

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Culture, Heritage and Libraries	27 October 2014
Subject: Service Based Reviews - City of London Pocketbook	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision

Summary

The purpose of this report is to highlight to Members of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee that, as part of the Service Based Review, savings equivalent to the current budget for the Pocketbook of £17,000 (i.e. £9,000 for the Red Book and £8,000 for the Blue Book) have been agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee.

The Policy and Resources Committee met on 2nd October 2014 and asked for the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee to give consideration as to the future requirement for a printed Pocketbook. If the book was to be discontinued, the information contained within it is available on the web and can be made available in a pdf format.

The Town Clerk's Department has overseen production of the 2014/15 Pocketbook on the basis of the recommendations agreed by the Pocketbook Working Party and this resulted in a saving of £2,800. The Policy and Resources Committee recognised the recent work of the Working Party and the fact that the Pocketbook is popular with some Members, particularly the information pages.

However, whilst the Pocketbook Working Party's work was underway, the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee were made aware that future production of the Pocketbook might be included in the package of Service Based Review savings.

Recommendations; that –

1. Members are asked to note the views expressed by the Policy and Resources Committee and their request for further work to be undertaken.
2. Members give consideration as to the future of the Pocketbook.

Main Report

Background

1. At the July 2013 meeting of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, Members requested a survey of all Members of the Court of Common Council in respect of the City of London's Pocketbook. Following the survey, the Committee established a small Working Party

to examine, in a task and finish approach, the potential improvements and cost savings that could be realised in the future production of the Pocketbook.

2. The Pocketbook Working Party made a number of recommendations to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee in respect of future production arrangements and content. The Town Clerk's Department has overseen production of the 2014/15 Pocketbook on the basis of the agreed recommendations and this resulted in a modest decrease in the cost.
3. As work to prepare the Pocketbook could not start until the Working Party had submitted its recommendations to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, it was anticipated, early-on, that the circulation of the new 2014/2015 Pocketbook might be delayed. The Town Clerk's Department accept that the delay is regrettable and are undertaking a review so that it can be avoided, should the Pocketbook continue to be published.
4. Whilst the work of the Pocketbook Working Party's was underway; the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee were made aware that future production of the Pocketbook might be included in the package of Service Based Review savings.

Current Position

5. As part of the Service Based Review, savings equivalent to the current budget for the Pocketbook of £17,000 (i.e. £9,000 for the Red Book and £8,000 for the Blue Book) have been agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee.
6. The Policy and Resources Committee met on 2nd October 2014 and discussed the general utility of the Pocketbook. Whilst accepting that its role as a diary was diminishing, given the prevalence of modern technology, the Committee acknowledged that the Pocketbook is popular with some Members, particularly the information pages.
7. In concluding, the Policy and Resources Committee recognised the work recently undertaken by the Pocketbook Working Party and asked that the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee give consideration as to the future of the Pocketbook.

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