5%) increase over 2008/09. We have received the lowest increase in Devon (see Appendix H) and the final details will be confirmed by Government in late January. This is a derisory increase and amounts to a cut in real terms of over 3.6% when compared to November CPI inflation of 4.1%.
- 4.4 At the national level The Formula Grant settlement has redirected resources to upper tier authorities who have responsibility for Education and Social Services. Most District Councils have received below inflation increases averaging 1.7% with the highest award in Devon being only 3%.
- 4.5 **Investment Interest** – This is a particularly difficult time to make investments or forecast returns due to the uncertainty regarding individual banks credit worthiness. Interest rates are also falling, the Bank of England reduced the base rate to 2% in November and further reductions are forecast. Investment income plays an important in keeping council tax down; the estimated income for 2008/09 is £1.3m, equivalent to £35 (27%) for a band D taxpayer. We have a number of long term fixed investments, so for next year we are protected to some extent but have used our advisors latest average forecast of 1.5% for new deposits which results in a budget of £930,000.

- 4.6 Until the economic situation regarding the banks becomes safer we are following an ultra cautious investment policy and the 2009/10 Treasury Management Strategy is elsewhere on the agenda. We have opened an account with the Debt Management Office (DMO) which is virtually risk free because it is part of the Government. However, the interest rates offered are particularly low due to the high level of security. At the time of writing the DMO account offers 1% which is over 2% lower than can be obtained in the money market.
- 4.7 Using the new DMO account will have little impact on our overall finances in the current year as we are already forecasting investment income of £140,000 over the budget target. However, it is a major issue in the long term; our average investments this year is some £26m; if we were to only invest in the risk free DMO account we would receive £520,000 per annum less interest than if we invested in the money market. £520,000 is equivalent to £14 (11%) on an average band D property. To replace this lost income would require other increases in charges or reduced services. This issue is discussed in more detail in the 2009/10 Treasury Management Strategy but it will require a balanced view to be taken, taking into account risk and investment returns.
- 4.8 **Single Status** - The term Single Status is used to describe the harmonisation of pay and conditions for all of our employees. It covers a wide range of issues including pay grades, productivity, flexible and variable working arrangements, training and learning. All local authorities had to complete the review by 31st March 2007.
- 4.9 Drawing on experience from other local authorities who have completed their reviews we provided £300,000 for 2007/08; £350,000 in 2008/09 and £400,000 in 2009/10. The timetable for the project has slipped and is still not completed so we do not yet know the final cost. The original budget provisions have therefore been retained in the Strategy and will be carried forward to be used when the exercise is complete. However, Members may need to review this later in the year. Early indications from the pay modelling exercise suggest that it may be difficult to keep to within these budget constraints on the one hand and produce a grading structure that is capable of dealing with the diverse nature of jobs within the Council.
- 4.10 **Economic Situation** – The state of the general economy impacts on the Council in many ways from increased demand for our services to reduced income for the services that we provide. Included in the budget pressures is reduced income of £31,000 from Land Charges due to the slowdown in the housing market. Car parking income is also down this year but given an average summer next year weather wise, we are expecting the income to go back up. Planning fee income is holding up this year but the future remains uncertain due to the slump in the property market.

4.11 Demand for our housing services are likely to increase in Housing Advice, Homelessness and Benefits. Businesses will also require help to see them through the economic downturn. All this puts pressure on our services at a time when our income may be reducing and there is no additional help from Government.

5 Consultation, Options to Close the Budget Gap and Bids for Additional Resources

- 5.1 Section 4 outlined the core budget pressures which face the Council and the funding gap between the resources required and those available. The purpose of this section is to receive feedback on consultation and to summarise the bids for additional resources together with the options to close the budget gap that have been identified by the Corporate Management Team.
- 5.2 **Consultation** - The budget proposals were previously considered by the Executive on 4th December 2008 which resolved to subject them to consultation by the Policy Development Groups (PDG's) and Scrutiny. The minutes of their meetings will be circulated before the Executive summarising their views.
- 5.3 Consultations had already been held with the Business Forum and Town and Parish Councils and a summary of the latter's views are included in Appendix D. When considering the results of the consultation it must be remembered that these are the views expressed by those who turned up on the evenings and are not those of all Towns, Parishes and businesses within the district.
- 5.4 The feedback from the Town and Parish Council evening showed a preference that increased priority is given to street cleaning and providing affordable housing for local people, although votes were also cast for eight other services. Similarly the voting was well spread over services to have a lower priority with the most votes given to reducing our spending on reducing our carbon footprint.
- 5.5 The Business Forum was attended by delegates who represented over 670 businesses in the County through the Federation of Small Businesses and Totnes Chamber of Commerce. The meeting welcomed the concessionary car parking initiative and a business from Lee Mill Employment Estate made reference to the positive aspects of the free car parking in Ivybridge. However, it was suggested that car parking fees might have reached a peak within the district and was therefore not encouraging visitors/locals to shop within the market towns of the South Hams. Reference was also made to the ease of large supermarket grocery shopping facilities on-line and the impact they are having on local businesses.
- 5.6 **Residents survey** - A budget survey to identify the public's priority and non-priority services was conducted through our magazine and website. Respondents were asked to vote for five of each of their most and least important services. The results are included in Appendix D. In total 186 forms were completed but unfortunately 30 of them were spoiled. However, the top five most important services were: collect household waste; provide recycling facilities; provide affordable

housing for local people; clean the streets; provide and maintain public toilets.

- 5.7 The top five least important services were: promote access to the countryside; work to reduce our carbon footprint; promote tourism; provide financial help to local businesses in temporary difficulty; inspect licensed businesses e.g. restaurants.
- 5.8 **Options to balance the budget** – Corporate Management Team were requested to identify efficiencies and any other budget savings that have already been achieved or managers can implement. After four years of achieving substantial savings it is now difficult to see how they can continue year after year without eventually having an incremental impact on service delivery. They are listed in Appendix E and total £493,550.
- 5.9 Details of the new national concessionary bus fare scheme trip data suggest that the rural districts costs have reduced at the expense of the urban areas. However, the Judicial Review regarding the 2007/08 reimbursement rate and an appeal against the 2008/09 reimbursement rate are still outstanding and their outcome will impact on the 2008/09 and 2009/10 costs, making predictions of costs difficult. Making a balanced judgement on the information available to us we should see a budget saving of £250,000 next year.
- 5.10 **Shared Services and Staff Vacancy Vetting** – The savings identified by CMT include £50,000 to be found from for the non filling of vacant posts. Based on sound management principles SMT are scrutinising all vacancies as they arise and where possible make other arrangements to cover the duties of that post. However, it is considered appropriate to increase this target by £50,000 to include the potential benefits of increasing the number of shared services with partners.
- 5.11 **Balances and Reserves** - The decision on the level of balances and reserves is one of several to be taken during the formulation of next year's budget and the medium term financial strategy.
- 5.12 The budget and medium term financial strategy are based on forecasts of inflation, pay awards, Government funding, interest rates and the level of services to be provided. The existence of balances provides for the unexpected, including changes to these forecasts. Reserves are built up to meet anticipated future requirements. The provision of an appropriate level of balances is a fundamental part of prudent financial management. The existence of specific reserves allows the Council to meet known future financial commitments such as the replacement of refuse vehicles or items of plant.

- 5.13 These are exceptional times and we are very well aware of the difficulties our residents and businesses face over the coming year so it is appropriate for the Council to review the level of its reserve contributions. The reserve balances are listed with explanatory details in Appendix F and amount to £5.4m (Estimate 1.4.2009). An exercise has been undertaken to review the level of reserve contributions taking into account their existing balance and known commitments. Recommended changes for 2009/10 from our normal reserve contribution accounting policies are as follows:
- 5.14 **Affordable Housing Reserve** – this reserve is used for the provision of affordable housing and for 2009/10 the contribution would normally be £230,000. It represents the District's share of the income arising from the Council's decision to reduce the council tax discount on second homes from 50% to 10%. This sum can equally well be provided from the capital receipts reserve of which £2million is uncommitted, so it is recommended that £230,000 of this reserve be earmarked for affordable housing instead of the contribution from the council tax. **It must be stressed that this is purely an accounting change and will not affect our commitment to the affordable housing corporate priority.**
- 5.15 **Pension Fund Strain Reserve** – Our accounting policy with regard to the treatment of redundancy expenditure is to spread the costs over 5 years. This involves the redundancy pension payments being charged to the General Fund Reserve in the first instance then contributions are made over 5 years to put that money back into the Reserve. This ensures that over the 5 years an adequate balance is maintained in the General Fund Reserve. The level of contribution required to maintain this policy for 2009/10 is £194,000 but only £142,000 is needed to meet actual pension fund payments in the year. It is therefore recommended that for 2009/10 the reserve contribution be set at £142,000 a saving of £52,000.
- 5.16 **Sustainable Waste Management Reserve** - This reserve makes provision for the future replacement of wheelie bins based on a 10 year lifecycle. However, experience elsewhere tells us that many bins will last a lot longer than 10 years and it is very unlikely that a significant sum will be needed in one year. It is therefore considered prudent not to make the annual contribution of £40,000.
- 5.17 **ICT Development Reserve** - This reserve provides finance for investment in information technology, both hardware and software. The reserve balance at 31 March 2009 will stand at £545,000 and it is anticipated that this will be sufficient to meet any commitments in 2009/10 even if large projects are needed to progress the shared service agenda. It is therefore recommended that the annual contribution of £53,500 be suspended for 2009/10.

- 5.18 **Land and Development Reserve** – This reserve has been earmarked to finance capital expenditure and other costs associated with the capital programme e.g. Land purchase, feasibility studies, abortive project appraisals etc. It is not set aside for specific schemes but is available to be used when sites come on the market which may be of interest to the Council. Normally a contribution of £100,000 per annum is made but there are no major commitments against this reserve and it is recommended that no contribution be made in 2009/10.
- 5.19 **Summary of Recommended Changes to Reserve Contributions** – Appendix B analysed the reserve contributions based on the 2008/09 contributions and normal reserve accounting policies. Listed below is a summary of the recommended changes as discussed in the preceding paragraphs and the impact on the total reserve contributions for 2009/10:

	£
Total Reserve Contributions for 2009/10 per Appendix B	1,489,700
Less changes recommended in paragraphs 5.13 to 5.17:	
Affordable Housing Reserve	-230,000
Pension Fund Strain Reserve	-52,000
Sustainable Waste Management Reserve	-40,000
ICT Development Reserve	-53,500
Land and Development Reserve	-100,000
Sub total of reduced reserve contributions	-475,500
Revised total of Reserve Contributions for 2009/10	1,014,200

- 5.20 **General Fund Reserve** – The uncommitted balance at 31st March 2009 is estimated to be at just under £2.1m. We have conducted a review of the adequacy of the balance with a form of ‘worse case’ scenario risk assessment as shown in Appendix G. This shows that a minimum balance of £1.5 million should be maintained. This compares with a minimum guideline from the Audit Commission of 5% on net revenue expenditure which is £500,000.
- 5.21 Our financial strategy recognises the need to maintain a General Fund Balance to provide stability for both medium and longer term planning and to provide a contingency against unforeseen events. In setting this amount at £1.5 million the following have been taken into account:
- The size of the authority
 - The volatility of some income and expenditure budgets due to its dependency on the weather, tourism and state of the local economy

- The risks faced by the Council with regard to funding unforeseen events
- The level of investment income used to support council tax arising from our reserves
- Single Status
- The financial investment required for, and risks inherent in partnerships

- 5.22 The Council can take comfort that our General Fund Reserve stands above the minimum balance. It acts as a safeguard should any of our specific reserves prove to low and provides investment interest and opportunities to help cushion and smooth council tax increases over the medium term.
- 5.23 **Adequacy of Balances and Reserves** – At 1 April 2009 the level of General Reserve is estimated to be nearly £2.1m, and the level of earmarked reserves estimated to be £5.4m. Cashflow requirements, liabilities, future commitments and contribution levels indicate this generally represents an adequate level on the basis of current knowledge.
- 5.24 Taking these matters into account, the Strategic Director (Resources) regards the level of reserves as an appropriate and prudent level for the Council both for the forthcoming year and in the context of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) guidelines require authorities to have a written policy with regard the level of the General Reserve balance. The guidelines recommend that the balance should be between 5% and 100% of an authority's net revenue budget, for us this is between £0.5m and £10m. As stated above our current balance is £2.1m and it is recommended that our policy is that it should not fall below £1.5 million which is approximately 14% of our net revenue spend.
- 5.25 **Bids for additional resources** - Redirecting resources towards our key priorities will continue the policy from previous years of allocating resources to facilitate a continuous improvement in our services to the public. It is important that we continue to redirect resources to improve key service priorities otherwise we are in danger of standing still as a council. However, due to the current economic climate CMT have felt it prudent to submit only one bid with one also being proposed by the Executive at its December meeting.
- 5.26 Appendix I includes details explaining each bid. The original total for 2009/10 amounted to £56,000 but the Community PDG voted to request the Executive to increase the Community Grant Fund by £10,000 and it will be up to Members to determine which bids they wish to support. All three PDG's supported the bid for additional street sweeping but only the Prosperity and Environment PDG's supported the E Newspaper. Scrutiny met after the agenda was sent out and the results will be circulated before the Executive.

6 Next steps - achieving a balanced budget

6.1 Using this report as an aid, Members now have to decide:

- the level of bids to include in next year's budget
- the savings target for SMT to achieve from shared services and staff vacancy vetting
- the level of reserve contributions

6.2 A summary of the overall position as detailed in this report is shown in the following table. If all the savings and bids are approved it results in a negative balance of £31,000; this means that we have identified more savings than is required to balance the budget. This figure will change depending on which of the savings and bids are approved but it is recommended that whatever the final balancing figure is, that this be transferred to the General Fund Reserve.

Budget Gap before taking into account new bids	£ 428,000
New Bids:	
E Newspaper	10,000
Additional Street Sweeping	46,000
Increase Community Grant Fund	10,000
Additional savings target to be achieved by SMT from shared services and staff vacancy vetting	-50,000
Reduced contributions to Reserves	-475,000
Balance if all the bids and savings are approved	-31,000

7 The Strategic Director (Resources) Report on the Robustness of the Estimates

7.1 Under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, I am required to report to Council on the following matters:

- the robustness of the estimates made for the purpose of budget calculations, and
- the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves

7.2 The Council's budget is based on a number of assumptions including the level of inflation, income from government grants and prevailing economic conditions. The Council faces the risk that events may differ from expectations. These risks are managed by:

- Reviewing the sustainability of plans over the medium term including an assessment of the impact of interest rate movements on affordability, a review of the potential for increases in service demand or new services and by assessing the revenue impact of capital investment

- Member involvement in developing budget proposals including consultation with relevant groups
- Preparing estimates on a prudent basis, making use of professional data sources where possible
- Discussing forecasts with budget holders to ensure that budget pressures are identified at the earliest opportunity
- The adoption of robust financial management arrangements, including option appraisal, adoption of financial standards, risk assessment and financial monitoring
- Continual performance monitoring and review of the key assumptions with updates to members as appropriate
- Established processes for capital investment planning and option appraisal

7.3 If Members decide to balance the 2009/10 budget over a longer timeframe by drawing on more Reserves, there is a further risk that budget pressures will be increased by unforeseen events or new service or statutory demands leading to a widening gap. Consequently, any short-term use of reserves must be approached prudently.

7.4 Taking account of the risk management arrangements outlined above and the level of reserves, I believe that the estimates made for the purposes of budget calculations are robust and that financial reserves are adequate.

8.0 Risk Assessment

The following are the significant risks and opportunities identified:

Opportunity	Issues/Obstacles	Benefits/Mitigation
<p>The Council sets a lawful budget.</p> <p>The Council sets adequate budgets to provide services that meet Council priorities.</p> <p>The Council provides value for money services within budgets.</p> <p>The Council maintains adequate reserves and balances to meet known future commitments and emergencies.</p>	<p>Failure of Council to set a lawful budget.</p> <p>Failing to target budgets to service priorities.</p> <p>Failure to maintain a comprehensive budgetary control review system. Including monitoring of material items of income and expenditure.</p> <p>The effect of the recession on our income streams including; car</p>	<p>The Budget is compiled in accordance with best practice guidelines issued by CIPFA and the Government. The final budget report includes an assessment from the Section 151 Officer on the adequacy of the Council's reserves and the robustness of the estimates made for the purpose the budget calculations. The budget process is laid down in the Council's Constitution. Executive</p>

<p>Help the local economy by not increasing council tax or car parking charges and introducing a concessionary car parking scheme for local residents.</p>	<p>parking, employment units, planning and land charges.</p> <p>Interest rates – we have allowed for reductions in rates but over the next few years this will bite harder as our fixed rate deposits mature – particularly a problem if the recession continues for some time.</p> <p>Single Status is not yet finalised, there could be a cost pressure not yet identified.</p>	<p>and Council meetings are timetabled to meet the Statutory deadlines for setting the Council Tax.</p> <p>The Council prepares a Medium Term Financial Strategy covering a five year period. The strategy provides a framework within which decisions can be made regarding future service provision and council tax levels. All budget bids and reductions include a section on their impact on council priorities and a risk assessment. The budget is subjected to extensive consultation with all Members, the public, business community and Parish and Town Councils.</p> <p>Adequate levels of appropriately trained staff. Thorough planning and monthly monitoring of performance to management and to every Executive.</p> <p>Adopting a Treasury Management Strategy, setting Prudential Code Indicators and using independent financial advisors.</p> <p>Adopting a prudent approach to financial forecasting which involves obtaining information from external professional sources. Continuous</p>
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		monitoring and review of the key factors which involves regular reports to Members on any major issues.
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9 **Conclusion**

- 9.1 The contents of this report summarise the overall position faced by the Council and the matters that the Executive needs to consider in arriving at its final proposals to achieve a balanced budget, including the outcomes of consultation.
- 9.2 This year has seen the worst ever Revenue Support Grant settlement for district councils with South Hams only receiving a 0.5% increase compared with the November Consumer Price Inflation of 4.1%. This represents a cut in real terms of 3.6% which we have to make up with efficiency savings on our services and reducing our reserve contributions.
- 9.3 Each year the preparation of annual budgets becomes more challenging than before; this year is particularly difficult due to the general economic conditions, uncertainty in financial markets and falling interest rates. Uncertainty also exists over the future funding and structure of local government. Central Government are awarding the Council low increases in revenue support grant and insisting on low single figure increases in council tax levels.
- 9.4 It is therefore imperative that we continue to find new ways of working and efficiencies that are achievable over the coming five years to avoid short term problems and make the annual budget setting process smoother. Suggestions from the PDG's have included that they review services taking into account budgets and outcomes which will build upon the process undertaken by the Executive over the past twelve months.
- 9.5 These are exceptional times and our residents and local businesses face a very difficult year. Included within the budget are direct measures to help the local economy with the freezing of council tax and car parking charges in addition to the introduction of a concessionary residents car parking scheme. The Executive's final recommendations are now sought as to how it wishes to reconcile the competing demands of additional expenditure, improved service provision and sound financial management.

John Foxworthy
Head of Financial Services

Executive
22 January 2009

Mark Seymour
Strategic Director (Resources)

Background Documents

Financial Forecast 2009/10 to 2013/14 – Executive September 2008

Draft Budget Proposals 2009/10 – Executive December 2008

Declaration of the Council Tax Base 2009/10 – Council December 2008