

PATROL ADJUDICATION JOINT COMMITTEE

REPORT FOR RESOLUTION

DATE: 2nd June 2008
AGENDA ITEM Number 12
SUBJECT: Revenue and Capital Budget 2008/09
REPORT OF: The Lead Authority
On behalf of the Advisory Board

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To request the PATROL Adjudication Joint Committee to adopt the Revenue and Capital Budget established by the National Parking Adjudication Service Joint Committee for 2008/09.

To agree arrangements for the production and distribution of PATROL public information leaflets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Joint Committee:

- [i] Agree to adopt the Revenue Budget established at the meeting of the NPAS Executive Sub-Committee on 29th January 2008 (Appendix 1).
- [ii] Agree the arrangements for meet the costs of PATROL public information leaflets for 2008/09 (Appendix 2).

CONTACT OFFICER

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APPENDIX 1

NATIONAL PARKING ADJUDICATION SERVICE JOINT COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SUB COMMITTEE

REPORT FOR RESOLUTION

DATE: 29th January 2008

AGENDA ITEM Number 13

SUBJECT: Revenue and Capital Budget Estimates 2008/09

REPORT OF: The Lead Authority
On behalf of the Advisory Board

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To request the Committee to adopt the Revenue and Capital Budget Estimates for 2008/09.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Joint Committee:

- [i] Agree to adopt the Revenue Budget estimates for 2008/2009 as detailed in the report.
- [ii] Agree to adopt a zero capital budget estimate for 2008/2009.

FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

It is intended that, in the long term, the service will be self-financing as a result of charges made to participating local authorities.

These charges are the subject of a separate report on the agenda and are recommended with a view to the service continuing to be self-financing.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Road Traffic Act 1991.
The NPASJC agreement.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In accordance with the NPASJC agreement it is necessary to establish a budget estimate for the forthcoming year. An assessment has been made of the likely service take up during 2008/9 and therefore the Adjudicators, administrative support and accommodation needed. This report deals with the consequential establishment of budgets to meet this level of demand.
- 1.2 The adjudication service is operated on a self-financing basis with income obtained from charges made to NPASJC member authorities.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Revenue Budget Estimates

2.1 Income

Experience from 2006/07 and 2007/08 underlines the fact that across the board increases in PCN issue rates cannot be assumed and the following assumptions have been made in relation to income for 2008/09:

- a) Councils who were in the scheme in 2006/07
The councils' last audited figures (2006/07) have been used as the basis for PCN issue in 2008/09.
- b) Councils who joined the scheme in 2007/08
The councils' most recent estimate has been used as the basis for PCN issue in 2008/09.
- c) Councils joining April 2008/09
No assumptions have been made about councils joining after April 2008.
- d) No assumptions have been made about the effects of the implementation of the Traffic Management Act 2004 on 31 March 2008 and its affect on new councils entering the scheme.
- e) Additional income to the NPAS budget
Additional income to the NPAS budget arises from the transfer of income from the Bus Lane Adjudication Service budget for the purposes of integrated adjudication services. For budget purposes, it assumes that the level of income will follow the most recent estimates from councils operating civil enforcement of bus lanes. No assumptions are made about councils joining the scheme.

2.2. Expenditure

The overall increase in expenditure from 2007/08 to 2008/09 is from £2,452,276 to £2,514,533 representing an increase of 2.54%.

a) Staffing

NPAS support staff have been the subject of job evaluation and the result is of this is awaited at the time of preparing this report.

Case Management Staff have been reorganised into three area teams comprising a coordinator and administrator covering a specific geographical area. A fourth coordinator role which is rotating coordinates bus lanes appeals and undertakes evaluation and analytical projects supporting the Tribunal Manager. This team arrangement provides an effective basis for responding to increased demand through the redeployment of the Project Coordination role and/or the recruitment of additional administrative support. A part-time post is being introduced to provide additional support to the Tribunal Manager and Case Management Staff. The requirement for an Appeals Manager currently within the establishment will be kept under review.

A review has been undertaken of what was previously referred to as the Service Development Department. The demands of the tribunal are more focused on communication needs than service development which is a shared responsibility amongst managers within the tribunal. The Service Development Department consists of a Service Development Officer Post, a Service Development Assistant Post and a Librarian and Information Officer Post. The Service Development Assistant Post will be disestablished. The new Communication Team will consist of a Communications Manager, Communications Officer and Librarian and Information Officer. The Communications Manager will report to the Head of Service and provide communication services to both the tribunal and the Joint Committee. Once recruited, the Communications Manager will be asked to review the requirement for a staff member focusing on web based communications.

A review of the finance team in the light of recommendations from the External Audit 2005/06 and Internal Audit Report 06/07 has highlighted the need to have a discrete finance function rather than a mixture of finance and administrative functions. The Office Manager post will focus on supporting the Head of Service with Joint Committee related matters rather than financial processing. A new post of Finance Officer is being created which will oversee revenue and expenditure procedures in conjunction with the Lead Authority's finance team. The Finance Officer will be supported by a Finance Assistant.

The Head of Service is working with the Lead Authority's Personnel Department to implement these changes.

b) Developmental Expenditure

NPAS has adopted a three year strategic approach to developments. Phase 1 (2006/07) saw the successful introduction of AIMS, the case management system into the back office in January 2006, and brought the adjudicators on-line by remote access.

In 2007/08 Phase 2 has seen the commissioning of a new IT platform, providing a content management system to support the new web site for Traffic Penalty Tribunal.

In addition, the Joint Committee has commissioned a new web site PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) for the provision of public information and links to local authority parking departments by 31 March 2008. The information contained within this web site will contribute to the public's understanding of civil enforcement of parking, bus lanes and, with time, moving traffic contraventions.

In 2008/09, Phase 3 will see the introduction of increased transactional web based activities on the Traffic Penalty Tribunal web site between the tribunal and its parties including on line submission of appeal documents. There will also be a period of development, including providing access to Traffic Regulation Orders, in respect of the PATROL web site. PATROL will be developed in collaboration with the Direct Gov public information website.

This third year of the strategy has the greatest potential to transform ways of working for the tribunal and parties to appeals. This is reflected in the increased IT budget for 2008/09. The overall aim of these development objectives over the next year is to achieve greater efficiency and cost savings for councils and accessibility of information to the general public about civil enforcement of parking and traffic regulations.

c) General expenditure

An assessment has been made of the revenue budget that will be needed to meet the demands on the service during 2008/09. The assessment has taken into account current and additional spending that will be needed to sustain the adjudication service to councils already in the scheme and those joining in 2008/09.

3. Capital Budget Estimates

- 3.1 With the benefit of Capital Approvals in previous years it has been possible to help establish and expand NPAS. These approvals helped the Joint Committee to achieve the developments necessary to establish the service.
- 3.2 It is therefore recommended that the Committee adopt a zero capital budget estimate for 2008/2009.

RECOMMENDED REVENUE ACCOUNT ESTIMATE for 2008/09

Expenditure	Budget 2007/8	Budget 2008/09
Adjudicators	850,636	831,129
Staff	668,203	740,528
Premises / Accommodation	120,096	150,715
Transport	48,659	45,000
Supplies and services	327,570	269,720
ICT	278,862	413,940
Service Management and Support	50,000	51,500
Audit Fee	8,250	12,000
Contingency	100,000	0
Total Expenditure	2,452,276	2,514,533
Income		
Annual contribution	0	0
Penalty Charge Notices	2,428,502	2,439,499
Adjudication case charge	0	0
Contribution from Reserves	0	0
Recharge for Bus Lane Adjudication Costs	23,774	75,034
Total Income	2,452,276	2,514,533
Net Surplus/Deficit	0	0

APPENDIX 2 PATROL – PUBLIC INFORMATION LEAFLETS

Background

1. At its meeting in January 2008, the National Parking Adjudication Service Joint Committee Executive Sub Committee approved the development of a public information web site and associated literature to increase awareness and understanding of the civil enforcement process amongst the general public.
2. The PATROL web site at www.patrol-uk.info was launched on 31 March 2008 to coincide with the introduction of the Traffic Management Act 2004. Visits to the web site are currently being monitored and feedback on the site is being used to continually update and improve it.
3. The web site includes a downloadable leaflet outlining the enforcement process. Hard copies of this leaflet have also been printed and translated into Welsh.
4. There has been positive feedback from councils on the leaflet with requests for over 200,000 copies of the first leaflet. No charge has been made for this initial order.

Recommendations

1. In setting the arrangements for future charging, it is recommended that subsequent orders of up to 1000 leaflets per council be met at no charge to the council and requests for over 1000 to be charged at unit cost (approximately £60 per 1000). The budget for this would be approximately £15,000 per annum. These arrangements would need to be reviewed on an annual basis and take into account budgetary pressures.
2. The existing leaflet is helpful in terms of providing an overall summary of the enforcement process however it is recognised that more detailed information may be helpful in some circumstances. The content for the second leaflet will be consulted upon with councils. A further leaflet is planned in a more accessible format taking into account feedback from the Traffic Penalty Tribunal's Appellant User Group. The recommendation is for the cost of developing these leaflets up to 1000 copies to be met from within the Joint Committee's budget and amounts over 1000 to be charged at unit cost (this will be determined by the design, size etc) to individual councils requesting these.
3. It is recognised that there are a number of agencies providing information and advice to motorists who are in receipt of penalty charge notices including Citizens Advice, Disabled Motoring organisations, RAC, AA. It is proposed that supplies of leaflets (up to a maximum of 1000) are made available to these organisations without charge.