

VJB36. DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2015/16

The Board considered a report by the Treasurer and the Assessor and Electoral Registration Officer presenting the draft revenue budget for 2015/16.

The Boards 2015/16 revenue budget was set out, together with the net requisitions for each of the constituent authorities. It was proposed that the gap between the proposed budget of £2,744,350 and the funding assumption of £2,547,940 is met from reserves. Additionally it was proposed that £277,000 was utilised from reserves to refund the constituent authorities. It was projected that reserves would be £359,000 at year end when the refund and earmarked funds are accounted for. The minimum level of reserves required is £82,330 (3% expenditure).

The report set out the drivers for the increased budget, in particular the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration; the reserves position and the requisition for each authority should the budget be approved.

The Board highlighted the budget pressures facing the constituent authorities and the actions being taken by each authority to reduce expenditure. Members questioned the proposed, increased, budget.

The assistant to the Treasurer confirmed that, while it was proposed that the gap is met from reserves in 2015/16, it was anticipated that funding would be received from the Cabinet Office to mitigate against the costs of IER. However the extent of the funding was not yet known.

Members questioned the level of reserves held by the Board and why it was necessary to hold such levels, which were in the order of 5 times the minimum level required. The Assessor set out the reasons for this and confirmed that, while it was prudent to carry a larger level of reserves than the minimum, particularly in light of the expected budget pressures in 2016/17 and 2017/18 he anticipated the level reducing. The position would be better known after the impact of IER.

Decision

The Board agreed:-

- (1) the Valuation Joint Board's Revenue Budget for 2015/2016 of £2,744,350, as detailed in appendix A of the report;**
- (2) the refund of 50% of general reserves in excess of the minimum level required, and**
- (3) to requisition the constituent authorities for their share of the net expenditure as outlined in table 5 of the report.**