Item 7

REPORT TO CABINET

14th DECEMBER 2006

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

Portfolio: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

BUDGET FRAMEWORK – 2007/2008 TIMETABLE

1. SUMMARY

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Cabinet is required to publicise a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of the annual Budget and its arrangements for consultation.

The attached Appendix proposes a timetable for the adoption of the 2007/2008 Budget and arrangements for consultation, which will accommodate the requirements of the Constitution.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the timetable be approved, as shown on the attached Appendix.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 Part 4 Section C Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution requires Cabinet to publicise a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of a Budget and its arrangements for consultation. A proposed timetable is shown in the attached Appendix.
- 3.2 At the Cabinet Meeting to be held on Thursday, 11th January 2007, I intend to present a report which will set the scene for next year's Budget, including a summary of the initial Budget requirements, details of the Revenue Support Grant and Housing Subsidy Settlements and suggested spending targets for each of the Cabinet portfolio areas.
- 3.3 In terms of the arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny of the budget process this year, I have agreed that each individual Committee will again consider their own portfolio of services and the formal consultation process will begin 4th January and end 31st January 2007. Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings have been agreed with the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen for 23rd, 24th and 25th January 2007 for Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1/2/3 respectively.
- 3.4 Cabinet, at its meeting on Thursday 15th February 2007, will be able to consider the views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as well as considering the views of Council Taxpayers, who will have participated in Focus Group meeting held in accordance with the Council Taxpayers' Consultation process, which is in its fifth year.

- 3.5 After taking those views into account, Cabinet will then approve the Budget proposals and make recommendations to the Council at a Special Meeting to be held on Friday, 23rd February 2007, when the level of council Tax will be determined, taking into account the precept requirements of the County Council, Police Authority, Fire and Rescue Service and Town and Parish Councils. The Special Council Meeting on the 23th February 2007 is the earliest date possible for determining the Council Tax as this date is influenced by the date on which precepts of the County Council, Police Authority, Fire and Rescue Service and Town and Parish Council Tax as this date is influenced by the date on which precepts of the County Council, Police Authority, Fire and Rescue Service and Town and Parish Councils are received.
- 3.6 The statutory deadline by which the level of Council Tax must be determined is Friday, 11th March 2007. Part 4 Section C Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (2e to 2h) of the Council's Constitution provide specific procedures where Council resolves to amend the recommendations of Cabinet (an in-principle decision). The period in between the Special Council Meeting on Friday, 23th February and the statutory deadline for determining the Council Tax on 11th March does provide sufficient time to comply with the arrangements set out in the Constitution.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 As the purpose of this report is to identify the timetable for the Budget process, there are no financial implications to be considered.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 The Council's three Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be consulted as part of the Budget process. A representative sample of Council Taxpayers is also being consulted as part of the Budget process.

6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Links to Corporate Objectives/Values

The timetable has been established to ensure that all appropriate actions are undertaken during the process of determining the 2007/08 budget in that the Council is:

- Consulting the appropriate representatives of service users, customers and partners;
- Being responsible with and accountable for public finances.
- Being open, accessible, equitable, fair and responsive to the public.

6.2 **Risk Management**

If this timetable is not met, the Council could suffer an adverse cash flow in not being able to collect Council Tax from Council Taxpayers from the beginning of the financial year on the 1st April 2007. This timetable has therefore been devised to ensure that the appropriate statutory deadline to determine the level of Council Tax can be achieved.

6.3 Health and Safety

No additional implications have been identified.

6.4 Equality and Diversity

No Equality and Diversity implications have been identified as the purpose of this report is to identify the timetable for the budget process.

6.5 Legal and Constitutional

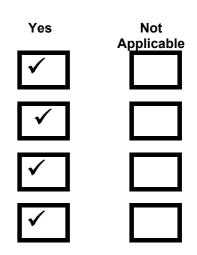
The appropriate Legal and Constitutional implications have been taken into account in determining this timetable

No other 'Material Considerations' have been identified.

Contact Officer:	Harold Moses
Telephone No.:	01388 816166 ext. 4385
E-mail:	hmoses@sedgefield.gov.uk
Background Papers:	The Constitution – Part 4 Section C – Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

Examination by Statutory Officers:

- 1. The report has been examined by the Council's Head of the Paid Service or his representative.
- 2. The content has been examined by the Council's S.151 Officer or his representative.
- 3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative.
- 4. Management Team has approved the report.



BUDGET FRAMEWORK - 2007/2008 TIMETABLE

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION, PART 4 – RULES OF PROCEDURE,

C – BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK PROCEDURE RULES

<u>Committee</u>	Report Distributed	Meeting Date	
CABINET			
• To consider Budget Framework	Wednesday 3/1/2007	Thursday 11/1/2007	
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY			
Consultation Process	Begins Thursday 4/1/2007	Ends Wednesday 31/1/2007	
Overview & Scrutiny 1	Monday 15/1/2007	Tuesday 23/1/2007	
Overview & Scrutiny 2	Tuesday 16/1/2007	Wednesday 24/1/2007	
Overview & Scrutiny 3	Wednesday 17/1/2007	Thursday 25/1/2007	
CABINET			
 To consider views of the Council Taxpayers' Forums))		
To consider view of Overview & Scrutiny Committees))) Wednesday 7/2/2007	Thursday 15/2/2007	
To approve the Budget proposals and make recommendations to Council)		
COUNCIL			
To consider recommendations form Cabinet))		
 To consider views from Council Taxpayers' Forums)) Thursday 15/2/2007))	Friday 23/2/2007	
• To determine the Council Tax level)		