



HILLINGDON  
LONDON



# Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee

## Councillors on the Committee

Richard Lewis (Chairman)  
Richard Mills (Vice-Chairman)  
Robin Sansarpuri (Labour Lead)  
Wayne Bridges  
Tony Burles  
Nick Denys  
Narinder Garg  
Raymond Graham  
Henry Higgins

**Date:** TUESDAY, 2 FEBRUARY  
2016

**Time:** 7.30 PM

**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOM 5 -  
CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH  
STREET, UXBRIDGE UB8  
1UW

**Meeting  
Details:** Members of the Public and  
Press are welcome to attend  
this meeting

**Published:** 25 January 2016

**Contact:** Khalid Ahmed  
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This Agenda is available online at:

<http://modgov.hillingdon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=243&MId=2457&Ver=4>

*Putting our residents first*

Lloyd White  
Head of Democratic Services  
London Borough of Hillingdon,  
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## **About this Committee**

This Policy Overview Committee (POC) will undertake reviews in the areas covered by the Administration and Finance Directorates and can establish a working party (with another POC if desired) to undertake reviews if, for example, a topic is cross-cutting.

This Policy Overview Committee will consider and comment on budget and service plan proposals for the Administration and Finance Directorates.

The Cabinet Forward Plan is a standing item on the Committee's agenda.

The Committee will not consider call-ins of Executive decisions or investigate individual complaints about the Council's services.

To perform the policy overview role outlined above in relation to the following matters:

1. Democratic Services
2. Localism
3. Central Services, incl. Human Resources, ICT, Communications & Legal Services
4. Capital programme, property, construction & facilities management
5. Financial Planning & Financial Services
6. Enforcement and anti-fraud activities
7. Procurement
8. Performance Improvement
9. Economic development & town centres and regeneration
10. Local commerce, employment, skills and job creation
11. Local Strategic Partnership and Sustainable Community Strategy;
12. Community engagement, partnerships and the voluntary sector
13. Equalities and Community Cohesion
14. Community Safety
15. Public Safety & Civil Protection
16. Energy use and carbon reduction
17. Health & Safety
18. Any functions not included within the remit of the other Policy Overview Committees
19. Cross-cutting reviews that cover the remit of other Committees

# Agenda

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes of Meeting held on 7 January 2016 (**Pages 1-4**)
- 4 Exclusion of Press and Public  
To confirm the items of business marked Part I will be considered in public and that items marked Part II will be considered in private.
- 5 Single Meeting Review - Single Person Discount in Relation to Council Tax (**Pages 5-8**)
- 6 Consideration of Second Review - Consultation with Partners (Public Utilities) in Relation to Planning Applications  
The Committee will be provided with a briefing on this possible second review topic.
- 7 Draft Budget Proposals 2016/17 - Comments from Policy Overview Committees (**Pages 9-18**)
  
- 8 Forward Plan (**Pages 19-24**)
- 9 Work Programme 2015/16 (**Pages 25-28**)

## **PART II**

- 10 PART II Minutes of Meeting held on 7 January 2016 (**Pages 29-36**)

## Minutes

**Corporate Services and Partnerships Policy  
Overview Committee  
Thursday 7 January 2016  
Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic  
Centre, High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW**



	<p><b>Members Present:</b> Councillors Richard Lewis (Chairman), Richard Mills (Vice-Chairman), Wayne Bridges, Tony Burles, Nick Denys, Narinder Garg, Raymond Graham and Robin Sansarpuri.</p> <p><b>Apology for Absence:</b> Councillor Carol Melvin.</p> <p><b>Officers:</b> Rajesh Alagh (Borough Solicitor), Gemma McNamara (Group Finance Manager), Maureen Pemberton (Revenues Manager), Nancy Le Roux (Deputy Director, Strategic Finance), Robert Smith (Head of Revenues and Benefits) and Khalid Ahmed (Democratic Services Manager).</p>
26.	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 NOVEMBER 2015</b></p> <p>Agreed as an accurate record.</p>
27.	<p><b>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <p>It was agreed that all items of business would be considered in public, but that the evidence provided by the Borough Solicitor on Item 6 - Major Review - Rates Retention and the Rating of Heathrow Airport be considered in private.</p>
28.	<p><b>DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS REPORT FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE GROUPS 2016/17</b></p> <p>The report set out the draft revenue budget and capital programme of the Administration and Finance Groups for 2016/17, along with indicative projections for the following four years.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that the Council continued to operate within the constraints of the Government's deficit reduction programme which had seen a reduction of £67m in central government funding since 2010/11.</p> <p>Members were informed that the discussion on the budget proposals should be considered alongside the context of the Council's overall financial position. The revenue proposals have been developed to deliver a zero increase in Council Tax for 2016/17, inflation pressures of £3.4m and projected</p>

	<p>reduction in Government Grants of £6m.</p> <p>In relation to Administration and Finance Group Budget proposals, there were proposed savings which totalled £1.9m for 2016/17. Members were informed that the savings were a combination of reviews of staffing structures, service efficiencies and re-tendering of contracts. This ensured that levels of services provided would not be affected.</p> <p>Reference was made to the savings which had been made as a result of the re-tendering of the Revenues and Benefits Administration Contract, service transformations, the Council's Business Improvement Delivery Programme, effective procurement and savings made to the Council's insurance contract.</p> <p>Discussion took place on the various restructures which had taken place and Members were informed that these ensured that teams were robust and efficient to be able to deliver the service requirements to support front line services in the Council and not impact on service provision for residents.</p> <p>Particular mention was made of Teams which had vacant posts removed from the establishment with the workload being absorbed amongst existing team members.</p> <p>In response to a Member request, officers would send out organisational charts of Teams within Administration and Finance Groups to enable Members to understand the staffing structure.</p> <p>In relation to Fees and Charges, Members welcomed the increase in revenue from Registrars, particularly in relation to the increased revenue from weddings at the weekend.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b></p> <p><b>1. That the budget projections contained in the report be noted and officers be praised for their proactive efforts in terms of the work which has been carried out in relation to negotiation of contracts and getting better value for money for the Council, and for residents of the Borough.</b></p>	
29.	<p><b>MAJOR REVIEW 2015/16 - HEATHROW AIRPORT CUMULO RATEABLE VALUE</b></p> <p>Members were reminded that at the last meeting of the Committee, the witnesses from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) agreed to give consideration to undertaking an audit of the main Heathrow Airport Cumulo rateable value assessment, to ensure that it was correct.</p>	

	<p>Members were informed that officers had been informed by the Valuation Office Agency that they had now had the opportunity to give consideration to the Committee's request for an audit, and had decided that an audit of the assessment was not necessary.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that the reason which had been given for declining to undertake an audit was that the VOA officers were confident that the actions taken by VOA staff on their regular inspections of the property when undertaking a review of the assessment were sufficient to ensure that all areas were correctly accounted for and assessed. The VOA reported that they had maintained close contact with the ratepayer who had provided updates on the changes that occurred.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b></p> <p><b>1. That the information provided be noted and be taken into consideration as part of the review.</b></p>	<b>Action By:</b>
30.	<p><b>CORPORATE SERVICES &amp; PARTNERSHIPS POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - CONSIDERATION OF SECOND REVIEW TOPIC</b></p> <p>Discussion took place on possible review topics for the Committee's next major review.</p> <p>The Committee asked that consideration be given to officers looking at the consultation taken with Public Utilities during the planning process.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b></p> <p><b>1. That an update be provided at the next meeting of the Committee on a possible review of looking at the consultation taken with Public Utilities during the planning process.</b></p>	
31.	<p><b>CABINET FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Noted.</p>	
32.	<p><b>WORK PROGRAMME</b></p> <p>Noted.</p>	
33.	<p><b>PART II MINUTES - 10 NOVEMBER 2015</b></p> <p>This item was discussed as a Part II item without the press or public present as the information under discussion contained confidential or exempt information as defined by law in the</p>	

	<p>Local Government [Access to Information] Act 1985 i.e. information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings. [paragraph 5 of the schedule to the Act].</p> <p>Agreed as a correct record.</p>	<b>Action By:</b>
<b>34.</b>	<p><b>MAJOR REVIEW 2015/16 - HEATHROW AIRPORT CUMULO RATEABLE VALUE</b></p> <p>This item was discussed as a Part II item without the press or public present as the information under discussion contained confidential or exempt information as defined by law in the Local Government [Access to Information] Act 1985 i.e. information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings. [paragraph 5 of the schedule to the Act].</p> <p>The Borough Solicitor attended the meeting and updated the Committee on the actions which had been requested of him at the last meeting.</p> <p>The Committee thanked the Borough Solicitor for the advice he had given.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED -</b></p> <p><b>1 That the information provided by the Borough Solicitor be noted and the recommended actions be taken forward.</b></p>	
	<p><b>Meeting commenced at 7.30pm and closed at 8.55pm</b></p> <p><b>Next meeting: 2 February 2016 at 7.30pm</b></p>	

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Khalid Ahmed on 01895 250833. These minutes are circulated to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.



# Agenda Item 5

## Single Meeting Review - Single Person Discount for Council Tax

**Contact Officer: Garry Coote / Khalid Ahmed**  
**Telephone: 01895 250369/ 01895 250833**

### **REASON FOR ITEM**

For this meeting, Members will be provided with a presentation on the Single Person Discount project which the Council's Corporate Fraud Investigations Team (CFIT) has been working on for 12 months.

### **OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE**

1. Members to consider the information contained in the report
2. To receive evidence from the witnesses present at the meeting.
3. To seek clarification or to request any further information from officers.

#### **1. Single Person Discount (SPD)**

The Council has a responsibility to protect the public purse through proper administration and control of the public funds and assets to which it has been entrusted. The work of the Corporate Fraud Investigation Team (CFIT) supports this by providing efficient value for money anti-fraud activities and investigates all referrals to an appropriate outcome. The Team provides support, advice and assistance on all matters of fraud risk including prevention, fraud detection, other criminal activity and deterrent measures.

The Corporate Fraud Investigation Team have been working on a project since January 2015 to identify incorrect claims for Single Person Discount in relation to Council Tax. The project is producing positive results in terms of reducing the number of SPD claims and generating additional income to the Authority. There are currently 30,088 SPD claims in Hillingdon. Since the commencement of this project SPD numbers are the lowest they have been for the last five years.

The CFIT are operating 4 work streams to match internal data sources against SPD claims.

Under the first work stream SPD records are being matched against Hillingdon First cards issued since April 2014. The matching exercise establishes if more than one person is registered for a Hillingdon First card at an address where SPD is being claimed. To date 103 SPD cases have been stopped resulting in an overpayment of £62k which will be recovered as additional revenue.

The second work stream concerns 'notices of the intention to marry' submitted to the Registrar's Office. Couples have to include their current residence on these applications and these details have been matched to SPD claims. Records from April 2014 are being checked and to date 55 cases have been identified resulting in an overpayment of £47k which will be recovered.

The third work stream involves data matching SPD records with the Electoral register. To date 247 cases have been identified resulting in an overpayment of £194k for recovery.

The fourth work stream commenced in November to match SPD claims against residents parking permits. The initial data matching has identified 278 matches which require further investigation. The investigations are likely to find that some of these matches are the result of poor data quality, however, any confirmed data matches will be processed for further investigation. If a suspected SPD fraud is identified the CFIT carries out additional background checks on the claimant, such as housing records, benefit records, school records and Equifax online credit reference checks. A member of the CFIT then contacts the claimant either by telephone, letter or personal visit to discuss the claim and the evidence indicating fraudulent activity. In most instances as a result of this contact, claimants choose to resolve matters swiftly and make arrangements to repay the Council any monies they have previously claimed in discount. They are keen to settle the matter and avoid any repercussions.

Since April 2015 the CFIT team have commenced a significant data matching exercise with a credit reference agency called Experian. This exercise matches all our SPD claims with credit reference information to establish if applications for SPD are genuine. The matches have been rated into categories of high, medium and low depending upon the likelihood of an incorrect SPD claim. Officers from the CFIT are investigating all relevant cases. To date 72 SPD cases have been stopped resulting in a saving of £62k. It is planned to review the data matches by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015.

Officers have also run some additional in house reports to compare information on different systems and this has identified a further 189 cases resulting in savings of £82k.

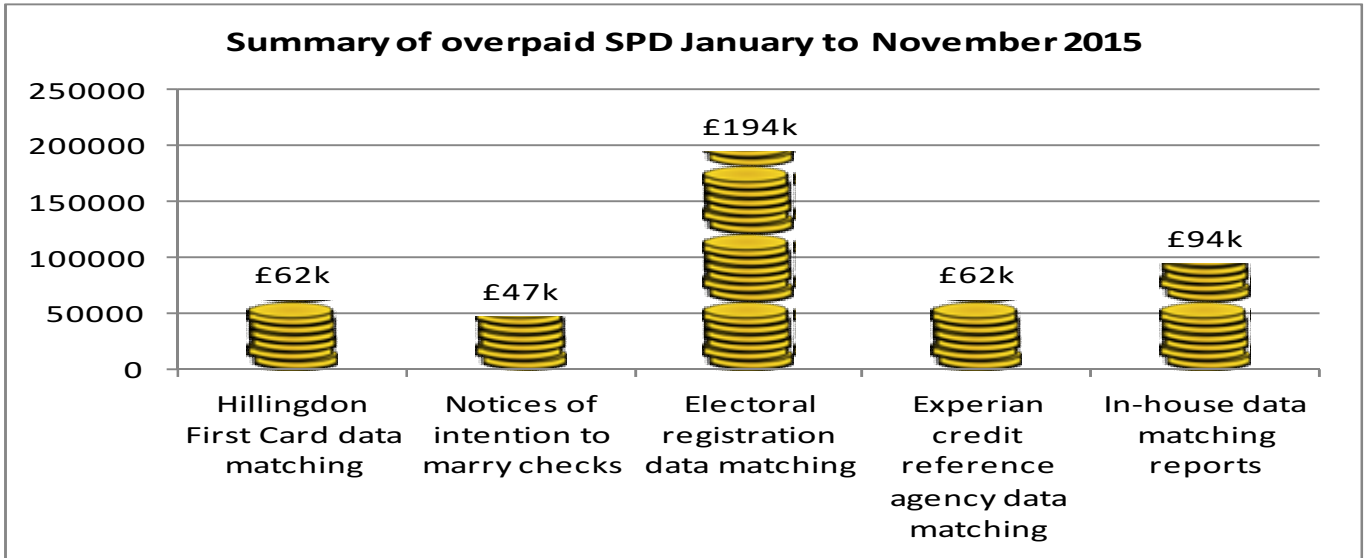
Since January 2015/16 the CFIT have cancelled 686 SPD claims resulting in overpayments of £459k as shown in table 3.

**Table 1**

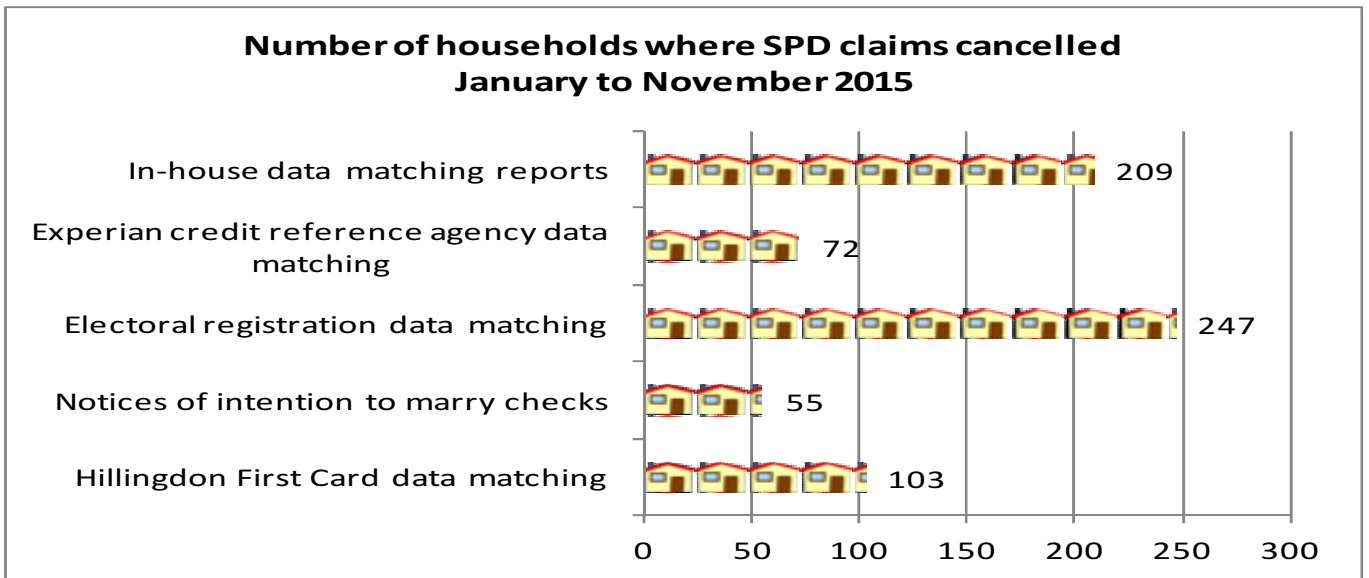
<b>Council Tax - Single Person Discount – since January 2015</b>		
<b>Workstream</b>	<b>Number of claims stopped</b>	<b>Overpaid SPD</b>
Hillingdon First Card data matching	103	£62k
Notices of intention to marry checks	55	£47k
Electoral registration data matching	247	£194k
Experian credit reference agency data matching	72	£62k
In-house data matching reports	209	£94k
<b>Total</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>£459k</b>

Charts 3 and 4 show summaries of the SPD overpayments and the number of households where claims have been cancelled from the intervention of the CFIT.

**Chart 1**



**Chart 2**



In cases where there is evidence of serious fraud the CFIT will look to pursue the prosecution of the claimant.



The poster opposite appears in issues of Hillingdon People and notice boards around the Borough to raise the profile of Single Person Discount abuse.

## WITNESSES

- Garry Coote - Corporate Fraud Investigation Manager
- Alex Brown - Corporate Fraud Investigation Team
- Yvonne Penston - Corporate Fraud Investigation Team
- Laura Piggott - Corporate Fraud Investigation Team

## PAPERS WITH THE REPORT

None.

## **Draft Budget Proposals 2016/17 – Comments from Policy Overview Committees**

Contact Officer: Khalid Ahmed  
Telephone: 01895 250833

### **REASON FOR ITEM**

To consider the full set of Policy Overview Committee comments on Cabinet's draft budget proposals, their overall implications and to submit those comments to Cabinet.

### **OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE**

That the Committee:

- 1. Consider the comments from the other Policy Overview Committees;**
- 2. Seek clarification where necessary and;**
- 3. Submit an agreed set of comments to forward to the Cabinet for it to consider alongside this Policy Overview Committee's budget proposals.**

### **INFORMATION**

As part of the Constitution (Budget and Policy Framework Procedure), Policy Overview Committees have a role to review the Cabinet's draft budget proposals, which were set out at Cabinet on 17 December 2015.

At each Policy Overview Committee in January, consideration was given to reports which provided details of draft budget proposals relating to the remit of each Policy Overview Committee.

For Members information the full extract of the minute relating to the draft budget proposals for each Policy Overview Committee is attached as Appendix A.

The Policy Overview Committee comments are set out as below:-

#### **Children, Young People and Learning POC –13 January 2016 (Children, Young People and Learning Services )**

"The Committee noted the budget proposals submitted and acknowledges the work that has been undertaken in providing a working budget, noting constraints placed via external funding streams. Concerns were expressed by some Members about the level of saving that needed to be achieved and the effect on services. There was

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Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee 2 February 2016

no consensus amongst the Committee Members as to whether reductions in funding would have an impact on the service delivered".

### **Residents' & Environmental Services POC –19 January 2016 (Residents Services )**

"The Committee expressed admiration for the continued savings found within the budget without compromising front line services.

The Committee commented that charges for non-resident users of services had remained static for several years, and this was a potential area to review for future savings. It was noted that charges have been benchmarked against those of neighbouring authorities and shown to remain competitive."

### **Social Services, Housing & Public Health POC – 20 January 2016 (Adult Social Care, Housing & Public Health)**

"The Committee noted the budget proposals and welcomed the work of the Council in this challenging area. In particular, the Committee noted that demand management and associated early intervention measures formed a key part of delivering future savings.

The Committee acknowledged the Government had announced that authorities providing Social Care would be able to levy a precept on Council Tax of up to 2% in support of Adult Social Care but this had not been reflected in the Council's draft budget.

The Committee was concerned about the high level of demand for Housing Needs services and the costs associated with Bed and Breakfast accommodation. However, it also welcomed the steps being taken across Council Departments and in conjunction with partners to monitor the numbers of empty properties and secure further accommodation at lower unit cost where possible.

The Committee welcomed new initiatives such as reablement in Adult Social Care and Supported Living through the Council's HRA programme to deliver savings whilst improving the quality of life for service users. The Committee expressed concern at the reduction in contingency provision for SEN transport but welcomed the steps being taken to increase the uptake in travel training and the use of travel budgets where appropriate.

The costs associated with transitional children were noted with the increased costs stemming from the complexity of the case load rather than increased volume.

The Committee also noted the role the preventative agenda across Adult Social Care, Housing and Public Health remits in delivering savings and efficiencies."

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**Corporate Services & Partnerships POC –7 January 2016 (Finance and Administration)**

"The Committee noted the budget projections contained in the report and praised officers for their proactive efforts in terms of the work which has been carried out in relation to negotiation of contracts and getting better value for money for the Council, and for residents of the Borough."

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Relevant minute extracts from the POCs

## APPENDIX A

### **Children, Young People and Learning POC –13 January 2016 (Children, Young People and Learning Services)**

Officers provided a presentation on the draft revenue budget and Capital Programme of the Children, Young People and Learning Services for 2016/17. During the presentation it was noted that:

- The draft budget proposals had been initially considered by Cabinet on 17 December 2015. Cabinet would next consider the proposals on 18 February 2016. The proposals would then go to Council for approval on 25 February 2016. This report would include comments made by the Policy Overview Committee. It was requested that the Committee agree a formal comment following the officer's presentation.
- The December Cabinet meeting had considered the budget prior to the Council having received notification of its Local Government Finance Settlement. The impact of the finance settlement was still being worked through as there were still a number of other funding streams where the Council had not yet received an update and the indication was that this was likely to take place in February 2016.
- The budget proposals had been compiled with the impact of the Government's deficit reduction programme in mind. This had seen a reduction of 56% (£67m) in Government funding to the Council since 2010/11, with indications being that the level of funding would continue to fall. The savings identified had taken into account the proposal to freeze Council Tax for an eighth successive year and funding the freeze for older persons into a 12<sup>th</sup> successive year. Balances and reserves had been maintained at well above the minimum recommended level.
- During 2015, the Council had agreed to provide significant additional resources for Children and Young People Services. This had included the continued use of agency staff at all levels. A structural review was undertaken to ensure that there was enough capacity to manage caseloads and that there were clear lines of management control and accountability. This resulted in a flatter management structure having been proposed.
- The structure for Children's Services had now been agreed and recruitment activity was being undertaken. Senior management posts had been filled first. Two service manager posts had been filled, leaving one that remained vacant. There were now only six vacancies remaining of 23 Team Manager posts across Children's Services.
- The recruitment of Social Workers had started in October 2015, with further recruitment activity due to be undertaken early in 2016. The recruitment activity was looking across the country and beyond in order to fill the posts.

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- The total cost to the Council of Looked After Children (LAC) was increasing. This was due to some children having increasingly complex needs rather than it being due to the number of LAC increasing. The number of LAC was in line with expectations for a population the size of Hillingdon's.
- Around one third of Hillingdon LAC were unaccompanied asylum seekers, which suggested that the number of non-asylum seeker LAC was relatively low compared to other council areas. Asylum seeker LAC tended to be older teenagers in the 16-18 age bracket. The cost of looking after these children ranged from £3,400 to £6,000 per week (£176,800 per annum to £312,000 per annum). Members were informed that it is more cost effective to use in house Council provision rather than an external provider.
- The number of asylum seeker children arriving in Hillingdon was stable. In Kent and other areas with seaports, there had been significant increases in arrivals. This has not been seen in Hillingdon, despite Heathrow Airport being in the Borough.
- The Home Office had advised all councils that grant funding would be provided for eligible asylum seeker children at a rate of £114 per day for eligible under 16's, £91 per day for eligible 16 to 17 year olds and £150 per week for those eligible aged over 18. In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that Council was required to meet the funding shortfall in order to provide care to these groups.
- Hillingdon was seeing a growing number of over 18 asylum seeking children, compared to the number of those who were under 18. This was due to a high number of younger children arriving five to six years ago who were now becoming adults.
- The number of primary schools pupils was continuing to grow, with there having been an increase of nearly 850 pupils between October 2014 and October 2015. Growth at secondary level was much smaller, but it was anticipated that this would rise in the future as the extra primary pupils moved to secondary school.
- Conversion by schools in the Borough to Academy status continued. 38 schools in Hillingdon were now Academies. Two other schools were looking to convert to Academy status.
- The Government had confirmed that a National Funding Formula would be introduced from April 2017. This would cover all funding streams, including Early Years, schools and High Needs.
- The entitlement to free child care for three and four year olds would be increased for working parents from 15 to 30 hours per week.
- The Education Services Grant would be reduced by 75% and it was anticipated that this would eventually be abolished. It was noted that one school had stated that they would lose £170,000 of their budget as a result.
- The proposed capital programme reflected population growth within the Borough. Local authorities were obliged to fund capital programmes to enable the expansion of existing schools and the building of new ones. The

successful programme of primary expansion had now largely been delivered with a residual forecast need for additional places in the north of the Borough. There was a need for additional secondary school places. Officers advised that pupil forecasts were kept under close review. The total cost of these programmes was approximately £200 million, with the Government funding approximately half the cost and Council Tax payers the other half.

## **Discussion**

A Member reflected that, given the reduction in Government funding, he considered that officers had done a good job in developing a budget that addressed all relevant issues.

Another Member voiced concerns about the level of savings that the budget was proposing to make. These amounted to total savings of 12.1 million across the Council, with 3.6 million of this due to come from Children, Young People and Learning Services. The Member was concerned at the scale and depth of budget reductions to some of the most important services. Some services were still in need of further improvement and there was a danger that cuts would undermine the improvements made to date.

Reductions to the Troubled Families budget and to that of Business Performance and Intelligence were highlighted as being of concern. In the case of the latter, it was worrying that reductions were proposed in this area given that the major review on 'The Effectiveness of Early Help to Promote Positive Outcomes for Families' [due to be presented to the Committee later in the meeting] was proposing that the use of data and intelligence be further developed to enhance service delivery. The review had also suggested that Early Intervention and Prevention Services needed to improve promotion of its offer to ensure that the maximum number of families were aware of the provision and could benefit from it. The Member was not clear how this could be achieved against the backdrop of a budget reduction of £600,000 on a current service budget of £8 million.

In response to the concerns raised, officers advised that different ways of working were delivering efficiencies to enable the savings to be made without impacting on service delivery. Efficiencies would also be made through improving value for money. Savings were also being made through the negotiation of more efficient contracts and by increasing in-house foster care provision. Each in-house fosterer used saved £20,000 compared to using an external provider.

With regard to Business Performance and Intelligence, processes had been reviewed, with teams being brought together. The teams had been re-organised to deliver greater efficiencies and focused on corporate priorities. The restructured service was able to operate more effectively with a reduced budget.

It was questioned whether possible increased future demand for primary places had been taken into account. Officers stated that forecasts showed that primary school demand had been largely met in Hillingdon, although there was some residual demand in the north of the Borough. There could also be future additional demand in the Hayes area, in part due to continued investment in residential and commercial developments. The forecasts were reviewed annually. It was not anticipated that excess demand would be a significant issue. It was, however, anticipated that there would be a significant increase in secondary demand in the next five to eight years.

Members asked what action was being undertaken to deal with schools that had been identified as being at risk of coasting. Officers responded that such schools would be contacted for the concerns to be discussed and would be given the opportunity to work collaboratively with partners in Hillingdon and beyond.

A Member asked whether additional expenditure was incurred over and beyond the provision of the Troubled Families Grant, when supporting such families. It was also questioned whether the Council paid other organisations who took on aspects of this work and how Children's Centres could continue to provide the current range of services if the budget was reduced by 50%. It was confirmed that the Grant funded Council costs and was not passed on to partner organisations. The Council's Early Intervention and Prevention Service worked with partners to identify families in need of 'Troubled Families' support. 262 families were being targeted by this work in this year. With regard to Children's Centres, service provision was not being reduced, the 50% reduction related to a realignment of resources relating to delivery programmes, where the resources are managed across the Children's Centre Programme. The required savings noted were being found by working more efficiently, such as through collective buying by the locality groups.

The Chairman felt that, based upon the evidence that she had seen, that the changes made within Children's Services would improve efficiency. Improved efficiency enabled budgetary savings to be made. Therefore, significant budget reductions did not necessarily mean a reduction in service provision.

### **Residents' & Environmental Services POC – 19 January 2016 (Residents Services)**

The Committee was provided with an update on the 2016/17 Residents' Services Budget Proposals, and raised the following points:

- The overall view set out in the report shows the funding position for the next 4 years improving from previous forecasts, however the 16/17 position was worse as a result of savings being front-loaded.
- The Council continued to operate within the constraints of Government's deficit reduction programme, which had seen a reduction of 56% (£67m) in

Central Government funding since 2010/11 and all indications were that funding would continue to decline.

- Members were asked to note that the draft budget report did not include the impact of the recent Spending Review or Local Government Provisional Settlement, which would be addressed in the budget report to February Cabinet.
- To ensure that there would be no Council Tax rise in the next financial year, savings of £12.144 million had been identified. The total savings included in the draft budget for Residents Services totalled £4.472 million.
- Despite savings, the budget still contained significant capital programmes including the renovation of the Battle of Britain Bunker, a new Council vehicle fleet, school playgrounds and road safety signage for schools.

The Committee expressed admiration for the continued savings found within the budget without compromising front line services.

The Committee commented that charges for non-resident users of services had remained static for several years, and this was a potential area to review for future savings. It was noted that charges have been benchmarked against those of neighbouring authorities and shown to remain competitive.

### **Social Services, Housing and Public Health POC – 20 January 2016 (Adult Social Care, Housing & Public Health)**

The Operational Finance Manager introduced the report.

The report set out the draft revenue budget and capital programme of Adult Social Care Group, Public Health, Housing General fund and Housing Revenue Account for 2016/17, along with indicative projections for the next four years

The Committee noted that the Council was looking to make significant savings of around £10,113k across the Council for 2015/16, of which the total savings in the draft budget for Adult Social Care were £3,190k and £200k for Housing.

With regards to future challenges for the Adult Social Group, it was noted that these stemmed from the following areas:

- Adult Social Care Demographic Pressures (303k increase from 2015/16)  
Transitional Children (£1,319k increase from 2015/16)
- Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport (£520k decrease from 2015/16)
- Winterbourne View (no movement from 2015/16) Care Act new Burdens Funding (£736k decrease from 2015/16)
- Impact of Welfare Reform on Homelessness (£189k increase from 2015/16) -

## **Corporate Services & Partnerships POC –7 January 2016 (Finance and Administration)**

The report set out the draft revenue budget and capital programme of the Administration and Finance Groups for 2016/17, along with indicative projections for the following four years.

The Committee was informed that the Council continued to operate within the constraints of the Government's deficit reduction programme which had seen a reduction of £67m in central government funding since 2010/11.

Members were informed that the discussion on the budget proposals should be considered alongside the context of the Council's overall financial position. The revenue proposals have been developed to deliver a zero increase in Council Tax for 2016/17, inflation pressures of £3.4m and projected reduction in Government Grants of £6m.

In relation to Administration and Finance Group Budget proposals, there were proposed savings which totalled £1.9m for 2016/17. Members were informed that the savings were a combination of reviews of staffing structures, service efficiencies and re-tendering of contracts. This ensured that levels of services provided would not be affected.

Reference was made to the savings which had been made as a result of the re-tendering of the Revenues and Benefits Administration Contract, service transformations, the Council's Business Improvement Delivery Programme, effective procurement and savings made to the Council's insurance contract.

Discussion took place on the various restructures which had taken place and Members were informed that these ensured that teams were robust and efficient to be able to deliver the service requirements to support front line services in the Council and not impact on service provision for residents.

Particular mention was made of Teams which had vacant posts removed from the establishment with the workload being absorbed amongst existing team members.

In response to a Member request, officers would send out organisational charts of Teams within Administration and Finance Groups to enable Members to understand the staffing structure.

In relation to Fees and Charges, Members welcomed the increase in revenue from Registrars, particularly in relation to the increased revenue from weddings at the weekend.

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# Agenda Item 8

## **Cabinet Forward Plan**

**Contact Officer:** Khalid Ahmed  
**Telephone:** 01895 250833

### **REASON FOR ITEM**

The Committee is required to consider the Forward Plan and provide Cabinet with any comments it wishes to make before the decision is taken.

### **OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE**

1. Decide to comment on any items coming before Cabinet
2. Decide not to comment on any items coming before Cabinet

### **INFORMATION**

1. The Forward Plan is updated on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. An edited version to include only items relevant to the Committee's remit is attached below. The full version can be found on the front page of the 'Members' Desk' under 'Useful Links'.

### **SUGGESTED COMMITTEE ACTIVITY**

1. Members decide whether to examine any of the reports listed on the Forward Plan at a future meeting.

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**Upcoming Decisions Further details**

Ward(s)

Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Contact for further information
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SI = Standard Item each month

Council

**Cabinet - 18 February 2016**

79	<b>Provision of Temporary Recruitment relating to 'Blue Collar' workers</b>	The existing contract for the provision Temporary Recruitment relating to 'Blue Collar' workers expires in September 2016. Cabinet approval will be sought for the recommendation to appoint the contractor from September 2016.	N/A		Cllr Scott Seaman-Digby	FD - Daniel Tilbury
62b	<b>Financial Support to Voluntary Organisations</b>	Following consultation with some organisations, Cabinet will consider their level of financial support from the Council for the 2016/17 financial year.	All		Councillor Douglas Mills	AD - Nigel Cramb
90	<b>Award for the support and maintenance of the council's Storage Area Network (SAN)</b>	This report seeks Cabinet approval to award the contract for the support and maintenance of the councils SAN following an open tender. The contract award will be for three years, with the option to extend for 1+1 years, subject to performance, cost and approval.	N/A		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	RS - Nick McCarthy

61b	<b>The Council's Budget - Medium Term Financial Forecast 2016/17 - 2020/21 BUDGET &amp; POLICY FRAMEWORK</b>	Following consultation, this report will set out the Cabinet's proposals for the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF), which includes the draft General Fund reserve budget and capital programme for 2016/17 for consultation, along with indicative projections for the following four years. This will also include the HRA rents for consideration. Subject to Cabinet's decision, the budget will then be referred to full Council for approval.	All	25-Feb-16	Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE & Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD - Paul Whaymand
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**Cabinet Member Decisions - February 2016**

91	<b>Tender: Hay Cutting and Hedge Trimming</b>	Cabinet approval will be sought to award a contract to carry out Hay Cutting and Baling including Hedge Trimming within Borough.	Various		Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE / Cllr Jonathan Bianco	RS - Adrian Batten
SI	<b>Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Members make a number of decisions each month on standard items - details of these standard items are listed at the end	Various		All	AD - Democratic Services

**Cabinet - 17 March 2016**

92	<b>Tender - Vehicle Hire Framework Agreement</b>	Cabinet will be asked to consider a Procurement Framework Agreement for Vehicle Hire of General Purpose, Passenger Carrying Vehicles and Specialist Vehicles including municipal type of vehicles on short,	N/A		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD / RS - Mahomed Ladha / Colin Russell
76	<b>Budget Management Software</b>	Cabinet will be requested to procure a budget management tool for budget holders, streamlining the regularly reporting process.	N/A		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	FD - Nancy Le Roux
<b>Cabinet Member Decisions - March 2016</b>						
94	<b>CCTV maintenance tender</b>	Cabinet Members will consider a tender for provision of maintenance to public space CCTV.	Various		Cllr Ray Puddifoot MBE / Cllr Douglas Mills	RS - Nigel Dicker
<b>Cabinet - 21 April 2016</b>						
SI	<b>Voluntary Sector Leases Report</b>	Regular report on discounted leases to voluntary sector organisations that benefit residents and the wider community	All		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	RS - Michael Patterson / Michele Wilcox
<b>Cabinet - 19 May 2016</b>						
95	<b>Environmental Enforcement Service</b>	Cabinet will consider a tender for the provision of an Environmental Enforcement Service.	All		Cllr Jonathan Bianco	RS - Bill Hickson

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# Agenda Item 9

## WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

**Contact Officer:** Khalid Ahmed  
**Telephone:** 01895 250833

## REASON FOR ITEM

This report is to enable the Committee to review meeting dates and forward plans. This is a standard item at the end of the agenda.

## OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE

1. To confirm dates for meetings
2. To make suggestions for future working practices and/or reviews.

## INFORMATION

*All meetings to start at 7.30pm*

<b>Meetings</b>	<b>Room</b>
<b>1 July 2015</b>	<b>CR 5</b>
<b>30 July 2015</b>	<b>CR 3</b>
<b>13 October 2015</b>	<b>CR 5</b>
<b>10 November 2015</b>	<b>CR 5</b>
<b>7 January 2016</b>	<b>CR 5</b>
<b>2 February 2016</b>	<b>CR 5</b>
<b>10 March 2016</b>	<b>CR 6</b>
<b>26 April 2016</b>	<b>CR 5</b>

Corporate Services & Partnerships POC 2 February 2016

PART I – MEMBERS, PUBLIC & PRESS

Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee

**2015/16 DRAFT Work Programme**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Item</b>
<b>1 July 2015</b>	Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee Possible Review Topics 2014/15
	Business Rates - Information item
	Work programme for 2015/16
	Cabinet Forward Plan

<b>30 July 2015</b>	Budget Planning Report for Administration and Finance Directorates
	Work Programme
	Cabinet Forward Plan

<b>15 September 2015 CANCELLED</b>	Scoping Report for next Major Review and presentation
	Head of Democratic Services - Elections
	Cabinet Forward Plan
	Work Programme

<b>13 October 2015</b>	Major Review - Witness Session
	Cabinet Forward Plan
	Work Programme

<b>10 November 2015</b>	Major Review - Witness Session
	Cabinet Forward Plan
	Work Programme

<b>7 January 2016</b>	Draftt Budget Proposals Report for 2016/17
	Major Review - Witness Session

Corporate Services & Partnerships POC 2 February 2016

PART I – MEMBERS, PUBLIC & PRESS

	Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee of Second Review Topic
	Cabinet Forward Plan
	Work Programme

<b>2 February 2016</b>	Briefing on possible Second Review - Consultation with partners on Planning Applications
	Single Meeting Review - Single Person Discount for Council Tax - Project by Corporate Fraud Investigations Team
	Comments from Policy Overview Committees on Draft Budget Proposals
	Cabinet Forward Plan
	Work Programme

<b>10 March 2016</b>	Witness Session for Second Review
	Cabinet Forward Plan
	Work Programme

<b>26 April 2016</b>	Cabinet Forward Plan
	Work Programme

Corporate Services & Partnerships POC 2 February 2016

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