

Cabinet – 17 December 2014

Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2018/19: Update on Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme, and outcome of budget consultation to date

Portfolio: Councillor S. Coughlan – Leader of the Council (Lead Portfolio)

Related Portfolios: All

Service: Finance – council wide

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1. Summary

- 1.1 Draft budget proposals have been distributed to scrutiny panels and stakeholders for consultation as part of the budget setting process. The final budget, including any changes following consideration of consultation feedback and equality impact assessments, and following receipt of final allocations of government funding, will be presented to Cabinet on 4 February 2015 for recommendation to Council, and will be considered by full Council on 26 February 2015.
- 1.2 The report includes the recommendations from each scrutiny panel on the draft revenue and capital budget proposals, along with findings from resident and stakeholder consultation. The findings from stakeholder consultation will be distributed in an Appendix once consultation has closed (10 December) and feedback has been analysed. Some specific consultation continues beyond this deadline, therefore an update report will be included on these, with a final report being considered in the new year.
- 1.3 The Autumn Statement was announced on 3 December and funding implications arising from this announcement are included in this report.
- 1.4 The report also advised about a change in Liability Insurance Arrangements. The holding insurer (Travelers Insurance Company) have indicated that they will be looking for a large premium increase for the liability insurance programme at the next renewal date on 1 April 2015. Due to the level of proposed increase it is recommended that the council undertakes an OJEU complaint tender for this contract with implementation effective from 1 April 2015.
- 1.5 Known and predicted changes to grants are also identified for approval, along with changes to capital funding in 2014/15 and changes to the draft capital programme and revenue proposals originally from those reported to Cabinet on 29 October 2014.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet note the feedback from scrutiny and performance panels and feedback to date from public / stakeholder consultation as set out in this report, and consider this feedback in preparation for final budget recommendations in February.
- 2.2 That Cabinet refer this report to all scrutiny and performance panels for consultation to enable their comments to be considered by Cabinet on 4 February 2015.
- 2.3 That Cabinet note and agree the changes to the 2015/16 proposed capital programme and approve the changes to the revenue savings proposals as outlined in section 3.1.
- 2.4 That Cabinet delegate authority to the Chief Financial Officer to approve the council tax base in order to inform preceptors of the final figures by 31 January 2015, in line with our statutory deadline. Final figures will be reported to Council on 26 February 2015 within the budget report.
- 2.5 That Cabinet approve an amendment to the 2014/15 capital programme to re-allocate £180k of funding approved for the Lucknow Road car parking scheme (£164k) and verge parking (£16k) to fund new transport projects as outlined in section 3.13.
- 2.6 That Cabinet authorise the undertaking of a tender process for the Liability Insurance contract using the Crown Commissioning Service Framework and note that approval will be sought at March 18th Cabinet to appoint the most advantageous tender.
- 2.7 That Cabinet approve the use of grants as outlined in section 3.15.

3. Report detail

Changes to the Draft Budget and Capital Programme

- 3.1 The first draft revenue budget proposals and draft capital programme 2015/16 to 2018/19 were reported to Cabinet on 29 October 2014. There are two proposed changes to the revenue budget and two changes to the draft capital programme as follows:

Revenue

- a. The proposed saving of £100k in 2015/16 for the introduction of district centre car parking charges to be withdrawn following extensive consultation (saving number 96 in the Environment & Transport portfolio plan at Appendix 1d of the budget report to Cabinet on 29 October). Cabinet have listened to feedback that the vast majority of respondents do not support this proposal. The main reason for this is due to the perceived impact on businesses, employees and shoppers to district centres leading to concerns for the demise of district shopping centres.

- b. Council on 27 February 2014 agreed for the proposed saving for the removal of subsidies for the maintenance of grass sports facilities (£90k) be deferred by one year until 2015/16. Cabinet have reviewed this proposal and do not wish to proceed with this in 2015/16.
- c. The impact of the above two changes is £190k, alternative funding for which will be identified.

Capital

- d. Cabinet received a separate report on 29 October on the Bentley Employability and Learning Hub and approved the funding of £145k from earmarked capital receipts towards this project in 2015/16. Therefore the council funded draft capital programme will need to be amended to reflect this, resulting in a revised council funded programme of £25.07m.
- e. £100k of external funding is now expected to be received from the Arts Council towards the Forest Arts hall conversion scheme in 2015/16. The externally funded draft capital programme will need to be changed to reflect this, resulting in a revised externally funded programme of £21.90m

The budget is an evolving process, with recognition that proposals may change as it develops prior to formal recommendation to full Council which meets on 26 February 2015. The council also awaits publication of the draft settlement for 2015/16, which may have implications on the current proposals, and will be reported in the final draft budget report to Cabinet on 4 February 2015.

- 3.2 As outlined in the supporting papers to Cabinet on 29 October 2014, the council will need to deliver:
 - Revenue savings / revenue funding changes of £29.28m in 2015/16.
 - A revised draft capital programme for 2015/16 which totals £46.97m, including new capital investment funded from the council's own resources of £25.07m (funded by capital receipts and unsupported borrowing) and externally funded schemes of £21.9m (funded by capital grants representing a balanced programme for 2015/16, including the changes identified in 3.1 above.
 - This is expected to deliver an adjusted gross revenue budget of c£610m in 2015/16.

Consultation

- 3.3 The draft revenue budget proposals and draft capital programme were referred to all Scrutiny and performance panels. **Appendix 1** summarises the feedback from each panel.
- 3.4 Cabinet agreed that draft savings proposals with direct impact on services would be referred for public consultation. Information on the full proposals are also contained on the council's website. The outcome of this stage of resident and stakeholder consultation is presented at **Appendix 2**. Due to the closing date of 10 December 2014 being later than the despatch date of this report, this Appendix will be despatched once available.

Leasing programme

- 3.5 Leasing minimises the call on capital resources by spreading the acquisition cost over some years. Revenue funds are needed to finance operating leases. The 2015/16 leasing programme is summarised in Table 1 below by portfolio and will form part of the final budget report to Cabinet. The revenue implications of the leasing programme of £1.48m for 2015/16 are already included in the draft revenue budget.

Portfolio	Revenue			
	Asset cost	New Leases	Current Leases	Total Leasing
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Environment & Transport	2.11	0.30	1.02	1.32
Community, Leisure & Culture	0.59	0.16	0.00	0.16
Total Leasing	2.70	0.46	1.02	1.48

- 3.6 The prudential system allows borrowing to fund the purchase of leased items. This expenditure is treated as capital expenditure and not revenue meaning as the council would buy the assets outright. The decision to lease or buy depends on several variables, for example, the costs of borrowing and the residual value of the asset at the end of its leased life. Before each drawdown, a review is undertaken of which financing approach is most appropriate. A rigorous evaluation is then undertaken before a decision to lease or buy is made, ensuring value for money.
- 3.7 The prudential system requires the setting of indicators for the likely level of capital expenditure each year. Decisions to lease or buy cause total expenditure to fluctuate during the year. Therefore regular monitoring reports to Cabinet and Corporate Management Team on the council's financial performance will include prudential indicators.

Funding changes notified / expected since Cabinet on 29 October 2014

Autumn Statement

- 3.8 The chancellors Autumn Statement was delivered on 3 December 2014. The following outlines the key points affecting local government along with the impact, where known, on Walsall:
- It has been confirmed that Public Sector Expenditure is set to fall at the same rate as between 2010/11 and 2014/15 until 2018. It is then forecast to increase by inflation in 2018/19 and 2019/20. At this point, it appears that there will be no further savings required by Walsall in 2015/16, subject to the draft settlement expected mid December.
 - Beyond 2015/16, the impact is unclear however there is a likelihood that additional cuts may be required which may also be front loaded for this period.
 - Various changes to business rates (support for small businesses through discounts and reliefs, transitional arrangements for properties with rateable values over £50k and extending the 2% cap on increases in

business rates) along with a full review of business rates by Budget 2016. The impact on Walsall is approx £4.23m which has been confirmed will be funded by central Government via a specific grant.

- Spending during the next parliament on the local and national roads network across the Midlands will be boosted further by maintenance funding worth £2.4 billion. For Walsall, the expansion of the M6 junction 10 to help 10 key employment sites within a 10 minute radius has been announced which is expected to create 2,500 new homes.
- Continued public sector pay restraint.

Council Tax Base

- 3.9 The council's Constitution (Part 5 s10.7) specifies that the council tax base will be considered and set by Cabinet. The calculation of the tax base is an administrative function, requiring officers to calculate its basis on the number of properties as at a specific date. The final council tax base figure is dependent on the number of overall discounts and reliefs applied including the level of discount within the council tax reduction scheme.
- 3.10 Council will receive reports on options in relation to council tax discount (empty homes) and the reduction scheme on 12th January 2015, therefore the final council tax base will be set once this is known.
- 3.11 The authority is legally obliged to set the council tax base by 31 January each year and to notify the precepting authorities (i.e. Police & Crime Commissioner, and Fire & Rescue Authorities) accordingly. This is integral to the budget setting process as it is required to calculate the annual council tax bands.
- 3.12 Cabinet are therefore asked to delegate responsibility to the Chief Financial Officer to approve the council tax base and to notify precepting authorities by 31 January 2015 in order to meet our statutory obligations.

Capital 2014/15 – Transport projects

- 3.13 The 2014/15 capital programme as approved by Council on 27 February 2014 included the provision of £168k for a new car park at Lucknow Road, Willenhall. Following a review of transport related schemes, Cabinet is requested to reallocate the balance of £164k of this funding, together with the predicted underspend of £16k on verge parking to support two highway schemes on the A34 Birmingham Road and Caldmore Road, totalling £180k. These schemes of £55k and £125k respectively address high priority traffic management and road safety matters.

3.14 Insurance – Liability Insurance Arrangements

On 19 June 2013 Cabinet were informed that the liability insurance arrangements for the council had been awarded to Travelers Insurance Company following an OJEU compliant tender process on the basis of a 3 year long term agreement (LTA) with an option to extend for a further 2 years. The initial 3 year agreement was also subject to a 2 year fixed premium rate period, this award was effective from 1 April 2013.

For insurance policies a long term agreement is worded such that if the insurer offers renewal terms at each annual renewal (1 April) on the existing basis then the insured is obliged to accept that renewal. In exchange for this commitment, the insurer allows a discount from the premium charged, in the case of these arrangements that discount was 5%. If the insurers breaks the LTA and alters the terms e.g. the premium rate charged, then the insured is free to tender the arrangements, however if the insured breaks the LTA the insurer has the right to claw back the discount allowed.

Travelers have recently indicated that they will be looking for a “substantial premium increase” at the next renewal of this policy due on 1 April 2015. The 1 April 2015 renewal date falls outside of the guaranteed rate period and is the first time that such an increase could be applied.

A number of councils insured by Travelers have seen breaks in their agreements with Travelers in the last 2 years especially Unitary and Metropolitan Borough Councils. The indication is that Travelers have become risk averse for those authorities that have responsibilities for Children’ Services and Highways, certainly the claims experience on the council’s liability exposure does not on its own warrant such an increase.

The exact level of increase has not been given however the indication is that it could be as high as 1,000%. The premium for these covers for the insurance year 2014/15 are £320k. This level of proposed increase clearly breaks the LTA and so we are free to tender these covers in the wider insurance market without penalty.

Since the last insurance tender exercise undertaken in 2013, a number of frameworks have been established for insurance arrangements - one of which is the Crown Commissioning Service (CCS), in total there are 17 suppliers listed on this framework. Other frameworks are available, however these do not include as many potential providers, generally listing 3 – 6 insurers.

In preparation for this tender a review of the council’s liability insurance claims history is being undertaken which will produce a report giving options for alternative excess levels and sums insured which will help us to identify the optimum insurance programme for this area of cover going forward.

Cabinet are requested to authorise the undertaking of a tender process for the Liability Insurance contract using the Crown Commissioning Service Framework, and to receive a report back In March 2015 to accept the most economically advantageous arrangements for the provision of the liability insurance arrangements.

3.15 Changes in grant funding notifications

The council has received confirmation of specific grant allocations expected in 2014/15 and 2015/16, none of which are currently allocated and all of which are un-ringfenced (with no conditions attached regarding their use of funding). These relate to:

- Independent Living Fund (c£698k in 2015/16 requested for use by Social Care when responsibility transfers to the council).
- Troubled Families Grant (£191k additional in 2014/15, requested for use by Children's Services to mitigate spend in this area and therefore their overspend).
- Staying Put Grant (£48.3k in 2014/15 requested for use by Children's Services to mitigate spend to date and therefore their overspend).
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) – New Burdens Grant (c£433k over 2014/15 & 2015/16 - £355.5k requested for use by Children's Services to deliver new responsibilities arising from the Children's and Family Act, the remainder to be used to reduce the current year overspend corporately)
- Autism Innovation Capital Grant (£18.5k in 2014/15 requested for use by Social Care) to implement their Autism strategy.

4. Council priorities

- 4.1 The budget process is an annual cycle aiming to support delivery of council priorities within the available resources. It aims to achieve this through the delivery of efficiencies, income reviews and service reviews and redesign to redirect existing and reducing resources to areas of high council priority.

5. Risk management

- 5.1 The budget process is governed by the overarching medium term financial strategy. Risk management is an integral part of this activity and is embedded in budget preparation, monitoring and forecasting to enable potential budget variances and risks to be identified early and addressed.
- 5.2 There is a significant amount of uncertainty around Government funding for 2016/17 and beyond, with a high likelihood that austerity measures will be tightened even further. The medium term financial outlook will need to be updated once these measures are confirmed.
- 5.3 The budget is risk assessed and this is used to formulate the recommended level of contingencies and reserves. The outcome of this will be reported to Cabinet and Council in the final budget report.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The council must set a balanced budget to meet its legal requirements.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 The legal duty for a council's finances falls within s151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Arrangements for the proper administration of their affairs is secured by the s151 Officer (the Chief Financial Officer).
- 7.2 Under the Local Government Act 2003 (s25), an authority must set a council tax and balanced budget, giving 14 days notice of the council tax level prior to the date of billing. The council must set a budget before 11 March of each year. This will include the Chief Financial Officer's report that deals with the robustness

of the budget and the adequacy of the reserves for which the budget provides, together with an assessment of risk.

- 7.3 Local Authority Accounting Panel Bulletin 77, issued by CIPFA in November 2008, outlines the guidance on reserves. Whilst this does not prescribe an appropriate level of reserves, leaving this to the discretion of individual authorities, it does set out a number of important principles in determining the adequacy of reserves. It emphasises that decisions on the level of reserves must be consistent with the council's MTFs, and have regard to the level of risk in budget plans, and the council's financial management arrangements (including strategies to address risk).
- 7.4 The collection fund and council tax base are governed by Statutory Instrument 2012 No.2914 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012. The council is legally obliged to set the council tax base and notify the precepting authorities by 31 January each year.
- 7.5 In addition, section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires the Chief Financial Officer to '...make a report ... if it appears to him that the Authority, a committee or officer of the Authority, or a joint committee on which the Authority is represented':
- a) has made or is about to make a decision which involves or would involve the Authority incurring expenditure which is unlawful,
 - (b) has taken or is about to take a course of action which, if pursued to its conclusion, would be unlawful and likely to cause a loss or deficiency on the part of the Authority, or
 - (c) is about to enter an item of account the entry of which is unlawful.

8. Property implications

- 8.1 Any direct property implications as a result of service redesign and revenue savings proposals will be assessed as part of the council's strategic property review.

9. Staffing implications

- 9.1 There will be some staffing implications arising from this report, and consultation with employees and unions will be undertaken in accordance with required procedures.

10. Equality implications

- 10.1 An equality impact assessment is undertaken on all proposals as they develop and on the overall budget and implications along with any required action will be reported when assessments are finalised, to allow Cabinet to consider any revisions required to the budget as it progresses and is finalised.

11. Consultation

- 11.1 Section 138 of the Local Government and Public involvement in Health Act 2007 placed a general duty on every local authority in England to take such steps as it considers appropriate to secure that representatives of local persons (or of local

persons of a particular description) are involved in the exercise of any of its functions, among other things by being consulted about the exercise of the function. The 2010 Equality Act whilst not imposing a specific duty to consult, lays a requirement to have due regard to the equality impact when exercising its function.

- 11.2 Consultation is an integral part of the budget process and a wide programme of consultation was undertaken to consult with a wide range of stakeholders (i.e. councillors, council tax payers, service users, and potential service users as appropriate, NNDR rate payers, voluntary and community organisations, etc.).
- 11.3 Scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue and capital budget proposals, and their recommendations are reported at **Appendix 1**. Panels will receive and consider any revisions to the draft budget proposals, and feedback from budget consultation during December 2014 / January 2015, with further recommendations to be reported back for Cabinet to consider in producing their final budget recommendations on 4 February 2015.
- 11.4 Phase one - listening and engagement - was conducted prior to draft budget proposals being available, the feedback sought was general in nature, seeking an understanding of stakeholder priorities, and this was reported to Cabinet as part of the first draft budget report on 29 October 2014. Between 21 August and 29 September 2014, over 4,600 responses to this initial phase were received. This level of response was achieved via a range of methods including face to face, online, in writing and over the phone.
- 11.5 Phase two, which began on 30 October, focuses on the draft budget proposals and seeks feedback on the impact of individual policy draft budget proposals. Feedback from phase 2 will inform final budget decisions and future decisions regarding the reshaping of future service delivery and the impact on residents and customers.
- 11.6 Key activities to date include:
 - Distribution of printed booklets summarising the draft budget proposals.
 - Wide communication of consultation on the draft budget proposals including letters, emails, social media, posters, postcards, press releases.
 - Website detailing the draft budget proposals, the booklet, Cabinet report, key financial information and generic online survey (plus other service specific surveys detailed below) www.walsall.gov.uk/budgethaveyoursay
 - 21 informal drop in face to face sessions throughout the Borough have been organised giving people the opportunity to have their say on the draft proposals face to face with council officers.
 - Weekly press adverts publicising budget consultation and the face to face drop in sessions.
 - A generic survey which invites comment on any of the draft budget policy proposals. The survey is available online and in printed booklets and can be completed over the phone via the contact centre. Over 400 responses have been received so far.
 - Easy read document detailing the budget setting process is available online and has been used when meeting with specific service user groups.

- Budget consultation has been covered at various meetings including Area Partnerships, District Centre Partnerships and many more.

11.7 Service specific activity includes (list is not exhaustive):

- Libraries:** detailed paper survey available in libraries and online. Mini depth interviews with library users and non users, and a specific meeting held with Streetly campaign group. An open public meeting will also be held in early December. A random sample postal survey is also being undertaken.
- Children's Centres:** Printed booklets summarising the proposals and the impact on each centre has been produced along with a detailed survey which is also available to complete online. Information has been sent to service users and stakeholders. Face to face drop in sessions have been organised at each Children's Centre and focus groups are being held.
- Clean and Green services:** A number of detailed questionnaires have been produced covering proposals affecting waste and cleansing, grounds maintenance and parks, allotments and Pelsall toilets. Additional work is ongoing to engage with particular service user groups including those who receive assisted bin collections and have larger bins, people with disabilities, friends of parks groups, etc.
- Local History Centre (LHC) and Walsall Museum:** Detailed questionnaires are available to complete at these two locations and available online. Group discussions have been held with LHC users and specific interest groups.
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme:** A large scale random sample survey has been sent to 5,000 people who currently receive the benefit and 5,000 that do not (this is being conducted by an independent research agency). In addition all people who receive the benefit were written to explaining the draft budget proposal and inviting them to complete an online survey which is also available for anyone to complete. Focus groups and telephone discussions have also been held.
- Council Tax Discounts:** Everyone who currently benefits from the reduction have been sent a questionnaire asking their views. A further 700 people who do not receive it have also been sent the questionnaire, which is available for anyone to complete.

11.8 **Appendix 2** summarises the main findings from resident and stakeholder budget consultation to date. As consultation is still ongoing, a summary of initial consultation findings is reported and will subsequently inform the equality impact assessments required for each draft proposal. Consultation feedback will be refreshed for Cabinet. Due to the closing date of 10 December 2014 being later than the despatch date of this report, this Appendix will be despatched once available.

11.9 The responses from Walsall Council on each savings proposal will be completed following consideration by Cabinet, and reported as part of the final budget report to Cabinet on 4 February 2015.

11.10 This report is prepared in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, the Chief Executive, relevant managers and executive directors.

Background papers: Various financial working papers.

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James Walsh
Assistant Director – Finance (CFO)
09 December 2014



Councillor S Coughlan
Leader of the Council
09 December 2014

Appendices: -

- 1 Feedback from Scrutiny and Performance Panels -
 - 1a Social Care and Health
 - 1b Neighbourhoods
 - 1c Business, Employment and the Local Economy
 - 1d Children's Services
- 2 Report findings from the second stage of resident/stakeholder consultation

Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2018/19: Recommendations of the Social Care and Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Social Care and Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19 at the panel's meeting on 6 November 2014. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 17 December 2014.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue and capital budget proposals in respect of the portfolio of services falling within their remit. Any changes to these proposals, following consultation, will be reported to a future meeting of the panel, providing an opportunity to make further recommendations to Cabinet. Cabinet may wish to consider the feedback contained within this report in formulating their draft budget proposals

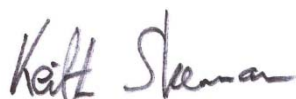
The Panel Resolved:

That the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19 were noted.

Author

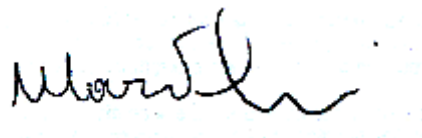
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Councillor M. Longhi
Chair, Social Care and Health Scrutiny and
Performance Panel

13th November 2014

Draft Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2018/19: Recommendations of the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Neighbourhoods Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19 at the panel's meeting on 12 November 2014. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 17 December 2014.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue and capital budget proposals in respect of the portfolio of services falling within their remit. Any changes to these proposals, following consultation, will be reported to a future meeting of the panel, providing an opportunity to make further recommendations to Cabinet. Cabinet may wish to consider the feedback contained within this report in formulating their draft budget proposals.

The Panel considered the draft revenue budget and capital programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19 for the Community, Leisure and Culture Portfolio and the Environment and Transport Portfolio. The following are the principle points arising from discussion at the meeting.

Community, Leisure and Culture Portfolio

Saving reference 60: Tree management/Urban Forestry – reduction in posts and deletion of new tree budget

Following a question on the risks associated with this saving, the Head of Clean and Green acknowledged that the reduced frequency of tree inspections could mean that potential problems would not be noticed as quickly as they were currently.

Saving references – 47, 48, 49, 50 and 51: Loss of posts in Area Partnerships and Community Development plus the reduction in support to Community Associations

Members questioned the portfolio holder on how he would achieve the priorities in his portfolio plan, around developing area partnerships and the voluntary and community sector, despite the proposed savings in area partnerships and community development.

Members expressed concern that removing financial support to community associations, to assist with building management, would have an impact that could cost the Council more in the longer term.

The meeting discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the current area partnerships model. A Member suggested that funding for Area Partnerships could be better spent supporting Community Associations whereas other Members felt the role that Area Managers played was key in solving complex problems. Following a query the Executive Director reported that two Area Manager posts were funded by partners.

Saving references 58 and 59: reductions in Greenspaces and ground maintenance

A Member expressed the view that cuts to frontline services, such as those proposed in greenspaces management and events, should be avoided. A Member in attendance explained that if the Council stopped facilitating these events, it was hoped that the community would run the events for themselves instead.

Saving reference 62: cease outdoor adventure service

A Member noted that this service was used by many disabled children and expressed concern that this would impact heavily on this small group.

The Portfolio Holder responded by explaining that options were currently being explored to continue the service. These options included increased charges and externalisation of the service.

Environment and Transport Portfolio

Saving reference 82: reduction in street cleansing across the town centre and district areas

The Panel expressed concern about the impact of this savings proposal. Members did not want the area to become untidy and become a place that people were not proud to live in.

The Portfolio Holder explained that shifts would be managed in the most efficient way to try and minimise the impact of the proposed service reduction.

Saving reference 79 and 80: Garden waste collection operational for 6 months (instead of 8 month) and introduction of garden waste charges

Concerns were expressed about introducing charges for the collection of garden waste. Other authorities that had followed this course had experienced difficulties. . It was noted that whilst some authorities had stopped charging, there were many more than still charged for garden waste collection, successfully. Members requested further information as to why some authorities had stopped charging.

Due to seasonal variations in demand for garden waste collection it was felt this would be a difficult saving to achieve whilst maintaining adequate levels of service. Some Members suggested that it would be better to continue the service into the autumn/winter to deal with leaf fall rather than start early in the spring.

The Portfolio Holder acknowledged this potential issue and noted that, if charging was introduced, the times the garden waste service was available would be reconsidered.

Saving reference 77: reduction in Household Waste Recycling Centre times
Saving reference 78: amend frequency residual waste collections from weekly to fortnightly

Members were concerned about the potential increase in fly-tipping should residual waste be collected fortnightly at the same time as reducing the opening hours of household waste and recycling centres.

The Head of Clean and Green reported that a feasibility study for all of the waste related proposals would be undertaken to assess the potential impact. The results of this study would then be used to design the future service in order to minimise the impact on residents as much as possible.

Saving reference 88: reduce reactive highways maintenance

A Member expressed concern that reducing reactive highways maintenance could bring about an increase in insurance claims against the Council. The Head of Highways and Engineering acknowledged this risk.

Saving reference 96: introduction of nominal car parking charge of £1 for 4 hours to assist with ongoing car park maintenance charges in district centres

The Panel held mixed views on this issue. On one hand, Members were concerned that the introduction of car park charges could have a negative impact local businesses, however on the other, some Members thought that a minimal parking charge would prevent car park spaces being unnecessarily filled by people not shopping in the area.

The Portfolio Holder acknowledged the potential difficulties. He explained that it was necessary to generate a budget to maintain the car parks moving forward. He felt the introduction of a low cost single unit charge would secure the attractiveness of the facilities in the future without being so expensive to push people to shop elsewhere.

Resolved:

That:

- 1. the draft revenue budget and capital programme 2015/16-2018/19 for the Community, Leisure and Culture Portfolio and the Environment and Transport Portfolio be noted;**

and;

- 2. further information be provided to Members detailing Local Authorities that had introduced and subsequently removed garden waste charges together with the reason for doing so..**

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Performance Panel

14 November 2014

Draft Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2018/19: Recommendations of the Business, Employment & Local Economy Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Business, Employment, & the Local Economy Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19 at the panel's meeting on 24 November 2014. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 17 December 2014.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue and capital budget proposals in respect of the portfolio of services falling within their remit. Any changes to these proposals, following consultation, will be reported to a future meeting of the panel, providing an opportunity to make further recommendations to Cabinet. Cabinet may wish to consider the feedback contained within this report in formulating their draft budget proposals.

The Panel considered the report with a number of Members expressing a wish to reserve the right to comment on the budget proposals at a later point.

Resolved:

That the draft revenue budget and capital programme 2015/16 - 2018/19 for the Regeneration Portfolio be noted.

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25 November 2014

Draft Financial Plan 2015/16 to 2018/19: Recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Children's Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19 at the panel's meeting on 25 November 2014. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 17 December 2014.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue and capital budget proposals in respect of the portfolio of services falling within their remit. Any changes to these proposals, following consultation, will be reported to a future meeting of the panel, providing an opportunity to make further recommendations to Cabinet. Cabinet may wish to consider the feedback contained within this report in formulating their draft budget proposals

The Panel considered the draft revenue budget and capital programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19 for the Children's Services Portfolio. The following are the principle points arising from discussion at the meeting.

Saving reference 13 – Children's Specialist Services – reduce by 25% over 4 years and remodel the delivery of short breaks for children with disabilities/special needs.

The Panel held reservations about assurances that service delivery would be unaffected despite a budget reduction of 25%.

Saving reference 22 - Children's Centre Services

The Panel supported the work carried out by Children's Centres and acknowledged the importance of the services they delivered. Concern was expressed that the reduction of Children's Centres, together with a reduction in staff, would impact negatively on service delivery and lead to a reduction in support in some areas of the Borough.

Further concern was expressed in relation to the potential for the Government to clawback previous investment in Children's Centres if buildings are not used for their intended purpose.

Saving reference 27 – Children's SEN School Assisted Transport and School Bus Passes

The Panel sought clarity about how the saving would be achieved. Members were advised that the system would be reviewed to ensure that any elements of waste or duplication are removed. Further, consideration would be given to the provision of services within Walsall, compared with other local authorities, to identify any potential saving.

Saving references 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 and 37 – Youth Services

The Panel acknowledged that a full review needed to be undertaken to ensure that services that will be delivered in the future will be those that children and young people want.

Saving reference 41 – Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services - Withdraw funding for psychologist working in schools

A Member expressed the view that this was required but accepted assurance that the Authority would meet their statutory duty. Services over and above this would be available through traded services between the local authority and schools.

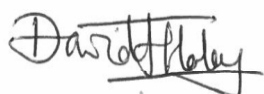
The Panel Resolved:

That the draft revenue budget and capital programme 2015/16-2018/19 for the Children's Services Portfolio be noted;

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Signed:



David Haley
Executive Director
Children's Services

Signed:



Councillor E. Hughes
Chair, Children's Services Scrutiny and
Performance Panel

26 November 2014



Initial findings from Budget Consultation Phase Two: Financial Year 2015/16

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1. Findings from phase two budget consultation: for financial years 2015/16 and beyond

Background

- 1.1. Between 21 August and 29 September 2014 over 4,600 responses to the council's initial phase of listening and engagement for budget consultation were received. This level of response was achieved via a range of methods including face to face, online, in writing and over the phone. Findings were reported to 29 October Cabinet.
- 1.2. Phase two consultation, which began on 30 October 2014, focused on the draft budget policy proposals and sought feedback on the impact they may have on anyone who lives, works, studies, visits or does business in the borough. More detailed questions sought to refine understanding of the views of service users and non users. A summary of key activities is provided in section 4 of this appendix.

Our Approach to Consultation

- 1.3. The council has a statutory duty to consult on service and policy changes. Consultation is also a learning process to help make better informed decisions. The purpose of this report is to share with Cabinet a snapshot of headline findings and nuances arising from phase two consultation. Cabinet will now review and consider the headline findings over the next six weeks and these will be used to inform Cabinet's final recommendations to Council in February 2015.
- 1.4. Quantitative data gathered via surveys has been collected for all 54 draft policy proposals. In addition some services gathered qualitative information (dialogue) via discussions, meetings, focus groups and interviews, providing information that is rich in detail and further aids understanding. Limited consultation has been conducted for proposals where the saving is in 2016/17. Further detailed consultation will be conducted on these proposals during 2015.
- 1.5. The programme of consultation has been designed to gather as many views as possible from people of all backgrounds, in all areas of the Borough and we have used a range of methods to do this. Information has been made publicly available to assist people in having their say in an informed manner. Equalities data has been collected to assist our understanding of the impact of proposals on particular groups, to identify adverse impact and any action required as a result. Full equality impact assessments have been undertaken as appropriate, which will be considered alongside this consultation feedback.
- 1.6. Results are presented in terms of whether a) people generally support the proposal or b) people generally do not support the proposal and is based on all feedback received to date. Some data is still being processed and some service specific consultation does not close until 21 December 2014 and early January 2015, therefore the total response, figures and the overall opinion presented here are subject to change. Results will be updated and reported to Cabinet in the new year.

- 1.7. The figures quoted in this appendix should not be treated in isolation. They are intended to give a general indication of opinion and should be considered alongside detailed consultation information that will be made available once all consultation has closed.
- 1.8. Figures for those who fully support and support but with concerns or amendments are treated as generally showing support, with their comments and concerns helping to understand what changes or amendments may be considered to the proposal prior to any decisions being made.
- 1.9. 5,200 responses, with more yet to come in, is the largest response to budget consultation ever achieved and represents the views of a broad sample of the population. It must be remembered when interpreting the results they are not based on quantitative statistical evidence. The non random approach provides a snapshot of opinion of those people who responded and so should not be confused with statistical representativeness.

2. Overall summary and Key Messages

- 2.1. At the time of reporting phase two consultation over 5,200 responses had been received which have been collated, analysed and reported. Feedback has shown that generally people are aware of the financial challenges the council faces, however many are not aware that the savings required are of a result of the cuts in government funding.
- 2.2. 28 of the draft proposals are generally supported, 13 are inconclusive, leaving 12 that are not supported. The headline findings and general opinion are outlined here.
- 2.3. Many feel that cuts to front line services and jobs should be avoided, with cuts made to back office functions and structures before cuts are made to services they use and rely on.
- 2.4. Throughout budget consultation this year and reflecting feedback from previous years, people reiterate the need to see the council running efficiently through better housekeeping, cutting out waste and unnecessary spend. Frequently people mention the need to cut the number of officers on high salaries and reduce the number of councillors and associated allowances, which people perceive to be high.
- 2.5. Concerns were expressed regarding proposals that affect vulnerable groups including children and young people and people with disabilities. People feel that disabled groups are already being 'hit hard enough' through changes to benefits, with proposed cuts to council services creating additional pressures for individuals, their carers and their families.
- 2.6. Proposals regarding changes to youth support services attracted a number of responses from young people who are worried about the impact these will have. Many of these feel that the cuts will have a detrimental impact on future

generations, youth unemployment and anti-social behaviour.

- 2.7.** Feedback indicates that generally people feel that reductions and closures mean valuable community assets such as libraries and heritage, children's centres, parks and open spaces will become run down or lost forever, having a negative impact on community cohesion, civic pride as well as the economy.
- 2.8.** Proposals in respect of waste management attracted a large proportion of responses and showed that people really value the services provided. Budget booklet respondents were generally not supportive of changes and where support is shown, this was on the basis that their concerns would be addressed, i.e. larger bin size for household waste, ability to influence the months of operation for garden waste.
- 2.9.** Road safety issues were highlighted in respect of proposals to reduce maintenance of road markings, highways maintenance and traffic signs, however response rates were low.
- 2.10.** Some draft proposals have attracted a great deal of opposition and attention. Petitions have been received in relation to proposal ref 65 Reduction of library network (closure of Streetly library), ref 51 reduced funding for Community Associations and ref 31 Changes to the delivery of youth work and ref 96 Introduction of car parking charges in district centres (specifically Willenhall) indicating the strength of feeling.
- 2.11.** Cabinet are listening to feedback and the budget report specifically acknowledges the strength and breadth of feeling in respect of the car parking charges proposal and has indicated that it does not wish to proceed with this proposal.
- 2.12.** The council tax reduction scheme attracted by far the highest number of responses, totalling 2,672 of the 5,200, the majority of which were collected through a specific postal survey. 51% supported full funding of the existing scheme, 41% supported an overall reduction, with 9% expressing no preference.
- 2.13.** Quantitative and qualitative information has been drawn together to provide a general indication of opinion for each proposal, supported by brief details of any key issues for consideration including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed. These results provide a current snapshot of opinion which may be subject to change as consultation remains open for some proposals.
- 2.14.** When interpreting the findings, in particular the percentages, please note the base number which indicates the number of people who responded to the question. In some cases this is low (less than 30) meaning percentage figures can be misleading. In addition percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Summary of headline findings from Budget Consultation Phase 2 as at 16th December

Proposal	Total Respondents	Support	Don't Support	Inconclusive	Year 2 saving
12: Remove funding to providers of support & advice on domestic violence	20	✓			✓
13: Redesign short breaks for children with disabilities	18	✓			
17: Reduce use of taxis for children in care	29	✓			
22: Close some and redesign remaining children's centre services	355			✓	
25: Reduction in non statutory school attendance support service and introduction of fees and charges	16	✓			✓
27: Reduce expenditure on school bus passes and restrict eligibility for Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils assisted transport	72	Based on support for faith and out of borough elements of proposal	No support for respite element of proposal	✓	
30: Changes to targeted careers Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)	51		✓		
31: Changes to delivery of youth work	145		✓		
32: Changes to how we deliver individual targeted support	51		✓		
35: Changes to Parent Partnership Service	9	✓			
36: Changes to how we reduce teenage pregnancy	18	✓			✓
51: Reduced funding to Community Associations	56		✓		
57: Reduction in grants to Allotment Associations	55	✓			
58: Parks, nature reserves and public open spaces	259	✓ Survey respondents support (203)	✓ Budget booklet respondents do not support (56)	✓	
59: Grass verges and floral displays	261	✓			
60: Reduction in Tree Maintenance and Urban Forestry services	236	✓ Survey respondents support (212)		✓ Budget booklet respondents 50:50 support / do not support (24)	
62: Outdoor adventure service (Sneyd and Aldridge Airport)	23			✓	
65: Reduction of the Library network from 16 to 8 libraries over two years	820		✓		
66: Reduction in Local History Centre Service	131	✓ Budget booklet respondents support (27)	✓ Survey respondents do not support (104)	✓	
67: Closure of Walsall Museum	110	✓ Budget booklet respondents support (46)	✓ Survey respondents do not support (66)	✓	
69: New Art Gallery opening times in Winter	40	✓			
77: Household Waste Recycling Centres (tips)	186	✓			
78: Collection of non-recyclable household waste	338	✓ Survey respondents support (193)	✓ Budget booklet respondents do not support (145)	✓	✓
79: Reducing how many months the garden waste (brown bin) service is in operation	309	✓ Survey respondents support (186)	✓ Budget booklet respondents do not support (123)	✓	

Proposal	Total Respondents	Support	Don't Support	Inconclusive	Year 2 saving
80: Charging for the collection of garden waste	270		✓		✓
82: Cutting the number of street cleansing staff and cleaning less often	258	✓ Survey respondents support (191)	✓ Budget booklet respondents do not support (67)	✓	
83: Closure of Pelsall toilets	115	✓			
88: Reducing reactive highways maintenance by 20%	33		✓		✓
90: Reduced replacement of road name plates	18	✓			
95: Increase in charges for staff parking and town centre business permits	38	✓			
96: Introduction of car parking charges for District Centres	83		✓		
100: Reduced maintenance of road drainage and Streams	32		✓		
101: Reduced maintenance of road markings	33		✓		
102: Reduced maintenance of traffic signs	28		✓		
111: Cease participation in Recruitability	13	✓			
147: Review of extra care sheltered housing	14	✓			✓
150: Review of the partnership between the Council and Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust (DWMHPT)	12	✓			✓
151: Removal of recruitability payments to sheltered employment users	10	✓			
152: Review of respite service for people with learning disability - Fallings Heath	19	Refer to December Cabinet report on Fallings Heath			
153: Review of day services for people with learning disability - Fallings Heath	23	✓			✓
154: Review of sheltered employment services for people with learning disability	16	✓			✓
155: Review of Community Alarm and related services	19	✓			✓
160: Cease the bus service that provides a mobile first stop shop	32	✓ Budget booklet respondents support (21)	✓ Survey respondents do not support (11)	✓	
163: Review of Council Tax reduction scheme	2672	✓ Budget booklet respondents support (48)	✓ Survey respondents do not support (2624)	✓	
164: Review council tax discounts for vacant properties	159	✓ Budget booklet respondents support (40)	✓ Survey respondents do not support (119)	✓	
PH1: Remodelling of Sexual Health services	16	✓			
PH2: Remodelling Drugs and Alcohol Services	22	✓			
PH3: Targeting Infant feeding (0-5 years) to vulnerable groups	31	✓			
PH4: Remodelling the School Nursing led Healthy Child Programme (5-19 years) service	16	✓			
PH5: Remodelling of Adult Healthy Weight/Physical Activity services	28	✓			
PH6: Targeting Health Trainers service to the most needy	17	✓			
PH7: Services to support working age population healthy lifestyles	17	✓			
PH8: Hospital infection control	23	✓			
PH9: Community mental health advice and guidance	18	✓			

Ref: 12	Remove funding to providers of support & advice on domestic violence	Initial Consultation closing date: 10.12.14	
<p>The support for victims of domestic violence in Walsall has changed over time with the provision of services from a wider range of organisations. In the near future it is expected to change further as we move toward the establishment of a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The MASH will streamline the way that information is received about a range of welfare issues concerning children and it is expected to lead to swifter more efficient responses to need. The consequence of these changes is that the need and activity from external providers will reduce and it may not be necessary in the longer term.</p>			
2015/16 (N/A)		2016/17 (£120,000)	Total (£120,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 70% (base 20) <p>Key issues for consideration including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a Year 2 saving and whilst feedback has been received through the budget booklet; more specific consultation is planned from Spring 2015. 			

Ref: 13	Redesign short breaks for children with disabilities	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14	
<p>Short breaks provision for children with disabilities currently consists of short break respite care with a local provider and various external residential providers as well as some evening and weekend clubs. Although all the support packages provided to children and their families are subject to assessment and review, the identification of needs has not always been robust and support packages have often 'drifted' without reassessment for long periods. Taking needs led approach it is proposed to change / reduce support services in line with more robust reassessments.</p>			
2015/16 (£50,000)		2016/17 (£150,000)	Total (£200,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 56% (base 18) 			

Key issues for consideration including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

- A small majority of Budget Booklet respondents supported the amendments but attendees at two consultation sessions did not support the proposal. The attendees were parents of children with disabilities all of whom receive short break support hence they had a direct interest. 16 out of the 18 Budget Booklet respondents were not users of the service.
- Whilst only a small number of parents who benefit from short breaks provision attended the consultations they presented strong views and they believe that they are representative of the wider group.
- A view repeated by parents was that cuts to short breaks could lead to growing stress for families resulting in: children coming in to the care system; parents having to give up their jobs; a negative impact on siblings who benefit from short breaks through the extra attention they receive at home.
- Achieving some of the savings through more effective use of local resources, for example the Bluebells unit, was discussed with parents in agreement with this point.
- Feedback from parents and children/young people indicates that short breaks support is highly valued.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Service users to pay for the service in full or for a nominal fee.
- Review seasonal service delivery i.e. less provision in winter months.
- Use of voluntary agencies.
- Save the money elsewhere e.g. sell the New Art Gallery.

Ref: 17	Reduce use of taxis for children in care	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Taxis are sometimes used to transport children in care to school and other places. It is proposed to make savings by promoting independent travel where possible by young people and by requesting that carers transport children to and from school, contact with their birth family and to recreational activities. Where it is clear that the use of a taxi is required it is proposed to review these arrangements monthly.		
2015/16 (£67,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£67,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 90% (base 29) 		

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

- Consultation has identified that members of the public are concerned about the impact on foster carer recruitment and retention
- Consultation with carers has identified the same issue and has identified that carers may be reluctant to take on children through the placement duty team if they know taxis may not be available as a supportive measure. Carers have also raised the issue of there being no increase in their mileage allowance for over 10 years, so whilst costs have increased in the broadest sense, payments to carers to incorporate travel have not.
- Taxis will still have to be used to support flexible placement choice and to enable children to attend school, contact with birth family and medical and recreational activities. Also where it is clear the carers are unable to transport due to; other children in placement, their individual arrangements or where there is no car or limited car space and travel by public transport is impractical.
- A further consultation event is due to take place on the 22nd January 2015. The reduction in the taxi budget will once again be raised and further views will be explored.

Ref: 22	Close some and redesign remaining children's centre services	Consultation closing date: 05.01.15
Close 12 children's centres and redesign the remaining children's centre services in areas where the need is greatest. This proposal focuses on the delivery of basic advice, information and support across the Borough to all families with children under 5's through health visiting and Family Information Services and more help to families with children under 5 who need extra support. To change any childcare provided in centre buildings to sessional term time places with a focus on the creation of places for 2 year olds eligible for 15 hours free entitlement and a change in management of this to schools or private / voluntary sector providers.		
2015/16 (£1,350,000)	2016/17 (£500,000)	Total (£1,850,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		Opinion appears divided and varies by Children's Centre
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 67% (base 106) • However, additional survey respondents' show mixed opinions about this proposal. Overall results show respondents are broadly divided so that 47% do not support versus 46% showing support; 26% fully, 20% with concerns/amendments (base 249). • This is further complicated by results split by individual Children Centre. Respondents show support for the proposal at: Alumwell, Bentley, Birchills, Darlaston, Leighswood, Paddock, Palfrey, Pelsall Children Centres 		

Respondents do not support the proposal at:
 Blakenall, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Edgar Stammers, Fibbersley, Greenfield,
 Hatherton, Lighthouse, Pheasey, Streetly Children Centres

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

- This consultation is still open and hence the overall picture may change.
- Budget booklet survey feedback is more likely to reflect opinion about the principle of Children Centre closure and hence that respondents are against closure 'in principle' based on a broad concept not entirely informed by detail.
- However, feedback from the supplementary Children Centre survey included much more detail about the draft proposal and the implications on individual Children's Centres. Hence this gives a more comprehensive and richer picture of the impact based on specific Centres; which is more mixed. However, there is a lot of agreement on the approach we need to take to deliver early years services into the future, i.e. provide support early on etc. Feedback on how people wish to receive the service is also proving valuable.
- We have received a wealth of feedback through dialogue mechanisms which is still being analysed.
- Participants clearly value the support they receive through existing Children Centres and value their centre as a community asset.
- We are confident in our ability to use the feedback provided to shape a future service that will meet needs and at less cost.

Ref: 25	Reduction in non statutory school attendance support service and introduction of fees and charges.		Initial Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Reduce service support for services currently provided by the Access Service in respect of managing school behaviour and attendance where services are currently provided outside of Local Authority statutory functions and received at no cost. This will be achieved by reorganising non-statutory service provision, ensuring that the issue of non-school attendance penalty notices covers the administration costs. Reprovision of behaviour and attendance services through a private enterprise to be paid through traded income and fees for local authority statutory work.			
2015/16 (N/A)		2016/17 (£89,000)	Total (£89,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 88% (base 16) • This is a year two proposal and supplementary consultation is ongoing. 			
Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving (based on budget booklet) are:			

- Withdraw the service altogether.
- Replace the service with truant officers.
- Cost recovery from parents of truants.
- Introduce the saving earlier in 2015/16.

Ref: 27	Reduce expenditure on school bus passes and restrict eligibility for Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils assisted transport.		Consultation closing date: 05.01.15
It is proposed to stop providing bus passes for pupils who choose to attend faith schools, reduce the financial support for children with special educational needs to attend schools outside of the borough. Remove travel to respite care and take into account Motability cars in making decision to provide transport. To increase concessionary fare mileage limit for 8 to 11 years of age from 2 miles to 3miles.			
2015/16 (£20,000)		2016/17 (£75,000)	Total (£95,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓ based on support for faith and out of borough elements of proposal
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			✓ No support for respite element of proposal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 54% (base 27) • Travel assistance to a faith school: Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 55% (base 45) • Travel assistance for out of borough SEND schools: Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 55% (base 38) • School travel assistance to respite provision: Additional Survey respondents do not support this proposal 59% (base 45) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents would struggle to get their children to respite so may lose out on accessing this and felt this would be unfair • Parents affected felt it would be unfair discrimination to remove bus passes for faith schools but most respondents agreed with this proposal • Generally parents agreed with proposals concerning faith schools and out of borough provision but did not support removal of transport provision to respite 			

Suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Most commonly to retain assistance for SEN pupils but remove the subsidy purely to attend faiths schools otherwise;
- Remove subsidy for families who have a mobility vehicle provided.
- School contributions.
- Do not subsidise out of borough transport.

Ref: 30	Changes to targeted careers Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Reduce the number of staff (careers personal advisers) by at least 50% who offer support to get young people into work, education or training and to keep them in work education or training. The support is already targeted at those young people most in need and we will target further which will mean working with fewer young people.		
2015/16 (£1,000,000)	2016/17 (£40,000)	Total (£1,040,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 71% (base 51) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people feel that the reductions in information advice and guidance on employment and training would result in an increase in youth unemployment • Vulnerable young people felt that they would be further disadvantaged because support and advice that they currently get from their Personal Advisors would be significantly reduced or disappear all together. In addition they feel that telephone contact should not replace face to face support. • Young people stated that they valued the support they received through their Personal Advisors. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service should be provided by schools and costs absorbed that way. • Cut down outreach centres. • Reduce absence in council staff. • Raise money through fundraising. 		

Ref: 31	Changes to delivery of youth work	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Reduce the numbers of youth workers; youth clubs and youth work. We will increase the targeting of resources on the areas of greatest need and deprivation. We will prioritise detached youth work (working where young people meet for example in parks, or on the street) and the use of our mobile youth vehicles. This approach will allow us the flexibility to continue to respond to reports of youth related ASB.		
2015/16 (£490,000)	2016/17 (£580,000)	Total (£1,070,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 89% (base 145) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our feedback consistently showed that people want YSS protected. • There are consistent messages from stakeholder's within the Community Sector including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The feeling that the closing of Youth Provision would result in an Increase in Youth Crime and Anti-social Behaviour ○ Some of deprived communities would suffer further disadvantage i.e. Young people have little to no access for things to do and places to go ○ Children and Young people would have poor outcomes including emotional and physical health and well being. • Members of the United Kingdom Youth Parliament (UKYP) said: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people are "shocked" as to how much money has to be saved ○ Don't find it fair that savings for CYP are taking a big cut in comparison to other parts of the council ○ They think it is risky to get rid of services because problems will increase for young people and will end up paying for it later on. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the youth centres that are cheaper to run and get the external providers to take over others • Charge more for the service to support current levels • Open for fewer days a week • Close more libraries and community centres and funnel savings for youth services 		

Ref: 32	Changes to how we deliver individual targeted support	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Some reduction in the level of targeted 1-1 support for vulnerable young people including a reduction in counselling opportunities and a different approach to working with young carers and children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation. Some of the reduction in service will be integrated into the role of youth workers and or targeted youth support staff.		
2015/16 (£86,000)	2016/17 (£54,000)	Total (£140,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 84% (base 51) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>CYP attending the Youth Conference gave some clear messages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Young people will become more vulnerable as they will not have instant access or bespoke access to services to meet needs. ○ Poorer outcomes on Health & Well-Being for Children and Young people in the Borough ○ A view that the future generation of Walsall will be disadvantaged socially, economically and emotionally in the long term <p>CYP are concerned about the impact and the disadvantages that will be faced by children and young people in the coming year.</p> <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take money from more savings across other areas of the council • Tap into Police funding • Use 3rd sector providers more effectively and look to fundraise 		

Ref: 35	Changes to Parent Partnership Service	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
<p>We will review and reshape the Parent Partnership service to ensure alignment to other Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities (SEND) activity. We will improve our partnership arrangements including with voluntary sector organisations to support parents and carers. There will be some reduction in opportunities for face to face support. The use of new technology will be used as a way to provide parents and carers with effective virtual support.</p>		
2015/16 (£20,000)	2016/17 (£10,000)	Total (£30,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully or support with concerns and amendments 78% (base 9) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means tested with higher earning users paying towards the service Take money from other areas of the council such as the Art Gallery or reduction in agency staff 		

Ref: 36	Changes to how we reduce teenage pregnancy	Initial Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
<p>The service provides support and training for young people (mainly young women at risk of pregnancy or who are pregnant). We will work with partners and health professionals to support young people through the designated school nurses and strengthen the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy to reflect these new working arrangements. We will ensure better use of technology to reach young people and to support other agencies to deliver this area of work.</p>		
2015/16 (N/A)	2016/17 (£30,000)	Total (£30,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully or support with concerns and amendments 83% (base 18) 		

- This is a year 2 proposal and consultation is ongoing

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

- Young people at Risk of Teenage Pregnancy shared that the Youth Development Programme supported them to make informed choices, with the opportunity to gain a qualification, which they may not otherwise have access to.
- Young People believe that reductions across Youth Support Services will have a knock on effect to young people who have diverse and varying needs.
- There was a perception that closure of provision will result in young people hanging out in the street and causing a nuisance and engaging in risky behaviour.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Work with schools to deliver more appropriate sex education and signposting
- Involve other agencies to take the lead such as youth workers
- Targeted information on contraceptive service for ages 14-16

Ref: 51	Reduced funding to Community Associations		Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Reduction in the amount of money given to Community Associations. This would mean the reduction of budgets in Community Associations based in council owned buildings.			
2015/16 (£80,000)		2016/17 (£100,000)	Total (£180,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 70% (base 56) <p>Key issues for consideration including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although there will be some impact with the proposed saving of the building management, it is the overall impact of multiple budget savings that will have a detrimental effect on the ability for the centres to continue to operate. These include separate proposals elsewhere in the budget on; reduction in youth services, removal of libraries from within buildings and reduction in social care budgets. This could result in some organisations losing considerable income and buildings being closed. 			

Suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- More use of volunteers and greater involvement from charities.
- Being more self-sufficient; income generation e.g. service users contribute towards service costs, membership fees, funding through sponsorship.
- Phasing in the reductions to allow for CAs to adapt.

Ref: 57	Reduction in grants to Allotment Associations	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
Total grant to be reduced by 50% to £13,790. Grants to be allocated on an 'as needed' basis.		
2015/16 (£13,790)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£13,790)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully or support with concerns and amendments 81% (base 27); fully support (74%), concerns/amendments (7%) • The additional survey respondents support fully or support with concerns and amendments 71% (base 28); fully support (25%), concerns/amendments (46%) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for not supporting this proposal fully revolve around less income for the Local Management Association and its future sustainability. <p>Suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running allotments as a business and encourage fundraising including charging full market value for rents. • Making linkages with other proposals i.e. proposal numbers 58 and 59 by growing seasonable bedding for planting schemes, floral displays with income helping subsidise allotments. • Loaning of equipment that associations would otherwise have to hire from elsewhere, advertising available plots. Allotment owners helping WHG to maintain some grassed areas in return for assistance. • Through greater council efficiencies, savings from reduction in brown bin service. 		

Ref: 58	Parks, nature reserves and public open spaces	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
A reduction in how much is spent on looking after parks, local nature reserves and other public open spaces. This will mean that there is less maintenance and repairs and we will not be able to run as many events such as bonfire night etc. There would also be a reduction in the number of staff members		
2015/16 (£362,708)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£362,708)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondent
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Budget Book response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 63% (base 56) • The additional survey respondents support fully or support with concerns and amendments 75% (base 203); fully support (23%), concerns/amendments (52%) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns revolve around the maintenance of local green spaces, an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour, reduced Quality of Life for residents and greater costs in the future through litter, dog fouling, etc. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritising what is essential i.e. maintenance, not organising events like bonfires, having selective grass cutting (wild meadow). • Charging for events, including much mention of bonfires being self funding and having more events and commercial opportunities available to raise income. • Increase council tax • Use of community payback • Look for efficiencies elsewhere i.e. reduction in councillors, housekeeping issues i.e. heating and lighting. 		

Ref: 59	Grass verges and floral displays	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
<p>This proposal includes reduction in the frequency of grass cutting operations on large grass areas with the exception of where there is sport and play provision and on popular pedestrian access routes. Summer season reduction in grass cutting in district estates and parks. The ceasing of all seasonal bedding including tower and barrier floral display baskets in parks, town and district centres.</p>		
2015/16 (£524,060)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£524,060)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 62% (base 60); fully support (35%), concerns/amendments (27%) • Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 81% (base 201); fully support (36%), concerns/amendments (45%) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents that say they use these services are more likely to not support the proposal than those who say they don't use these services. This is likely to be influenced by where people live and travel through and hence the value they give on having these services. • Of those that support the proposal respondents tend to say that whilst they value having the floral displays they don't see them as a necessity, though they tend to value the maintenance of grassed areas much more recognising that areas will look less cared for. • Reasons for not supporting the proposal fully relate to: the impact on their local community, its image, potential to deteriorate attracting litter and graffiti impacting on local quality of life and the impact on visitor levels and investment. <p>Suggestions for alternatives to the saving include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive plant donations from local businesses and garden centres, including having local planting days, creating a sense of pride. • Greater community involvement, volunteers and local communities looking after their local areas and the verges in front of their homes. • Less frequent verge cutting including creation of wildflower areas • Increase council tax • Gain efficiencies elsewhere i.e. better housekeeping, etc 		

Ref: 60	Reduction in Tree Maintenance and Urban Forestry services	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
We will reduce our non-statutory requirements for tree maintenance and urban forestry operations e.g. tree planting and non essential maintenance programmes by 23% whilst ensuring our statutory duty of care is managed effectively.		
2015/16 (£135,696)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£135,696)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet feedback shows that respondents are divided in support of this proposal 50% show support and 50% do not support (base 24); fully support (41%), concerns/amendments (8%) • Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 82% (base 212); fully support (36%), concerns/amendments (47%) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main issues for respondents to not fully support the proposal are around safety and longer periods between routine maintenance and greater risk of non detection of issues. <p>Suggestions for alternatives to the saving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of students (arboricultural) to gain work experience. • Local residents help with tree planting and maintenance including use of volunteers. • Increase council tax. • More efficient council services e.g. better housekeeping. 		

Ref: 62	Outdoor adventure service (Sneyd and Aldridge Airport)	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Stop providing the outdoor adventure service – the water sports at Sneyd Reservoir and at Aldridge Airport.		
2015/16 (£97,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£97,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that.....		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Budget booklet respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Users
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 65% (base 23), although 87% of the 23 respondents have never used the facility. • Face to Face meetings with service users such as Old Hall Special School and Mary Elliott Special School show that users value the service highly and they do not support this proposal and are keen to work with the service to increase usage and income to retain the facility and make it more sustainable. Staff consultation shows that the team are keen to work differently to increase capacity, if users are able to commission the service sufficiently. <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptability of the service to accommodate clients with profound challenges • Affords some children with a sense of freedom and achievement they may never otherwise experience <p>Common suggestions for alternatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income generation i.e. introduce charging, annual contributions from schools, out-sourcing and hold events and activities. 		

Ref: 65	Reduction of the library network from 16 to 8 libraries over two years.	Consultation closing date: 04.01.15
Closure of 5 libraries in 2015/15 (Beechdale, Pheasey, South Walsall, Streetly at Walsall Wood) and a further 3 in 2016/17 (Blakenall, New Invention and Rushall). Extension of the mobile library service to areas without libraries and encouragement of more involvement from community organisations.		
2015/16 (£385,092)	2016/17 (£180,630)	Total (£565,722)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 88% (base 307) • Additional Survey respondents do not support this proposal (overall) 72% (base 513). The level of non support for this proposal differs by library; with levels for those not in support of this proposal ranging from 60% for Blakenall and Willenhall and rising to 91% for Pheasey and Streetly libraries. <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The library survey remains open into January 2015. • There is a wealth of other feedback being gathered i.e. there are several dates pending for drop in sessions at local libraries, including a public meeting at Central Library on 13 December. This feedback is yet to be incorporated into our overall findings. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close a library but not the one I use, including closing the ones that aren't well visited. • Reduce services but don't close libraries i.e. opening hours. • More use of volunteers to help run libraries. • Replacement with well stocked and regular mobile library service. • Save money elsewhere, don't spend money on other 'unnecessary' projects like leisure proposals, The Heritage Centre, close the New Art Gallery and save on management salaries. • Ideas on income generation notably seeking 'nominal' contributions from users; for which there appears an appetite for example, annual membership fee, card replacement fee, DVD rental, internet access and book sales. • Make libraries multi-service community hubs including partnerships with commercial sector. • An appetite for an increase in council tax to save libraries. 		

Ref: 66	Reduction in Local History Centre Service	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
The proposal is to reduce the service at the Local History Centre to the Council's legal minimum, including a reduction in opening hours.		
2015/16 (£69,158)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£69,158)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Budget book respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 70%; fully support (37%), support with concerns/amendments (33%) (base 27) Additional Survey respondents do not support this proposal 51% (base 104) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget booklet respondents are less likely to be users of the service than for feedback received through the additional survey and dialogue undertaken. There is a split opinion on this proposal reflecting service usage vs non usage. Users of the facility clearly value the service highly and are against what they see as a degradation of it. Even for those showing support of the proposal there remain concerns about the diminishing of a service that they feel is important for understanding the boroughs heritage especially for younger generations. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service users think that the local history centre could be amalgamated with other cultural services and delivered in a more accessible location, for example a town centre location, perhaps space vacated by Walsall Museum or within New Art Gallery. Also having more online resources. Make more use of volunteers and students on work experience to help run services. 		

Ref: 67	Closure of Walsall Museum	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
Walsall Museum would be closed and the Museum's collection would be put into secure storage until such time as it can be displayed elsewhere.		
2015/16 (£70,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£70,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Budget book respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 56% (base 46) Additional Survey respondents do not support this proposal 83% (base 66) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opinions on this proposal are divided between those who do not use the service and those who do. Those not using the service perceive that the museum is not well attended and whilst nice to have could be closed. For those who use the museum, they speak quite strongly about its value in understanding Walsall's heritage, and worry about its loss. Users worry about the loss of the collections, non users also recognise this impact but are more pragmatic in coming forward with suggestions about how those can be made available in other ways. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidation of the service into New Art Gallery and or other cultural services i.e. Leather Museum, Central Library, and Local History Centre including queries about what is happening with the Heritage Centre and how does that impact on this loss of Walsall Museum going forward? Transfer collection to alternative provider i.e. Black Country Living Museum. Introduce small admission charge and or reduced opening hours. Use of volunteers 		

Ref: 69	New Art Gallery opening times in Winter	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
The proposal is to close the New Art Gallery an hour earlier for 20 weeks, Tuesday to Friday, during the colder period of the year.		
2015/16 (£5,367)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£5,367)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 80% (base 40) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further calls for reduction in NAG service are often cited against many other proposals i.e. don't cut this service find the savings elsewhere e.g. NAG. People have also often mentioned across other culture related proposals that services could be amalgamated into the NAG i.e. and in particular Walsall Museum collections, local history centre. Given the scale of the saving involved and the limited impact the change to winter opening has there has been no service specific consultation undertaken. <p>Other common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate income for example through room and event hire, leasing the space to other Local Authorities, charging an entrance fee. Various suggestions for even more reductions in opening hours based on existing visitor figures. 		

Ref: 77	Household Waste Recycling Centres (tips)	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
Reduce opening hours to 9am to 5pm and close one additional day at each site per week. This means that each site will be open for 5 days per week.		
2015/16 (£98,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£98,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 65% (base 67); fully support (34%), with concerns/amendments (31%) Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 81% (base 119); fully support (52%), with concerns/amendments (29%) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consensus of those who support with concerns/amendments are happy to support as long as the opening hours aren't 9-5 to coincide with the working day, some opening is at weekends and that the 2 sites aren't shut on the same days. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to savings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review opening times based on visitor figures so that customer demands are met including addressing the need for later opening hours. In addition to publicise and encourage more use of freecycle and or have a tip/ salvage shop to generate income. 		

Ref: 78	Collection of non- recyclable household waste	Initial Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
Change how often we collect rubbish (the waste we can't compost or recycle) collections from weekly to fortnightly.		
2015/16 (N/A)	2016/17 (£532,000)	Total (£532,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Budget book respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 63% (base 145) Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 52% (base 193); fully support (21%), concerns/amendments (31%). As identified above the survey is still open until 21.12.14. <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results are divided at present, with concerns for not fully supporting the proposal are mainly the capacity of the bin and to a lesser extent the smell and vermin issues that may arise as a result of the proposal. <p>The most common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having larger grey bins or provide extra bags for waste overflow. Create a "trade waste" style service where residents wanting to remain on a weekly collection schedule can purchase additional collections at their own cost. Separate collection for food waste to alleviate pressure on grey bin capacity. 		

Ref: 79	Reducing how many months the garden waste (brown bin) service is in operation.	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
Operate the garden waste (brown bin) collection service for 6 months between April and September (currently 8 months)		
2015/16 (£140,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£140,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Budget book respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 55% (base 123) Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and 		

amendments 61% (base 186); fully support (30%), concerns/amendments (31%). It should be noted that the survey is open until 21.12.14.

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

- Opinion is divided. The main concern relates to when the 6 month season would fall and not being long enough to cover the whole growing season.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Being able to influence the period of brown bin collection accommodating concerns about late autumn falling leaves. Including various other permutations on when to run the service, i.e. retain 8 months service but with 3 weekly collection in April and November, monthly collection.
- Make the selling of compost more profitable i.e. more money from composting receipts and selling compost to local people and companies
- Make compost bins available.
- Receptacles for garden waste to aide transport to the tip.
- Redirect money from other proposals i.e. Walsall Heritage Centre, run council more efficiently.

Ref: 80	Charging for the collection of garden waste	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
Introduce charges for the garden waste collection service. Residents would decide whether or not they want to opt in. Our current estimate of the annual charge for this service is £28 though this depends on the number of months in the year the service is delivered for.		
2015/16 (N/A)	2016/17 (£310,000)	Total (£310,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 69% (base 150) • Additional Survey respondents do not support this proposal 72% (base 120) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues preventing people fully supporting the proposal revolve around the belief that they are already paying for the service through their council tax and feel that this will lead to increased fly tipping. 		

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Reduce the service through less frequent collections but do not charge for it and hence do not introduce both saving proposals (Cross Ref Proposal No 79).
- Charge according to garden size or council tax band.
- Make money from the service e.g. by selling back compost to residents and recovering heat.
- Not spending money on projects that are used by limited numbers of people i.e. Leisure centres, New Art Gallery, new transport infrastructure.
- Housekeeping issues; reduce number of councillors; turn the lights off and thermostat down.

Ref: 82	Cutting the number of street cleansing staff and cleaning less often	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
This proposal would see the loss of 15 front line employees who currently look after street cleaning in Walsall town centre and the district centres. We would be cleaning less often and be less reactive to demand.		
2015/16 (£477,732)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£477,732)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Budget book respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 69% (base 67) • Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 65% fully support (24%), concerns/amendments (41%) (base 191) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns include; future impact on cleanliness and the environment, negative influence on the local economy and regeneration in the borough, increased levels of litter leading to the 'broken window' effect i.e. where rubbish is dropped because it is already dirty. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More enforcement and better education to discourage littering and address businesses like fast food outlets that generate litter. • Use of community pay back and involvement of local residents in clean up campaigns and maintenance of local neighbourhoods. • Increase the number of bins available. • Prioritise cleaning in areas that need it most i.e. reduce frequency of cleaning in 		

residential areas.

- Introduce business improvement districts seeking local business support to help maintain cleanliness.
- That in preference to spending money on cleaning up market areas; enforce market trader licence agreements for removal of their own refuse and use savings to subsidise this proposal

Ref: 83	Closure of Pelsall Toilets		Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
Closure of the public toilets at Pelsall. The site would then be marketed along with the adjacent former Neighbourhood Office. Alternative facilities are available at the new Pelsall Village Centre			
2015/16 (£12,000)		2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£12,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully 95% (base 22) • Additional Survey respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 85% (base 93); fully support (65%), concerns/amendments (20%) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The small number of respondents who don't support the proposal identify there could be an impact on local businesses, with more people trying to use their toilets. Any impact is likely to be on disabled users who can use the toilets out of hours currently, however of the seven disabled respondents four fully supported the proposal and one with concerns/amendments. <p>Alternative proposals to the savings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Village Centre should have access from outside the building to the toilets when the centre is closed so could be redesigned. 			

Ref: 88	Reducing reactive highways maintenance by 20%	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
We will reduce the reactive highway maintenance budget by 20% of the total budget, meaning there will be less money for reactive and emergency repairs to the highway including damage to guardrails, potholes and trip hazards on footways.		
2015/16 (N/A)	2016/17 (£180,000)	Total (£180,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 81% (base 33) • This is a year two saving and consultation will be ongoing <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As this is a universal service, there hasn't been a service specific survey undertaken for this proposal. Hence we are relying on relatively low number of response through the budget booklet to gauge the strength of feeling for this proposal. • There has been some dialogue with the emergency services and utilities via the resilience forum who raised concerns about the risk to health and safety. Other respondents (Walsall Deaf Centre, Blind / Partially sighted hub) raised concerns that this proposal is a false economy which could lead to increased costs associated with risk and insurance claims. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise highways maintenance over other less important highway projects • Reduce the compensation bill by maintaining roads and footpaths • Reduce the burden on the LA to repair effects caused by utility providers i.e. introduce penalties for providers doing work within a pre-determined time following resurfacing for non-emergency repairs • Make them pay for any follow up remedial actions after emergency repair works. Phased payments on resurfacing works • Reduce street lighting • Don't spend money on other projects i.e. Leisure proposals 		

Ref: 90	Reduced replacement of road name plates	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
The proposal reduces the budget by 50% therefore damaged street name plates will not be repaired or replaced providing one other street name plate exists at the location. Response times will be slower.		
2015/16 (£10,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£10,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 83% (base 18) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As this is a universal service, there hasn't been a service specific survey undertaken for this proposal. Hence we are relying on relatively low number of response through the budget booklet to gauge the strength of feeling for this proposal. <p>There are two key suggestions for alternatives to the saving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source funding elsewhere i.e. through business sponsorship, from local residents. Procure more cheaply and seek to extend their longevity, i.e. use alternative and more durable materials such as plastic and place them higher on buildings so they don't get damaged or stolen and ensure procure cheaper services. 		

Ref: 95	Increase in charges for staff parking and town centre business permits	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
£5 increase per month in staff, elected members, partner agencies and town centre business car parking permit charges within the Town Centre.		
2015/16 (£30,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£30,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 70% i.e. just over two thirds, 37% fully support, 33% support but 		

with amendments/concerns though almost one third (29%) do not support the proposal hence opinion is divided (base 38).

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

- There hasn't been a service specific survey undertaken for this proposal. Hence we are relying on a relatively low number of response through the budget booklet to gauge the strength of feeling for this proposal.
- Council staff raise common concerns about the excessiveness and unaffordability of the proposal on already hard pressed workers for example, lower paid staff, part time workers, etc and hence a further impact on staff morale. They are disgruntled about the perceived inequitable impact on those based in the town centre versus those based in out of town centre locations.
- Those supporting the proposal, typically non users, comment about it looking good that staff are contributing to savings, and that people in the private sector are not benefiting from subsidised car parking costs.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Applying a smaller charge and include charging all staff regardless of where they work.
- Increase it more than £5.
- Tiered charging based on salary.
- Encourage more sustainable travel including home working.
- Increase penalty charges for driving in bus lanes and irresponsible parking.
- Through other efficiencies, i.e. management salaries, housekeeping efficiencies for example turning the lights off etc.

Ref: 96	Introduction of car parking charges for District Centres		Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Introduce pay and display charges of £1 for 4 hours parking in District Centres (Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston and Willenhall).			
2015/16 (£100,000)		2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£100,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 72% (base 83) • Additionally, a petition has been submitted containing over 2,000 signatures against this proposal. As the petition has more than 1,500 signatories, it will be debated at Council when it meets on 12 January 2015. 			

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

- Most of the feedback received against this proposal has been voiced rather than submitted through surveys.
- Businesses have shown no support for this proposal based on concerns for the economic impact on district centres

Alternatives to the saving are limited with comments reiterating their reasons against the proposal, but where alternative suggestions are offered they include:

- More parking enforcement to help alleviate on street parking and deliver this saving.
- Various suggestions for charging levels, including lower amounts for shorter periods or more but for longer periods i.e. £1.50 for 6 hours.
- Business permits
- Charging between 9am and 3pm so as not to affect the school run.
- Introduce overnight fees for lorry parking.

Ref: 100	Reduced maintenance of road drainage and streams		Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Reduce maintenance of road drainage and streams by 10% in year 1 as a pilot scheme to assess the implications on localised flooding prior to considering major reductions in funding in year 2.			
2015/16 (£18,000)		2016/17 (£72,000)	Total (£90,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 75% (base 32) <p>Key issues for consideration including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As this is a universal service, there hasn't been a service specific survey undertaken for this proposal. Hence we are relying on relatively low number of response through the budget booklet to gauge the strength of feeling for this proposal. • Objections centre around safety of roads with more surface water, increased risk of flooding, increased insurance premiums and the feeling that the service already needs to be carried out more frequently. • A number of partner organisations and service providers have raised concerns regarding increased impact and cost to them this proposal will cause. • Concern regarding impact on traffic movement and possible increase in road 			

traffic incidents.

- At Walsall's Resilience Forum, South Staffs Water raised concerns of the potential impact to their services.
- West Midlands Fire Service believed the greatest impact would be on their service during the winter months, as Walsall has several flooding black spots.
- The Chief Inspector Local Policing raised concerns of the potential effect on traffic movements and an increase in road traffic collision demand on the police service.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Cut elsewhere to continue current level of support – councillor allowances, art gallery, town hall restaurant etc
- Section 106 agreement for new developments
- Spend money on the drainage now so it is cheaper in the future
- Increase council tax and sell empty buildings.
- Ban non-porous driveways

Ref: 101	Reduced maintenance of road markings	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Reduced maintenance of road markings by 10% in year 1 as a pilot scheme to assess the implications on road safety. Any further reductions may have potential serious implications on numbers of those killed and seriously injured prior to considering further major reductions in funding in year 2.		
2015/16 (£6,500)	2016/17 (£28,500)	Total (£35,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 70% (base 33) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As this is a universal service, there hasn't been a service specific survey undertaken for this proposal. Hence we are relying on relatively low number of response through the budget booklet to gauge the strength of feeling for this proposal. • Respondents from groups that make up the Disability Forum raised concerns of false economy and the potential increase in road traffic collisions. • At Walsall's Resilience Forum, South Staffs Water raised concerns of the potential increased risk of accidents notably with larger vehicles if lanes are not appropriately marked and lane changes have to be made last minute. • The Chief Inspector Local Policing felt that road users would be placed at 		

greater risk of injury and vehicle damage and a potential increase in road traffic collisions resulting in an increased demand on the police service.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Increase parking costs to support this
- Carry out works during the day and use more durable materials to save money
- Increase council tax and pull money from the Gala Baths refurbishment.

Ref: 102	Reduced maintenance of traffic signs		Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Reduced maintenance of traffic signs by 10% in year 1 as a pilot scheme to assess the implications on road safety. Any further reductions may have potential serious implications on numbers of those killed and seriously injured prior to considering further major reductions in funding in year 2			
2015/16 (£16,000)		2016/17 (£64,000)	Total (£80,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents do not support this proposal 68% (base 28) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As this is a universal service, there hasn't been a service specific survey undertaken for this proposal. Hence we are relying on relatively low number of response through the budget booklet to gauge the strength of feeling for this proposal. • Groups that make up the Disability Forum raised concerns that roads are dangerous already and this will make it worse. • Emergency services via the resilience forum raised concerns of the potential increase in road traffic collisions and an increased demand on the police service. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reintroduce speed camera fines • Prioritise where to maintain signs 			

Ref: 111	Cease participation in Recruitability	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
<p>The removal of the available annual budget and the closure of the Recruit-Ability programme. This removal will mean that 6 part time, 12 months placements will not be available from April 2015. The Council however will continue to fully support people with a disability in all of its recruitment activity and display the two tick symbol on all job adverts. This guarantees people with a disability an interview where their application meets the minimum specification for the job.</p>		
2015/16 (£47,502)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£47,502)
Feedback received thus far tells us that...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 77% (base 13) <p>Given that there is support for this proposal suggestions for alternatives are limited but include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not cease recruitability but reduce the hours offered and length of contract instead. Remove the need to identify disability on application forms as that discriminates people so that applications are judged on their ability rather than physical state. Ensure there is other help available to assist disabled people to gain employment. 		

Ref: 147	Review of extra care sheltered housing	Initial Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
<p>Housing 21 contract - Further review of the extra-care sheltered housing contract to find ways to switch to personal budgets and reduce overall cost.</p>		
2015/16 (N/A)	2016/17 (£250,000)	Total (£250,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 79% (base 14) This is a year two proposal and consultation will be ongoing 		

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Employ carers directly rather than using an agency.
- Cut bus passes, winter fuel allowance to the wealthy and no childcare allowance overseas

Ref: 150	Review of the partnership between the Council and Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust (DWMHPT)		Initial Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Section 75 review of partnership jointly with CCG with a view to more cost effective outcomes and targeted commissioning.			
2015/16 (N/A)		2016/17 (£200,000)	Total (£200,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 75% (base 12) • This is a year two proposal and consultation will be ongoing <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>The current s75 agreement with Dudley Walsall Mental Health Trust partnership is within its final year. A formal review is being undertaken. It is planned that the review and any subsequent changes to practice and management will deliver further savings of £200k in 2016/17.</p> <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of CCG's. 			

Ref: 151	Removal of recruitability payments to sheltered employment users		Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Removal of recruitability payments to sheltered employment users - continue withdrawal of the subsidy for apprenticeships whilst expanding support to volunteering, vocational and training opportunities in partnership with colleges.			
2015/16 (£104,000)		2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£104,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			

- Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 70% (base 10)
- A full process of consultation will be undertaken within 2015

Respondents offer no suggestions for alternatives to the saving other than one that reiterates the feeling that disabled people are considered a potentially disadvantaged group with an expectation that due consideration will be given to how their employment needs are met.

Ref: 152	Review of respite service for people with learning disability		Consultation closing date:
Fallings Heath respite care - review and replace residential provision with a wider range of alternatives, subject to consultation. No carers will receive a reduction.			
2015/16 (£260,000)		2016/17 (£20,000)	Total (£280,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
c) people generally support this proposal.			-
d) people generally do not support this proposal.			-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 69% (base 19) • The outcome of detailed consultation on the future of Fallings Heath is being reported to Cabinet on 17 December - Agenda item 17 http://www2.walsall.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=15253 <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed consultation with services users and their carers was conducted earlier in 2014 which showed that residential respite care services at Fallings Heath are very highly valued. • Having access to quality care delivered by skilled staff and in a friendly, welcoming, safe and personal environment, that is flexible and affordable makes for excellent respite care. • Alternatives to respite care were rarely used or considered, some respondents would not favour using anything but residential respite • Service users and their families feel Fallings Heath should remain open as it is, with closure or change likely to have a negative impact on those who access the service <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are: No alternative suggestions</p>			

Ref: 153	Review of day services for people with learning disability	Initial Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Review and redesign day opportunities that produce cost effective non buildings based options using Goscote as a "hub" for these users and staff.		
2015/16 (N/A)	2016/17 (£517,000)	Total (£517,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 61% (base 23) This is a year two proposal and consultation will be ongoing <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate more income so that services don't have to be cut as well as finding cheaper accommodation Users pay towards the costs, could be a means based exercise. Sell empty school buildings and increase council tax 		

Ref: 154	Review of sheltered employment services for people with learning disability	Initial Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Links to Work - replace current service with a redesigned service that supports users to access volunteering, vocational and training opportunities in partnership with colleges and employers.		
2015/16 (N/A)	2016/17 (£300,000)	Total (£300,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 75% (base 16) This is a year two proposal and consultation will be ongoing <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target an increase in income 		

Ref: 155	Review of Community Alarm and related services	Initial Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
Strategic Development: Review and revise all community alarm and related services in line with the new charging policy, and the implementation of the Care Act. Proposals would require consultation and procurement follow on.		
2015/16 (N/A)	2016/17 (£570,000)	Total (£570,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 63% (base 19) This is a year two proposal and consultation will be ongoing <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings should be made in 2015 or a fee introduced. Create a joint service with neighbouring authorities. 		

Ref: 160	Cease the bus service that provides a mobile first stop shop.	Consultation closing date: 10.12.14
The First Stop Express Bus visits district centres to provide access to range of council services will stop operating but access to the services offered will still be available at Civic Centre.		
2015/16 (£22,253)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£22,253)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Budget booklet respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 63% (base 21) Additional Survey respondents do not support this proposal 72% (base 11) <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>The majority of respondents to the Budget Booklet Survey support this proposal fully or with concerns/amendments. Most respondents do not state they have used this service although a few say this proposal has any impact on them.</p>		

A number of face to face interviews were carried out with customers who accessed the bus during November 2014. Feedback was also given by a voluntary sector partner and an internal department who utilise the bus periodically. Most people who stated they were not in support of the proposal as they found it convenient to use.

There are limited suggestions for alternatives to the saving other than to reduce the service available at the Civic Centre by a day a week instead or that it could be better if other agencies or partners also offered services from it.

Ref: 163	Review of Council Tax reduction scheme.	Consultation closing date: 28.11.14
Council Tax Reduction is a benefit people on a low income can claim from the council to get help with paying their Council Tax. Walsall Council now needs to decide whether to reduce or maintain the level of support it offers low income working age households through council tax reduction. Pensioners who receive the reduction will remain unaffected by the proposal.		
2015/16 (£2,360,406)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£2,360,406)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Budget book respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support a review of the scheme 73% (base 48) • Additional Survey respondents (base 2,624) – the feedback was split, with 51% preferring the council to fully fund the existing scheme, with 40% acknowledging the need for some reduction, but no consensus on the level. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1 reduce the support by 25% - 19% Option 2 reduce the support by 20% - 9% Option 3 reduce the support by 10% - 12% Option 4 fully fund the CTRS – 51% No selection – 9% <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>The majority of respondents to the budget booklet survey that supported the review were not impacted by it (there is some personal impact for those supporting but with amendments). There was 48 respondents to the budget book and common suggestions for alternatives to the saving were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone should pay the standard rate • Reduce other services to sustain this service • Means tested approach to those who currently receive the reduction 		

- Increases in council tax for people who currently pay it and increases on larger properties

In relation to the additional survey 60% of the respondents were not personally impacted by the proposal.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the savings are

- Chase up unpaid council tax
- Reduce other services to sustain this service

Common concerns and comments about the options

- Income is low, cannot afford any rise in the cost of council tax
- Already struggling to live on income
- Struggling to pay the existing council tax
- Low income needs the help badly.

Ref: 164	Review council tax discounts for vacant properties.	Consultation closing date:
Currently privately owned empty properties can receive up to 100% Council Tax discount for the initial three months that they are unoccupied. Under the proposal, all homeowners would be liable for 100% of their council tax bill and full council tax charge would apply to empty and unfurnished properties or properties under or requiring structural repair once they have been unoccupied for seven days.		
2015/16 (£1,000,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£1,000,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Budget book respondents
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		✓ Survey respondents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 85% (base 40) • Additional Survey dealt with two specific discounts the responses were (base 119) <u>Unoccupied and unfurnished properties</u> Option 1 completely remove the discount – 27% Option 2 100% discount for the initial 7 days – 13% Option 3 retain the 100% discount and 3 month time period – 60% <u>Properties requiring major repair or undergoing structural alteration</u> Option 1 completely remove the discount – 30% Option 2 retain the 50% discount and 12 month time period – 67% No selection – 3% 		

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

The majority of respondents to the budget booklet survey support fully support or support with concerns/amendments and are not impacted by this proposal. Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Re-banding of properties to increase revenue
- Higher rates on properties vacant for more than six months
- No reduction at all

In relation to the additional survey 53% of the respondents were not personally impacted by the proposal. Common suggestions for alternatives to the savings are

- Chase up unpaid council tax
- Reduce other services to sustain this service
- Small increase in council tax

Common concerns and comments about the options

- Increase the costs of landlords
- Landlords not able to re-let in a short period of time
- Empty properties do not receive council services
- Does not give time to repair property after damage caused by tenants

Ref: PH1	Remodelling of Sexual Health services		Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
These services provide contraception for Walsall residents and prevention, testing and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). These will be re modelled to provide a more joined up service. There will be a reduction in prevention services, less Chlamydia screening and other outreach activity.			
2015/16 (£53,000)		2016/17 (£70,000)	Total (£123,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓ based on feedback thus far
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 81% (base 16) • Consultation is still open so additional quantitative data to follow <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal was supported if the service redesign attends to prevention work as well as targeting those groups who are most at risk. 			

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Use Doctors surgeries and medical centres.
- Provision of contraception on prescription with charges.
- Use the 3rd sector and community groups to raise awareness and prevention services

Ref: PH2	Remodelling Drugs and Alcohol Services	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
The drug and alcohol services are in the process of being remodelled. This new model of working, through a single lead agency, should reduce some of the impact of the cuts to the service budget. However, it is possible that the waiting times to enter the service may increase, impacting upon individuals, families and communities.		
2015/16 (£390,141)	2016/17 (£70,000)	Total (£460,141)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓ based on feedback thus far
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 77% (base 22) • Consultation still open so additional quantitative data to follow. <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed budget cut is supported if the service redesign attends to prevention work and the services remain easily accessible and waiting times do not develop. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a service charge and or increased penalties for drug use. • Fine agencies where waiting times are exceeded. • Let a voluntary agency run this in conjunction with the Police and NHS. • Continue to fund the service but look for efficiencies with staff and users to save money. 		

Ref: PH3	Targeting Infant feeding (0-5 years) to vulnerable groups	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
<p>These services promote breastfeeding and lifestyle support to reduce maternal obesity. Reductions in the funding will potentially impact on infant illness, childhood obesity and deaths in infancy. The face to face service will be less available to women across the whole of Walsall and prioritised in those areas of greatest need where breastfeeding is lowest and in groups who are less likely to breastfeed.</p>		
2015/16 (£45,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£45,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
c) people generally support this proposal.		✓ Based on feedback so far
a) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 58% (base 31). • Consultation still open so additional quantitative data to follow <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>There was no consensus in the feedback, there was support for support groups but it was questioned whether the services needed to be professionally led or whether there are opportunities for them to be peer or volunteer led.</p> <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make savings elsewhere to fund this service to the current level such as management savings, savings from drugs and alcohol, and other children's services that aren't used. • Referred to Dr's surgeries, hospitals, charities, faith groups and children's centres. 		

Ref: PH4	Remodelling the School Nursing led Healthy Child Programme (5-19 years) service	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
<p>This is a public health nursing service offering a universal and targeted service to children of school age and their parents. The reduction in funding will impact upon prevention work including support for children, parents, school staff and governors. This could lead to increased longer term costs e.g. teenage pregnancy increasing and emotional health and wellbeing decreasing and less support for care leavers and for children at key transition times.</p>		
2015/16 (£1,000,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£1,000,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 56% (base 16) Consultation still open so additional quantitative data to follow. <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal attracted opposing views with a split between those in favour and those against. It was considered important to capture the services that young people value in the services offered relating to; relationships, anxiety, substance misuse and sexual health. <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to use Children's Centres to deliver this service. Withdraw completely and allow schools to source elsewhere. 		

Ref: PH5	Remodelling of Adult Healthy Weight/Physical Activity services	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
<p>These services help Walsall residents develop healthier lifestyles. There are almost 272,200 people living in Walsall of which 70% are estimated to be overweight or obese. Remodelling the service will result in a lower level of specialist support services being available.</p>		
2015/16 (£155,000)	2016/17 (£45,000)	Total (£200,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		

- Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 75% (base 28)
- Consultation still open so additional quantitative data to follow

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

The summary of the feedback is that, whilst concerns have been expressed, the impact of the proposed cuts will be mitigated by the remodelling of the service.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Suggestions to stop this service or move to GP's with money coming from their budget.
- People should take responsibility for their own health or incentives to be healthy.
- Engage with external services to deliver in a different way.

Ref: PH6	Targeting Health Trainers service to the most needy		Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
Health Trainers services help people to develop healthier behaviour and lifestyles in their own communities. The reduction in funding will limit this help so that only those with the highest risk of getting long term illnesses are included. This means that fewer people and communities will be able to improve their health. We will also aim to pay less for these services, where possible.			
2015/16 (£62,000)		2016/17 (£20,000)	Total (£82,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...			✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.			✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 82% (base 17) • Consultation still open so additional quantitative data to follow <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>The proposal was mostly supported with the group activity supported as the critical element of the present service. There was some support for more preventative elements in the service design.</p> <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the service completely. • Performance based contracts for provision so only pay for success. 			

Ref: PH7	Services to support working age population healthy lifestyles	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
<p>These services aim to improve the health of the working age population. The funding for these services will be reduced. This will have an impact upon the level of health related support that is provided to residents to sustain them in employment. This may impact on their overall health and ability to maintain/ find employment increasing the reliance on benefit payments.</p>		
2015/16 (£30,000)	2016/17 (£10,000)	Total (£40,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 76% (base 17) Consultation still open so additional quantitative data to follow <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>The proposal has attracted few general residents' comments. The comments from the focus groups support the proposal.</p> <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get rid of the service entirely. Make better use of GP's. People to self source this information. 		

Ref: PH8	Hospital infection control	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
<p>Public Health has provided extra money for a number of years to support the infection prevention service within Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust. However, the Trust already receives monies for this as part of the Trust's core funding. Withdrawing the Public Health funding may impact upon the hospital's ability to respond to infections caught in hospital. This would be monitored closely and reviewed as necessary.</p>		
2015/16 (£134,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£134,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 65% (base 23) 		

- Consultation still open so additional quantitative data to follow

Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.

The proposal received mixed responses with some respondents expressing a lack of clarity around the present funding. There were more respondents in support of the proposal than not in support.

Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:

- Save in other areas such as charging for refreshments at council meetings, fewer agency nurses and preventative work through education in schools.
- Reduce waste in hospitals across all areas including procurement, staffing and absenteeism.

Ref: PH9	Community mental health advice and guidance	Consultation closing date: 21.12.14
<p>These services aim to improve the emotional wellbeing of the population. There will be less capacity to offer training to the general public that explains how individuals can take steps to improve their own emotional wellbeing, less community development work around general mental health and a reduction in face to face support for individuals needing low level support or counselling. The focus on supporting vulnerable groups will continue.</p>		
2015/16 (£133,000)	2016/17 (N/A)	Total (£133,000)
Feedback received thus far tells us that ...		✓ as appropriate
a) people generally support this proposal.		✓
b) people generally do not support this proposal.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Booklet respondents support fully and or with concerns and amendments 55% (base 18) • Consultation still open so additional quantitative data to follow <p>Key issues for consideration across all consultation activity including any concerns / amendments / alternatives expressed.</p> <p>The proposal was met with equal numbers of respondents in support and against. There was a suggestion that the proposed cuts could be mitigated by better integration of the support services across related service areas.</p> <p>Common suggestions for alternatives to the saving are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less highly paid managers, more frontline staff • Send fewer leaflets and do more directed publicity. 		

3. Feedback from partners

3.1. Any feedback received from partners at all stages of the consultation process have been shared with proposal owners and hence incorporated into the feedback on each proposal. Individual feedback is summarised here.

3.2. West Midlands Police, Walsall Police Command Team

- Walsall Police recognise and somewhat share the financial challenges the council faces, therefore they see it as imperative to work together better to meet these challenges together.
- Area Partnerships are critical to new ASB trigger process
- Need to reduce repeat demand through effective partnership working and hence the brigading of resources.
- Retain Area Partnership structure, though suggest reduction to three area managers.
- Multi Agency Intelligence Network (WIN) supports the partnership with intelligence rich outputs including area tasking. Collective information supports partnership activity if targeted in the right way.
- Levels of investment in adult and children's safeguarding are critical to safeguard communities i.e. Vulnerability forum, early help offer has critical role in managing Troubled Families.
- Key support and diversionary commissioned services i.e. Addaction, Mental Health, Lantern House, Domestic Violence forums contribute to integrated offender management and support vulnerable communities.
- Community safety (Anti Social Behaviour officers) critical to delivering community safety priorities, managing demand and reducing repeat demand for all our services.
- Enforcement in particular Environmental Health helps to divert calls for police call out.
- Youth Service diversionary and youth justice services are important for safeguarding, troubles families, preventing criminality.
- Road Safety Unit anti-social use of vehicles and speeding is a consistent local community concern and increased demand for police services have been felt by previous reductions in service delivery by the council. Police Crime Commissioner is championing road safety across the West Midlands.
- Look forward to discussions regarding the joining together of realigning enforcement services.
- Preparedness and prevention; various critical statutory functions include resilience planning business continuity, counter terrorism and community cohesion.

3.3. Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust

- Social Care:
 - Support for element of protection for adult social care but feel proposed savings are still significant.
 - Support protection of reablement team, intermediate care and social care support for hospital discharge team.
 - Seek an opportunity to work with the council regarding £1.7m saving from Access, Assessment and Care Management in order to mitigate against risks that it will increase demand for our services or maintaining patient flow.
- Children's Services:
 - Impact on proposal 22 – Children's Centres will impact on NHS services i.e. community midwifery, health visiting means we need to be fully involved in planning for any changes.
- Public Health:
 - Seek and early discussion about the PH proposal PH 1-9 given that NHS delivers some of these services proposal for change. Notably removal of infection control funding. School Nursing and Lifestyle Service reductions e.g. health trainers

3.4. Walsall Voluntary Action (WVA)

- WVA recognise the challenges and opportunities the council and WVA have to work together better to meet local needs and WVA submitted a range of detailed proposals outlining ways to achieve this. Overall WVA feel it is important that Walsall Council supports and sustains a thriving local voluntary and community sector for all communities in the borough.

We recommend that:

- Local voluntary community sector strategic leaders and WVA collaborate with Walsall Council to work up proposals for the financial year 2014/15 and beyond to minimise any detrimental effects on the local voluntary and community sector and allows a strategic discussion to take place on the future funding arrangements between the voluntary and community sector and the council;
- As part of the council's budget setting process a strategic overview is provided that identifies potential budget re-allocation to the voluntary and community sector and how it can contribute to Walsall Council meeting its budget challenges;
- Members are effectively involved in this process to ensure direction and leadership;
- This work is fed into both the development of a local comprehensive voluntary and community sector strategy and is a key part of the consultation

programme needed with the voluntary and community sector and identifies key actions that both the council and the sector can sign up to.

4. Phase 2 consultation: Summary of key activities

- Distribution of printed booklets summarising the draft budget proposals
- Wide communication of consultation on the draft budget proposals including; letters, emails, social media, posters, postcards, press releases, easy read document and alternative formats were available on request
- Weekly press adverts publicised budget consultation activity
- Website detailing the draft budget proposals, the booklet, cabinet report, key financial information and generic online survey, plus other service specific surveys www.walsall.gov.uk/budgethaveyoursay
- 21 informal drop in face to face sessions were held throughout the borough giving people the opportunity to have their say on the draft proposals face to face with council officers. An additional 6 drop in sessions were held in libraries specifically on the libraries proposal and an open public meeting (Saturday 13 December 2014) was organised.
- Budget consultation has been covered at various meetings including Area Partnerships, District Centre Partnerships and via groups representing the young and old, as well as at a range of social care service user groups
- A generic survey invited comment on all of the draft budget policy proposals. The survey was available online and in printed booklets, it could also be completed over the phone via the contact centre. 1,001 responses were received for this survey alone.
- Service specific questionnaires available online and in paper were designed to understand opinions in more detail, these included proposals for: libraries, the Local History Centre, Walsall Museum, Clean and Green services, public toilets, Council Tax Reduction Scheme, Council Tax Discounts, SEN assisted transport, Public Health and Children's Centres.

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