

Agenda item 4

For approval - The revised work programme taking into account Covid-19 impact and projects and to note the first year end budget forecast of the year.

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Summary

This report has three functions:

1. To table for approval an amended work programme
2. To propose that two EMRs totalling £11,650 are released
3. To provide the first year-end budget forecast

There is a lot of information contained in the two appendices of this report. Please contact the lead manager for detailed questions about the work programme or Sarah Williams for detailed questions about the budget in advance of the meeting.

Introduction

In normal years in the autumn both the work programme and the budget forecast would be tabled for information to ensure that Cllrs were confident that we are making sufficient progress and are on budget. This year is not normal, however, and both the work programme and the budget are different to those agreed by Cllrs in January.

Revised work programme

The first lockdown meant that we had to stop a lot of the work we had planned and, instead, support the community in new and unplanned ways. We also ran a series of Recovery Panels that proposed a series of new areas of work as well as confirming that a lot of what we had planned was still relevant and important.

The format of the work programme at [appendix 1](#) remains the same. As usual, we have RAG rated each action; where green is on schedule, red is unlikely to be delivered and amber is delayed (either through lack of capacity or budget). In addition, we have RAG rated the recommendations from the Recovery Panels in the same way at the end of the document.

We have assumed that Cllrs want the Recovery Panel recommendations to be delivered alongside the rest of the work programme while excluding those actions that are no longer able to deliver.

Assuming that we receive some grants that we have applied for, we are confident that we can deliver the work programme, as amended.

Year end budget forecast

The impact of the additional work means that the budget has changed too – see [appendix 2](#). We incurred additional covid-19 related costs but also created savings from not being able to stage events, for example.

To deliver the work programme as amended we will have to release £11,650 earmarked reserves that are no longer required for their original purposes (November 2019 Fireworks £7,900 and 50% of the Town Hall marketing budget £3,750). I suggest that this is a reasonable thing to do given our priorities. We have also received £35k from Mendip in recompense of some of the additional costs we incurred in supporting our community during lockdown and we have cut budgets where possible by a further £65k. (Of course, the second lockdown is in progress and we don't know what the rest of the year will bring.)

It is likely that there will be additional costs incurred on the Market Place II project as we wait for the final invoices. If these invoices exceed our allocated budget and we agree that they are reasonable, I suggest that the extra would need to be sourced from the Saxonvale Legacy EMR so as not to impact on the budget at [appendix 2](#).

The budget forecast shows that by releasing the £11,650 EMRs, we aim balance the books by year end and have £202k remaining in the General Reserve. For reference this figure is explained on the bottom right of the last budget page of the budget sheet.

Recommendations

1. Approve the work programme as amended at [appendix 1](#)
2. Release EMR 342 (Fireworks 2019) and EMR 335 (Town Hall marketing) and
3. Note that the first year-end forecast, seven months into the year, for a balanced budget with a General Reserve at year end forecast to be £202k.