

BUDGET PROPOSALS 2011/12 – COMMENTS FROM POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEES

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REASON FOR ITEM

To consider the full set of Policy Overview Committee comments on Cabinet's 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 forward to the Cabinet for it to consider alongside its 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 16 December 2010.

At each Policy Overview Committee in January, consideration was given to reports which provided details of budget proposals relating to the remit of each Policy Overview Committee. Their comments are set out as below:-

Residents' & Environmental Services POC – 18 January 2011 (Planning, Environment and Community Services Group)

The Committee noted the budget projections and combined budget proposals put forward by the Planning, Environment & Community Services Group, within the context of the corporate budgetary position. There were no specific comments.

Corporate Services & Partnerships POC – 19 January 2011 (Finance & Business Services and Deputy Chief Executive's Office Groups)

The Committee noted the budget projections put forward by Central Services. There were no specific comments.

Education & Children's Services POC –26 January 2011 (Education & Children's Services Group)

The Committee made the following comments on the Education and Children's Services budget for consideration:-

1. That the wording 'core offer' and 'additional offer' (see below) be clarified to provide a better understanding of what was being provided as part of these services.

"The Education & Children's Services Group has taken the opportunity to completely rethink how it delivers its overall service to Hillingdon's children and young people. It has applied a phased approach to developing a 'core offer' for services deemed essential, backed by an 'additional offer' of services which support the core services, as many of the core services do not, on their own, ensure child safety. Savings proposals have been developed on a service basis."

2. The Committee highlighted the importance of partnership working if the proposals contained within the budget were to work.
3. The Committee requested that it should be made clear in the report that this was the last stage of a long process to develop the budget proposals being put forward to Cabinet.
4. The Committee asked that the "End of Student Award Function" saving proposal be re-worded for clarity (saving no. 2.3)
5. The Committee requested that relation to the Music Service saving proposal that it contains a description advising that the savings figure referred to does not just come from charging for services (saving no. 5.5)
6. Fees & Charges – the Committee asked that consideration be given to different charges being made for services to residents and non residents as is the case in other departments.
7. The Committee recognised that Hillingdon was one of the few councils increasing funding for its capital projects. The Committee requested that officers seek to ensure that this approach continued given the likely pressures faced in primary schools and in due course in secondary schools.
8. Finally, the Committee recognised the considerable difficulty faced by officers in meeting the current financial situation, which has been forced upon them. The Committee agreed with the approach taken in streamlining administration to improve ways of working and avoiding duplication with schools.

Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee

9 February 2011

PART 1 – MEMBERS, PUBLIC & PRESS

Social Services, Health & Housing POC – 27 January 2011 (Adult Social Care, Health & Housing Group)

The Committee noted the budget projections put forward by Adult Social Care Health and Housing and made the following comments for Cabinet to note:

- In relation to Carers, the Committee highlighted (The Authority) should be careful not to inadvertently create other budget pressures by decisions taken (in this area).
- With regards to Personalised Budgets, the Committee noted that ICT (Liquid Logic) teething problems were delaying the Department's progress to role out personal budgets.
- With one of the Committee's major review topics focusing on Assistive Technology, the Committee welcomed the speed at which their work on Assistive Technology was being progressed further by the Leader.
- On the benefits of Partnership working with the PCT, the Committee welcomed the expectation of the PCT working closely with the Council on new budget streams but expressed concern about the respite care one and asked Officers to seek to ensure that this is used by the PCT to enhance support for carers within the Borough.
- When the Committee examined Day Services Provision, it expressed concern that changes to community education could bring an influx of these clients, and this had not been taken account of in the budget figures.
- In relation to Day Centre provision, the Committee noted that some carers had expressed concern about the potential variation in Day Centre numbers especially given the numerous benefits which they brought such as social interaction for service users and respite for carers.
- With regards to Residential respite care provision, the Committee endorsed the officer's recommendation for option A (*continue with 28 nights free residential based respite in any financial year and a flat charge thereafter*) as an interim measure.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Relevant minute extracts from the POCs