

Cabinet – 4 February 2009

Draft Budget 2008/09: Recommendations of Scrutiny and Performance Panels following budget consultation

Portfolio: Councillor A Griffiths – Finance and Personnel

Service: All services

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1. Summary of report

This report presents the final comments and recommendations of all 5 scrutiny and performance panels following consideration of the draft corporate budget report at meetings held in January 2009. This will enable consideration by Cabinet before they make their final budget recommendations to Council.

2. Recommendations

To note the recommendations of all five scrutiny and performance panels as detailed in the **appendix 1** and consider them when making final budget recommendations to Council.

3. Background information

Scrutiny has received information to consider throughout the budget process. This includes resource planning documents for the services within their remit in the autumn and the draft budget proposals in January. Corporate scrutiny has also received resource planning documents for all services across the council. This report contains the recommendations from each panel from their January meetings to enable Cabinet to consider them prior to recommending a final budget to Council.

4. Resource considerations

Financial: The consideration of the draft budget reports by the scrutiny panels is an integral part of the council's budget setting process. **Appendix 1** summarises feedback from the Health Social Care and Inclusion and Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panels held on 19 January 2008, the Children's and Young People Scrutiny and Performance Panel held on the 20 January 2009, the Neighbourhood Scrutiny and Performance Panel held on 22 January and Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel on 23 January.

5. Citizen impact

The budget is aligned with service activity within service plans across the council. Investment has been targeted at service improvement, stability and user demand.

6. Community safety

None arising directly from this covering report.

7. Environmental impact

Budget decisions may affect the council's ability to deal with environmental issues.

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 **Risk:** The council annually reviews corporate financial planning and budget principles. In November cabinet approved an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The budget setting process includes a corporate financial risk assessment to determine key risks and their impact on the budget.

8.2 **Performance management:** Nothing arising directly from this covering report.

9. Equality implications

9.1 Services consider equalities in setting budgets and delivering services. Irrespective of budgetary pressures the council must fulfil equal opportunities obligations.

10. Consultation

All 5 scrutiny and performance panels have received budget presentations in respect of the services falling within their remit, the draft corporate revenue budget and draft capital programme from January 14 cabinet and have had opportunity to make recommendations to cabinet. This report provides scrutiny panels' second opportunity to make recommendations on the draft budget proposals.

Background papers

Various financial working papers.

Revenue Support Grant Provisional Settlement – Cabinet 17 December 2008

Draft Corporate Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2009/10 – 2011/12 – Cabinet 14 January 2009

Recommendations of Corporate Scrutiny Panel following consultation - Cabinet 14 January 2009

Recommendation of Scrutiny and Performance Panels following consultation – Cabinet 17 December 2009

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James Walsh
Executive Director

26 January 2009



Councillor Griffiths
Portfolio holder

26 January 2009

Recommendations of the Health Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny and Performance Panel

- The Health, Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny and Performance Panel met on 19 January 2009, considered each item in their remit but made no specific recommendations with regard to the draft budget proposals for 2009/10 – 2011/12.

Recommendations of the Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel

- That consideration be given to a voluntary reduced hours proposal or job share between existing employees to avoid the deletion of two principal planning officers as proposed in saving 116;
- That consideration be given to voluntary reduced hours, job share or retraining schemes for all posts at risk of deletion or redundancy across the Council to retain skills within the workforce

Recommendations of the Children and Young People Scrutiny and Performance Panel

- The withdrawal of funding for Ready Steady Summer scheme to be referred to the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel
- The draft children's services revenue and capital budget proposals for 2009/10 to 2011/12 be supported

Recommendations of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel

- Cabinet reconsider efficiency/saving proposal 44 'NPP – stop funding the LNP community cash scheme' as this is a valuable resource to local neighbourhood partnerships to help deliver local projects and programme across the borough;
- Alternative ways for customers to pay car parking charges, including accepting bank notes, debit cards and other electronic methods, be investigated;
- As part of any planned replacement of car park ticket machines consideration should be given to introducing ticket machines that print car registration numbers on tickets to the transfer of tickets between vehicles;
- The Panel consider the Councils use of Bryntysilio and potential alternatives during 2009/10;
- The summer youth activities be actively promoted throughout the borough within existing resources.

Recommendations of the Corporate Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel

That the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel, with one abstention:

- Endorse the budget recommendations of the other scrutiny panels as set out;
- Note their thanks to Cabinet for listening to their request and making the important welfare rights service core funded;
- Support the savings and investments proposals in relation to Finance Services;
- Support the savings and investments proposals in relation to Legal Services;
- Support the savings proposals in relation to Transformation;
- Support the savings proposals in relation to Corporate Performance Management

That the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel, with 5 votes for and 4 abstentions:

- Commend the overall revenue budget report to Cabinet
- Commend the overall capital budget report to Cabinet.