

Cabinet – 12 December 2012

Financial Plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 : Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for consultation

Portfolio: Councillor Towe – Finance and Personnel

Related Portfolios: All

Service: Finance – council wide

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1. Summary

- 1.1 The report contains the second draft budget report and includes the draft capital programme 2013/14 to 2017/18.
- 1.2 The draft capital programme for 2013/14 totals £39.99m. It sets out new capital investment funded from the council's own resources of £9.66m (funded by capital receipts and unsupported borrowing) and externally funded schemes of £30.33m (funded by capital grants) and represents a balanced programme for 2013/14. The draft leasing programme totals £3.96m of new capital expenditure in 2013/14. In addition, the report sets out a further four years of proposals for 2014/15 to 2017/18.
- 1.3 Despite reductions in capital funding in recent years and going forward, the draft capital programme contains some significant investment into highways, education, and into adult social care and housing to support vulnerable households through Health through Warmth and provision of aids and adaptations. A reserve list of new projects is also reported, where funding could be redirected in year if available.
- 1.4 These draft budget proposals will be distributed to scrutiny panels and stakeholders for consultation as part of the budget setting process. The final budget, including any changes arising from consultation arrangements, and final allocation of formula grant, will be presented to Cabinet on 23 January 2013 for recommendation to Council, and will be considered by full Council on 21 February 2013.
- 1.5 This report also summarises the proposed changes to the authorisation and submission of business rates information to the Government, as referred to in paragraph 3.5.

- 1.6 This report to Cabinet also reports the recommendations from each scrutiny panel on the draft revenue budget proposals. Further feedback from the draft capital proposals outlined in this report, along with findings from resident and stakeholder consultation, will be reported back to Cabinet on 23 January 2013.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve as a basis for consultation the current draft capital programme of £39.99m for 2013/14, and an indicative capital programme of £27.40m for 2014/15, and £21.53m for 2015/16 to 2017/18.
- 2.2 That following formal approval of the programme in February by Council, Cabinet delegate responsibility to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Capital Strategy Board, to designate resources to projects off the capital reserve list should resources become available in year.
- 2.3 That Cabinet delegate to the Chief Finance Officer authority to approve national non domestic rates returns to central government as part of the requirement under Regulation 5 of The Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2012 to calculate the local authority's non-domestic rates income, in consultation with the portfolio holder.
- 2.4 That Cabinet note the feedback from scrutiny and performance panels, set out in this report, to be used and evidenced alongside feedback from other public / stakeholder consultation as the council's draft budget proposals are developed for 2013/14 onwards.
- 2.5 That Cabinet refer the Draft Capital Programme to all scrutiny and performance panels for consultation, to enable their comments to be considered by Cabinet prior to Cabinet meeting on 23 January 2013 to make its final recommendations to Council.

3. Report detail

Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14 onwards - update

- 3.1 The draft revenue budget proposals were reported to Cabinet on 24 October 2012 as part of each portfolio plan. There are currently no changes to what was previously reported, however the budget is an evolving process, with recognition that proposals may change during consultation (which ends in January) and prior to formal recommendation to full Council on 21 February 2013. We are awaiting publication of the draft settlement for 2013/14, which is expected late December 2012.
- 3.2 As outlined in the supporting papers to Cabinet on 24 October 2012, we are anticipating the need to identify revenue savings of £13.6m in 2013/14. Draft revenue proposals totalling £12.9m are considered to have minimal impact on front line service provision, and cover the following –
- Review of senior management with fewer back office staff
 - Use of a reduced number of agency staff
 - Reduction in general operational costs

- Review of council buildings and rented accommodation via the Smarter Workplaces programme
 - Review of procurement of council expenditure and contracted services.
- 3.3 Cabinet agreed that draft savings proposals with direct impact on services would be referred to public consultation. These relate to the following –
- Increase in school meals charges
 - Reductions in music support activity
 - Review of grounds maintenance activity
 - Extension to the brown bin collection closedown over the winter period
 - Closure of 6 district public toilets
 - Reduce the number of council buildings and property related expenditure
 - Increase in market rents
 - Review of council tax exemptions and discounts following changes in legislation
 - Review of social care commissioning – moving people back to Walsall from expensive out of borough placements

The outcome of formal consultation will be reported to Cabinet on 23 January 2013 for consideration towards the final draft budget to be recommended to Council on 21 February 2013.

- 3.4 The draft revenue budget proposals have been referred on to all Scrutiny and performance panels. **Appendix 4** summarises the feedback from each panel. Further feedback from the draft capital proposals outlined in this report, along with findings from resident and stakeholder consultation, will be reported back to Cabinet on 23 January 2013.

National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) - Statistical return for Government

- 3.5 The NNDR1 form is the mechanism that a local authority predicts its business rates income for the forthcoming year. Since 1990, its purpose was to determine the level of payments to the non-domestic rates pool held by central government and required authorisation by the Section 151 Officer.

Under the new rates retention scheme from April 2013 the purpose of the NNDR1 form is to meet the local authority's requirement under Regulation 5 of The Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2012 to calculate the local authority's non-domestic rates income for the next year.

The deadline for completing statutory returns is subject to change by government. The authority is reliant on the documentation being supplied initially by government and this is often delayed to the point of only allowing a short period of time to complete and submit the authorised returns to government. Due to this uncertainty it would be difficult to secure Cabinet approval within the existing timetable of meetings, so it would be prudent to delegate authorisation of returns to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder for finance and personnel.

Funding changes notified / expected since Cabinet on 24 October 2012

- 3.6 Business Rates Retention Scheme - A Business rates retention policy was published by the Department of Communities and Local Government on 21 November 2012. This includes:
- Proportionate shares – the baseline will now be calculated on 2 years worth of data rather than 5 years as previously advised.
 - Increasing reward for growth – after the central share and levy payments, at least 25p in every pound of business rates generated locally will be retained locally.
 - Safety net – now set at 7.5%, which guarantees authorities of 92.5% of their baseline funding under the scheme (Walsall will have to fund the first 7.5% of income, which for us is expected to amount to around £2.5m).

The background to the scheme and any known changes will be included in the draft budget report to Cabinet on 23 January 2013.

- 3.7 Transitional grant – £100m allocation set aside by the DCLG for one year for well designed schemes that support work incentives. It is aimed at influencing councils to implement new schemes which ensure low income households do not face extensive increases in the 2013/14 council tax bills. Walsall will apply for the grant, which is expected to be £645k grant. This is a one-off grant.
- 3.8 Changes in council tax support grant – We have been advised that the original funding allocation included an Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) projection of a 2.9% increase in council tax charges. Given that the Government has now announced that councils can set a maximum council tax increase of 2% without having to call a referendum, this is expected to have a detrimental impact on the original estimates for receipt of council tax support grant. The estimated impact is a reduction of our grant in 2013/14 of £672k, fully offsetting the one-off transitional grant, which was originally a windfall when announced.
- 3.9 The above therefore also has a detrimental effect on Walsall's assumed 2014/15 funding levels, requiring an amendment to the MTFP of around £700k. We await confirmation of this change. There is also a proportionate share change that will affect the level of council tax support grant which could result in a funding reduction of £134k. The background to the Business Rates Retention Scheme and any known changes, including changes to other funding sources, will be included in the draft budget report to Cabinet on 23 January 2013.
- 3.10 The chancellors Autumn Statement was delivered on 5 December 2012. The following summarises the issues that will directly affect Walsall, some of which will require further research to determine the direct financial impact on the council's medium term financial plan (MTFP).
- Departmental spending to reduce by 1% in 2013/14 and 2% in 2014/15. Although the chancellor has announced that this will affect local government from 2014/15 only (with the exception of schools), there may well be implications of the 1% such as a reduction in other grants the council receives in 2013/14.

- Based on current forecasted levels of grant, this could mean a reduction of £0.5m in 2013/14 and £4m in 2014/15.
- Full details of government spending plans for 2015/16 will be announced in the government spending review in the first half of next year – further reductions will impact on Walsall.
- Public pay to rise by 1% - this is included in our MTFP.
- Planned increases in fuel costs in January 2013 have been scrapped.
- Small business rate relief has been extended by a further year to March 2014. This is expected to be classed as a new burden as it will be a change in legislation, with funding received from central government (c£2m) to cover this.
- Empty property relief for new builds from October 2013. This extends the current relief of 3 to 6 months, to 18 months, subject to state aid rules. This is expected to have no financial impact as the rates would not be included in the baseline calculation for the new business rates retention scheme.

Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 onwards

- 3.11 Capital programme resources are limited. The financing for capital expenditure on new investments is heavily reliant on grants and other funding received from the Government. The Government is clearly, in the medium term, planning to significantly reduce government financed capital spending.
- 3.12 The success that Walsall has had in securing a wide range of external funding will be harder to achieve as many of the sources of funding will soon stop or at best be significantly reduced. Whilst Walsall is relatively well placed to capitalise on new capital opportunities e.g. the Regional Growth Fund, the reality is that external funding will be significantly reduced. Furthermore the basis on which funding is provided could change away from direct grant to, for example, loans and equity shares some of which will carry potentially added risk.
- 3.13 The remaining flexibility is currently through capital receipts and unsupported borrowing. Capital receipts projections however are limited, and fully dependent on when council assets are sold. Earmarking of capital receipts beyond what we are statutorily obliged to do is not recommended without overall strategic consideration of the entire capital programme. Use of unsupported borrowing incurs ongoing revenue debt charges and impacts on council tax payers.
- 3.14 Capital allocations and grants from Government and other sources have not yet been provided, therefore best estimates have been used, based on published information to date. Any further reduction in funding will require amendments to the draft programme.
- 3.15 Despite the above difficulties, significant investment is planned and funded over the three year 2013/14 to 2015/16 and the draft capital programme is balanced. The council is able to fund all existing commitments and has, through prioritisation of bids and resources and sound treasury management, been able to support new investment into key services, and areas of capital investment need.

- 3.16 The capital programme is presented in three parts:
- Mainstream programme - funded by the council's own resources, through capital borrowing and receipts.
 - Externally funded programme - funded from capital grants and third party contributions.
 - Leasing Programme – funded from revenue
- 3.17 **Table 1** shows the draft capital programme against predicted available resources. The full draft capital programme is shown in **Appendices 1 to 3**.

Table 1 : Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2015/16			
	<u>2013/14</u>	<u>2014/15</u>	<u>2015/16</u>
	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>	<u>£m</u>
<u>Anticipated Capital Resources</u>			
Capital Receipts target	1.50	1.50	1.50
General Unsupported Borrowing	6.34	4.38	4.42
Specific Unsupported Borrowing	0.73	0.73	0.73
Previous years underspend*	0.42	0.00	0.00
Surplus capital receipts from 2012/13**	0.67	0.00	0.00
<i>Total council funded resources</i>	9.66	6.61	6.65
External Funding	30.33	20.79	14.88
Total Capital Resources	39.99	27.40	21.53
<u>Capital Bids</u>			
<i>Council funded schemes</i>	9.66	6.61	6.65
Externally funded	30.33	20.79	14.88
Total Draft Capital Programme	39.99	27.40	21.53
Funding shortfall (surplus)	0.00	0.00	0.00

- 3.18 Through the anticipated generation of additional capital receipts in 2013/14, it is predicted that the prioritised new bids contained in **Appendix 1** can be funded. A further review of proposed schemes will be required before capital allocations are released in year. For 2014/15 onwards, the full impact of these projects will be reviewed, and funding revisited as part of the ongoing budget process.
- 3.19 Capital receipts projections are based on professional estimates of property colleagues. Any additional receipts received in year (excluding those earmarked for Smarter Workplaces and Bentley Community Facility) will be considered to fund projects identified on the reserve list at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.20 General unsupported borrowing relates to additional borrowing which is funded from the council's own resources – generated through savings, and/or paid for via the council tax. Council's are allowed to borrow in accordance with the Treasury Management Code of Practice. The current capital financing cash limit is forecast to be able to support £6.34m of additional unsupported borrowing to fund high priority items in 2013/14.

- 3.21 Schemes are recommended to go ahead as they represent council priorities, for a number of reasons:
- Safeguards interests of vulnerable people
 - Promoting economic prosperity for residents
 - Reducing inequalities
 - Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
 - Schemes that are unavoidable to meet statutory and legislative requirements in the provision of services. It includes items such as health and safety, new legislation etc.
 - Schemes that unlock external investment in the borough; drives out long term revenue savings; support the strengthening of the borough's economy; delivers an efficient and effective operational estate linked to the asset management 2010 programme; and invests in assets to grow future income streams for the council.
 - Capital insurance reserves: to protect the council's position, for which funding is available should the need arise to draw it down.
 - Priority schemes for which external funding can be drawn down and which may or may not require a contribution from the councils own resources.
- 3.22 Whilst the overall demand for resources usually exceeds those available, schemes deemed to be a high priority in terms of reflecting the council's priorities can be funded, representing a balanced programme.
- 3.23 As well as those in Appendix 1, there are a number of large capital schemes that are in development or planning stages. It is recommended that as individual business cases are developed and considered by Cabinet, they are then included in the latest update of the draft capital programme if they are deemed to be a high priority and affordable. Funding for these will need to be identified and may be through a combination of unsupported borrowing and/ or use of internal balances. Where practical, a payback agreement should be implemented, whereby projects should, wherever possible be self funded over the life of the project and beyond. These include Darlaston Enterprise Zone, kick starting the local housing market through the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme, the Leisure Centre Review, and the Old Square Redevelopment.
- 3.24 A summary of forecast externally funded schemes is shown in **Appendix 3**. Where a bidding process is required, it is assumed the full cost of the project is met from external grant and/or third party contributions. If it becomes clear during the process that this is not the case, the project cannot proceed without further consideration by Cabinet, and then only should resources be available and approved.

Leasing programme 2013/14 onwards

- 3.25 Leasing minimises the call on capital resources by spreading the acquisition cost over some years. Revenue funds are needed to finance operating leases. The 2013/14 leasing programme is summarised in **Table 2** overleaf by portfolio. The revenue implications of the leasing programme of £3.96m for 2013/14 are included in the draft revenue budget.

Table 2 : Leasing Programme 2013/14 by Portfolio		
<u>Portfolio</u>	<u>New expenditure</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>New Leasing</u> <u>£m</u>
Transport & Environment	3.89	0.11
Business Support	0.07	0.00
Total Leasing Programme	3.96	0.11

3.26 The prudential system allows borrowing to fund the purchase of leased items. This expenditure would be treated as capital expenditure and not revenue meaning 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, our leasing advisors produce a report and recommend 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.

3.27 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.

4. Council priorities

4.1 The budget process follows council priorities, including the agreement to use the marmot objectives to help redirect existing resources through the implementation and rollout of the working smarter programme and systems thinking approach.

5. Risk management

5.1 Managers are required to deliver service and improvement targets on time, to standard and within budget.

5.2 The budget process is governed by the overarching medium term financial strategy and will be delivered within the working smarter Programme approved by Cabinet. 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.

5.3 There is a significant amount of uncertainty around both the 2013/14 grant settlement and the next Spending Review. The former is due to the lack of detail around the operation of the Business Rates Retention scheme for Walsall and the latter, due to the worsening economic growth position and increased national borrowing levels. The medium term financial outlook will need to be updated once the worsening economic predictions are confirmed.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 The council must set a balanced budget to meet its legal requirements as set out under legal implications.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 Under the Local Government Act, 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.

8. Property implications

- 8.1 There are a number of implications from this report as set out under the relevant project description and property implications will arise as the smarter workplaces strand of the working smarter programme is developed.

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 None directly associated with this report. An equality impact assessment is undertaken on all proposed revenue savings (specifically on those requiring policy changes), and on all capital schemes.

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 arrangements are in hand to consult with a wide range of stakeholders (i.e.: councillors, residents, service users, business sector, voluntary and community organisations, etc.).
- 11.3 Scrutiny and performance panels will receive and consider any revisions to the draft budget proposals during December 2012 / January 2013.
- 11.4 The 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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06 December 2012



Councillor Towe
Portfolio holder – Finance & Personnel

06 December 2012

Appendices: -

- 1 Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 – 2017/18 – Mainstream funded schemes
- 2 Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 – 2017/18 – Mainstream Reserve List
- 3 Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 – 2017/18 – Non-Mainstream
- 4 Feedback from Scrutiny and Performance Panels -
 - 4a Health
 - 4b Community Services & Environment
 - 4c Social Care
 - 4d Children's Services
 - 4e Regeneration
 - 4f Corporate

Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2016/17 - Mainstream (council) funded schemes

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	DETAILS OF PROJECT & CUSTOMER BENEFIT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £
1	Leisure and Culture	Arboretum Play Area	To replace and improve the children's play area in Walsall's Arboretum Extension. Whilst the wet play area and some other safety work is being undertaken in September 2012, the proposed scheme would be to replace the rest of the play area. The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. Initial capital is required to pump prime the external funding bids. Without the Councils contribution it is highly unlikely from our conversations with funders that they would consider funding the whole scheme. This match funding is expected to attract significant external investment from 2014/15 to 2017/18.	175,000	0	0	0	0	175,000
2	Leisure and Culture	Walsall Arboretum Restoration Programme - illuminated Park proposals	This funding would allow the following work to be undertaken to celebrate the restored park: lighting to key routes within the park; illumination of key park buildings including the Bandstand, Boathouse and Lichfield Street Lodge; and illumination of the park landscape features, trees and water features including the Boardwalk. The overall aim would be to create a unique experience in Walsall and allow visitors to view the park from a different and exciting perspective. It would broaden 'the offer' of the park, creating the environment for a diverse and imaginative events' programme utilising the bandstand, centre green and visitor centre.	270,000	0	0	0	0	270,000
3	Leisure and Culture	Willenhall Memorial Park	Landscape improvements to Willenhall memorial park, to include the building of a regional skate park, and improved pedestrian and vehicular access around the park with repairs to existing pathways and boardwalks. £52k has already been secured to support delivery of this project. This will attract a further external funding of £95k.	180,000	60,000	0	0	0	240,000
4	Leisure and Culture	Greenspace improvement plan	Prior to 2012/13 the Green Space Improvement Service was allocated £50,000 per year to match and pump prime a variety of schemes in conjunction with external partners and funding agencies to deliver the Green Spaces Strategy. In 2012/13 this figure was increased to £150,000 and the £100,000 increase was ring-fenced to deliver the Doe Bank Park improvement scheme. The council is about to consider adopting a new five-year Green Spaces Strategy for 2012/13 to 2017/18 and the request is to double the baseline financial allocation from £50,000 to £100,000 so that more and better improvements can be undertaken in parks and open spaces throughout the Borough.	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	0	400,000
5	Leisure and Culture	Allotment and community garden strategy - Borneo Street	The demand for allotments within Walsall has increased in recent years in line with national trends. Meeting this demand in full would be very challenging particularly in light of the many competing demands for capital funding. This scheme will go some way towards meeting this demand and, because of its central location within the borough alongside a main road (A461), would offer relatively good accessibility for all residents. Specifically, the proposal is to create 15 new plots on Council owned land at Cartbridge Lane South. The site is located in the Green Belt and is currently available for use as grazing land. However, there has been little demand for this in recent years and there are no tenants at present. In view of these circumstances, the land is immediately available and as such offers an early opportunity to make good the current shortfall in provision. The estimated cost of this scheme is £50,000 and includes some rationalisation of access arrangements to the existing allotment site in Borneo Street.	50,000	0	0	0	0	50,000
6	Leisure and Culture	Roadway extensions in Streetly cemetery	Burial space at Streetly cemetery is gradually filling up the sections that currently have road and footpath access. Unused sections that are already owned by the council do not have infrastructure (roadway and paths) and this will be required so that the spare land can be used and burials undertaken. The improved access will be necessary for funeral vehicles and mourners to get to the additional grave spaces in the furthest part of the cemetery	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	DETAILS OF PROJECT & CUSTOMER BENEFIT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £
7	Leisure and Culture	Headstone safety in Cemeteries	The Health and Safety Executive requires all burial authorities to control the risk associated with the operation of their cemeteries, including risks from unsafe memorials. This project has provided funding for continual safety work on memorials since 2005/06. Because of the investment made over the past 6 years, the level of risk has reduced to the extent that the annual investment can now be reduced to £80,000. Investment at this lower level will be necessary to adequately control the risk involved and safeguard the safety of cemetery users as well as council employees. Annual risk assessments are carried out to inform the required investment levels in subsequent years. It is anticipated that the requested amount of £80,000 will be sufficient to meet the council's management of risk within its cemeteries for the forthcoming financial year.	80,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	0	215,000
8	Leisure and Culture	Willenhall Lawn Cemetery extension	Preliminary investigative work to establish the feasibility of providing further burial space at Willenhall Lawn Cemetery to the east of the existing cemetery and to draw up plans for the development of the land as burial ground with an internal road system, landscaping and cemetery facilities. There are in the region of 500 grave spaces remaining of the existing provision and statistically there are about 115 new full coffin graves purchased each year in this cemetery. The availability of full coffin graves in the cemetery will therefore last until 2016. This funding will support a feasibility study to take place in 2013/14. Should the results of this study signify that the ground is suitable for the burial of human remains then a further capital bid will be made to enable construction to take begin in late 2014 for use by early 2016. The proposed extension consists of two areas; the larger is 1.9Ha and the smaller 0.4Ha. It is estimated that this will be sufficient for about 5000 full coffin graves, allowing for infrastructure. At present rates, this will give provision in the Willenhall cemetery for about 35 - 40 years at the current rate of usage.	120,000	0	0	0	0	120,000
TOTAL LEISURE AND CULTURE				1,125,000	205,000	145,000	145,000	0	1,620,000
9	Transport and Environment	Highways maintenance	This project is to safeguard progress already made in the condition of Walsall's classified highway network and maintain service levels. This includes alternate funding of highways maintenance to replace revenue funds in the following three years	1,450,000	1,700,000	1,900,000	2,100,000	0	7,150,000
10	Transport and Environment	Retained Housing Land	During the transfer of its housing stock, approximately 50% of housing land was retained by the council. This proposal relates to an extensive network of footpaths through 'public sector' housing estates which were not included in the housing stock transfer but which are not public highway. There is a £100k budget in 2012/13 for this work and so continually investment in this area through the council's capital programme would help maintain the condition of footpaths in a safe condition, and so reducing the risk of pedestrians tripping on damaged surfaces. This would in turn reduce the liability and the associated cost to the council from claims arising from accidents. The proposal includes collaboration with WHG in coordinating any maintenance works that border WHG areas. This is part of phased work in collaboration with WHG to meet its duty as land owner and enhance the environment for the public.	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	0	400,000
TOTAL TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT				1,550,000	1,800,000	2,000,000	2,200,000	0	7,550,000
11	Regeneration	Health through warmth and related Retro Fit schemes	To provide energy and fuel saving advice and energy efficient heating and insulation works to private homes. There is a grant for this but demand outweighs resources. Over 2,200 referrals have been received to date and £1m would deliver health through warmth to at least 335. This directly assists over 2,000 households with vulnerable residents (reduces excess seasonal deaths, reduces fuel poverty, minimises impact of illnesses made worse by cold and damp conditions (COPD, cancer etc), and enables people to stay living safer and longer in their homes). It is expected that this funding will attract external contributions of £1.1m from British Gas, and £0.125m from Scottish Power in 2012/13.	470,000	600,000	500,000	400,000	0	1,970,000
12	Regeneration	Demolition of redundant buildings to save on rates	Demolition works to redundant council buildings to enhance marketing opportunities for sites and mitigate financial health and safety risks. This removes buildings from a locality which can be a security issue for local residents. It also mitigates revenue costs for the council and its customers.	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	0	800,000

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	DETAILS OF PROJECT & CUSTOMER BENEFIT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £
13	Regeneration	Regenerating Walsall	This project relates to the use of capital funding to create a stimulus for regeneration activity and de-risk projects for the private sector with particular emphasis on creating employment opportunities and stimulating housing renewal. This may involve for example, undertaking site investigations, obtaining outline planning consent, and undertaking reclamation and / or demolition work. Similarly, the programme will also support the capital receipts programme by preparing council owned sites for sale. The funding may also be used to enhance the physical environment, in town and district centres and along key employment corridors. Together these activities will help to create the conditions for economic growth and prosperity.	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	1,000,000
14	Regeneration	Civic Centre essential maintenance	Areas of the Civic Centre need essential maintenance - windows to the Civic Centre (original glazing units have reached / are starting to reach the end of their useful life) estimated cost £554,116, water ingress from the roof garden is causing damage estimated cost £12,190 - to replace planters with paving.	566,306	0	0	0	0	566,306
15	Regeneration	Improving the customer experience when visiting the Council House - includes front of house facilities	This project will include the remodelling of parts of the ground floor of the Town Hall, to improve the initial customer experience by remodelling customer reception and refurbishment of public toilets, to enhance security for customers and staff, and to enable more public use of the town hall complex. This will build on a first phase of urgent repairs to this grade 2 listed building which are currently being progressed. A business case will also be developed for the refurbishment of refreshment facilities which in turn will increase income.	700,000	0	0	0	0	700,000
16	Regeneration	Shop maintenance	Ongoing reactive maintenance requirement and council obligation to tenants in the councils commercial shops estate. Works can include repairs, leaking roofs, electrical repairs etc as defined under the lease agreement. This enables the councils tenant customers to maintain their business operations.	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	0	480,000
17	Regeneration	Aids and adaptations (statutory element)	To maintain independence for disabled clients in their own homes by providing relevant equipment and adaptations to property. In addition to this, Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is received. This directly assists over 1,100 households with vulnerable disabled residents (meets the statutory DFG need, reduces excess seasonal deaths, minimises slips trips and falls, enables people to stay living safer and longer in their homes). A further £500k is included on the reserve list for 2013/14 but may need to be brought into the programme in year if statutory adaptations exceed available budget for 2013/14.	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	0	4,000,000
TOTAL REGENERATION				3,256,306	2,120,000	2,020,000	1,920,000	200,000	9,516,306
18	Social Care and Health	Preventative adaptations - part of the transformation of social care (non-statutory element linked to Aids & Adaptations above)	To provide adaptations to vulnerable residents who do not meet the current criteria for statutory disabled facilities grant/aids and adaptations. There is currently a waiting list of over 1,000 disabled residents and over 3 years this funding would deliver adaptations to 335 that will improve the quality of life. A further £250k is included in the reserve list for 2013/14.	750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	0	3,000,000
TOTAL SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH				750,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	0	3,000,000
19	Business Support Services	Essential Enhancement to Data Security Systems	This is to replace end of life access control servers for the whole council. This is the hardware that controls who can and cannot log on and lets them do so. The servers controlling user access to the council's network are end of warranty life and will soon be non-compliant with the government code of connection. If the council is not compliant with the government code of connection it will not be allowed to use the Government Secure Gateway and in the future the Public Sector Network (PSN).	60,000	0	0	0	0	60,000
20	Business Support Services	Bring your own device security layers	The authority has to maintain the security of its network and adhere to the GCSX code of connection to continue the using G-CLOUD services such as Housing Benefits and Registrar's "Tell us Once" , but all public sectors are moving towards "bring your own device to work" concepts because of the financial and personal productivity advantages they offer. As more people get their own iPads etc. we need to put additional security in to enable their use but keep the council's information secure.	70,000	0	0	0	0	70,000

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	DETAILS OF PROJECT & CUSTOMER BENEFIT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £
21	Business Support Services	Council wide IT planned rolling replacement and upgrade: Telephony consolidation	Telephony consolidation. The council currently maintains two main telephone systems which introduces unnecessary costs and requires IT support staff to be skilled in both systems. There are opportunities for business efficiencies with the Cisco IP system. There are a number of issues created by having 2 telephony systems which can and do lead to customers being unable to contact us. The costs of supporting 2 systems are also avoidable. Following the completion of Smarter Workplaces in the Civic Centre, ICT will continue to push technology refresh through the outlying areas of the council properties to introduce thin client and consolidate the phone systems. This will include the council house. The costs include new desktop hardware and software and the costs for the central servers. The thin client devices have a life of 15 years which is the equivalent of 2 or 3 desktop replacement exercises.	50,000	0	0	0	0	50,000
22	Business Support Services	Council wide IT planned rolling replacement and upgrade: Upgrade of Windows	Upgrade to the councils remaining out of date works stations which will bring them in line with the new technology in place for smarter workplaces and will ensure that the council has a robust and resilient environment which is fit for future technological use, this will enable the council to move away from windows in the future if required and will include mobile devices where appropriate	705,700	0	0	0	0	705,700
23	Business Support Services	Replace essential Wide Area Network data circuits that will no longer be supplied by BT. These circuits connect buildings that are not being consolidated by Smarter Workplaces.	This is the final phase of a 3 year program to migrate away from BT as they were more expensive than the alternative that we selected (UpData) in 2011.	21,120	0	0	0	0	21,120
TOTAL BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES				906,820	0	0	0	0	906,820
CAPITAL INVESTMENT EARMARKED RESERVES									
24	Regeneration	General reactive/planned property maintenance	To address health and safety items in connection with the council's building portfolio as they occur to enable properties to remain operational. Ensuring that council services to customers can be maintained where services are delivered from buildings.	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	0	2,000,000
25	Regeneration	Asbestos removal	Programme of asbestos removal in council buildings. The council is required by legislation to manage asbestos in its properties and this requires the removal in some areas. Asbestos has to be identified and removed before construction works can commence. This covers a programme of 5 yearly surveys and the removal of asbestos which is found to be in poor condition. Also covers asbestos removal where identified in maintenance works on council owned premises, including demolitions. Ensuring that customers are not put at risk by asbestos.	155,000	155,000	155,000	155,000	0	620,000
26	Regeneration	Control of legionella	The council has a statutory duty to manage and control legionella within its buildings. This covers a programme of 3 yearly risk assessments (RA), any remedial works identified with the RA, yearly chlorination and 6 monthly sampling of all council owned properties. All properties inspected 3yrs for Hot and Cold water systems and Air conditioning - all non schools buildings. Ensuring that customers are not put at risk by legionella.	275,000	275,000	275,000	275,000	0	1,100,000
27	Regeneration	Work resulting from the statutory testing of building services	Legislative requirement to undertake electrical testing and carry out resulting works. There is a programme of 5 yearly fixed wire testing, any remedial works identified from the fixed wire testing, annual emergency lighting testing and remedials, annual fire alarm testing and remedials, annual gas appliance/boiler servicing and remedials, annual lighting conductor testing and remedials, annual portable appliance testing as required by the council's safety management standards, and inspections and remedials within all council owned premises. Ensuring that customers are not put at risk by electrical infrastructure or equipment.	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	0	1,200,000
28	Regeneration	Fire risk assessment	Works following surveys to ensure the council's non-education buildings comply with fire legislation, identified within the Level 2 Fire RA carried out by SHAW/Fire Service in all council owned premises. Based on a rolling programme managed by the SHAW/Fire Service based on risk rating, (Higher risk more frequent inspections) for all building including public facing. Ensuring that customers using Council buildings can do so in a fire safe environment.	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	0	800,000

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	DETAILS OF PROJECT & CUSTOMER BENEFIT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £
29	Finance and Personnel	Leasing v Buy	For each vehicle or piece of equipment that we purchase and drawdown through the vehicle replacement programme, an options appraisal is conducted to determine whether purchasing or leasing is the most cost effective option. This ensures that we demonstrate VFM with each decision. Due to the current low borrowing rates, purchasing is currently proving to be cheaper than leasing.	340,000	0	0	0	0	340,000
30	Finance and Personnel	Risk management	The funding is utilised where risk assessments have been undertaken or where events dictate that action be taken to manage risks e.g. insurer intervention, regulatory reform. This assists in preventing future losses, reduces premiums and results in less call on the uninsured property damage allocation and therefore has a benefit of less call on councils resources overall, including council tax payers.	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	0	400,000
31	Finance and Personnel	Uninsured property damage	The council self insures its assets and is responsible for the first £250k of each claim. Expenditure is only incurred where the council has suffered loss or damage to its property in accordance with the terms and conditions of the insurance policy. Due to the nature of the work, and there being no way of knowing when an accident is likely to occur, there is no strict start date or duration for this allocation, although it is prudent to reserve in the likelihood of an incident occurring. The policy covers fire, lightning, explosion, aircraft, riot, civil commotion and terrorism. By maintaining a small budget every year for this, it has the effect of reducing the overall cost of insurance to councils, schools and therefore Walsall taxpayers.	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	0	800,000
TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT EARMARKED RESERVES				2,070,000	1,730,000	1,730,000	1,730,000	0	7,260,000
TOTAL MAINSTREAM SCHEMES - NEW BIDS				9,658,126	6,605,000	6,645,000	6,745,000	200,000	29,853,126

Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2016/17 - Mainstream (council) funded schemes - Reserve List

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	DETAILS OF PROJECT & CUSTOMER BENEFIT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £
CAPITAL RESERVE LIST ITEMS - SUBJECT TO FUNDING BEING AVAILABLE									
	Transport and Environment	Verge Parking	Constuction of between 3 and 6 new residential car parking facilities per annum within residential areas; to provide hardstanding areas	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	1,250,000
	Transport and Environment	Refurbishment of Fryers Road Transfer Station/HWRC site	Feasibility study for refurbishment or alternative option for Fryers Transfer Station - in time for the new W2R contract by April 2014. A full building survey is required to ascertain the work needed which will be funded through 2012/13 revenue.	250,000	0	0	0	0	250,000
	Transport and Environment	Hatherton multi storey car park - safeguarding income	Feasibility work to review the car park. £200k was allocated in 2010/11 for the structural repairs to the car park. The council aims to deliver parking facilities that support the local economy and meet public expectations. The car park strategy is underway, and the long term solution to the car park will be included in this overall strategy.	200,000	0	0	0	0	200,000
	Transport and Environment	Generic highway improvement	To fund one off highways improvements necessary for health and safety needs.	125,000	0	0	0	0	125,000
	Regeneration	Darlaston Town Hall	Feasibility study to maximise the letting potential for the building. Investment is required to provide modernised kitchen facilities, refurbished balcony and modernisation of office and meeting room areas. Combined with a robust business plan and letting system this could generate significant income for the council.	500,000	100,000	0	0	0	600,000
	Regeneration	Aids and adaptations - link to Item 16	To maintain independence for disabled clients in their own homes by providing relevant equipment and adaptations to property. In addition to this, Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is received. £1m is included within the mainstream council funded programme above. If the mainstream council funded budget is fully utilised in 2013/14, there may be a need for a call on this reserve list to meet statutory requirements.	500,000	0	0	0	0	500,000
	Regeneration	Health through warmth and related Retro Fit schemes - link to item 10	To provide energy and fuel saving advice and energy efficient heating and insulation works to private homes. This directly assists households with vulnerable residents (reduces excess seasonal deaths, reduces fuel poverty, minimises impact of illnesses made worse by cold and damp conditions (COPD, cancer etc), and enables people to stay living safer and longer in their homes). £470k is included within the mainstream council funded programme above.	330,000	0	0	0	0	330,000
	Social Care and Health	Preventative adaptations - part of the transformation of social care - link to item 17	To provide adaptations to vulnerable residents who do not meet the current criteria for statutory disabled facilities grant/aids and adaptations. £500k is included within the mainstream council funded programme above.	250,000	0	0	0	0	250,000
CAPITAL RESERVE LIST ITEMS - SUBJECT TO FUNDING BEING AVAILABLE				2,405,000	350,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	3,505,000

Draft Capital Programme 2013/14 to 2016/17 - Non Mainstream (Externally funded schemes)

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £	FUNDING BODY/DETAILS OF THE PROJECT
GOVERNMENT FUNDING									
1	Education	Basic need	2,097,621	1,887,859	1,699,073	1,529,166	1,376,249	8,589,968	Department for Education
2	Education	Devolved formula capital	662,580	596,322	536,690	483,021	434,719	2,713,331	Department for Education
3	Education	Capital maintenance	3,530,556	3,177,500	2,859,750	2,573,775	2,316,398	14,457,980	Department for Education
Total Childrens Services			6,290,757	5,661,681	5,095,513	4,585,962	4,127,366	25,761,279	
4	Transport and Environment	LTP Highway Maintenance	1,945,000	2,028,000	2,028,000	2,028,000	2,028,000	10,057,000	Department for Transport
5	Transport and Environment	Low Emissions Town & Cities	100,000	0	0	0	0	100,000	Potential new DEFRA grant of C £100,000 could be approved in 2013/14. The bid will be made by Birmingham on behalf of Walsall MBC.
Total Transport and Environment			2,045,000	2,028,000	2,028,000	2,028,000	2,028,000	10,157,000	
6	Regeneration	Disabled facilities grant	1,351,000	1,351,000	1,351,000	1,351,000	1,351,000	6,755,000	Department of Communities and Local Government
7	Regeneration	Gypsie & Travellers	941,050	0	0	0	0	941,050	HCA Grant
8	Regeneration	Darlaston Strategic Development Area Access	10,880,000	5,531,000	2,021,000	309,000	0	18,741,000	2013/14 Department for Transport £8,039,000, 3rd party contribution £800,000, Centro Local Contribution £1,666,000 & LTP Grant £375,000
9	Regeneration	Local transport plan (excluding contribution to Darlaston SDA)	1,115,000	1,744,000	1,744,000	1,744,000	1,744,000	8,091,000	Department for Transport
10	Regeneration	Local Sustainable Transport Fund	511,000	0	0	0	0	511,000	Department for Transport
Total Regeneration			14,798,050	8,626,000	5,116,000	3,404,000	3,095,000	35,039,050	
BIDS FOR THIRD PARTY / EXTERNAL FUNDING									
11	Leisure and Culture	Blackwood Park	95,700	66,100	171,500	151,400	31,000	515,700	Landscape Improvement Plan : to achieve Green Flag status Anticipated that s106 or Community Levy funding will be key towards funding this scheme which is spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 five year period £515,700
12	Leisure and Culture	Play Strategy	512,000	563,000	724,000	652,000	760,000	3,211,000	Capital investment plan: provision of 10 new children's play areas, 6 new youth and adult play sites (incorporating 6 new play equipment items) plus 48 new youth or adult play facilities ie gym trails - The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. Funding would be sought from HLF, Big Lottery, Landfill Tax Credits, s106, partnership funding bids £3,211,000
13	Leisure and Culture	George Rose Park	50,000	56,000	56,000	41,000	35,000	238,000	Landscape improvement Scheme - Major improvements to George Rose Park including new bandstand, recreational facilities, woodland, improvements to the 9-a-side pitches, signage etc £238,000
14	Leisure and Culture	High Heath Park	129,515	0	0	0	0	129,515	Improvement Plan - Anticipated that s106 or Community Levy funding will be key towards funding this scheme in 2013/14. Scheme is for new recreational facilities, landscaping, signs £129,515
15	Leisure and Culture	Holland Park	230,000	147,200	147,200	148,200	316,400	989,000	Landscape improvement scheme - Anticipated that s106 or Community Levy funding will be key towards funding this scheme in 2013/14. The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. £990,000

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £	FUNDING BODY/DETAILS OF THE PROJECT
16	Leisure and Culture	King George V Playing Fields	280,000	58,500	14,000	15,500	10,500	378,500	Landscape improvement scheme - Recreational facilities, walls, footpaths, access, pavilion improvements, health and formal sports facilities. The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. NB £125,000 of s106 funding is expected to be received and ring-fenced for this scheme during 2013/14 £378,500
17	Leisure and Culture	Kings Hill Park	55,000	160,000	60,000	22,000	14,000	311,000	Landscape improvement scheme to achieve green flag status - Refurbished pavilion and usual range of significant improvements throughout the park. Anticipated that s106 or Community Levy funding will be key towards funding this scheme in 2013/14. The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. £311,000
18	Leisure and Culture	Health in Parks	30,000	30,000	35,000	35,000	37,000	167,000	Installation of outdoor gyms in various parks across the borough - Anticipated that s106 or Community Levy funding will be key towards funding this scheme in 2013/14. Scheme is to install <10 outdoor free gyms to encourage people to exercise £167,000
19	Leisure and Culture	Bentley Green Spaces	88,000	100,000	285,000	70,000	39,000	582,000	Area wide improvement plan - The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. Funding would be sought from HLF, Big Lottery, DEFRA Nature Improvement Areas, Landfill Tax Credits, s106, partnership funding bids £582,000
20	Leisure and Culture	Oak Park and Walsall Wood	40,000	110,000	140,000	110,000	110,000	510,000	Landscape improvement - Network of paths linking various areas, recreational facilities, access, security, signs, etc. Anticipated that s106 or Community Levy funding will be key towards funding this scheme in 2013/14. The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. £510,000
21	Leisure and Culture	Palfrey Park	30,000	25,000	15,000	10,000	10,000	90,000	Landscape improvement - Additional health facilities and further landscape works to maintain Green Flag status. Anticipated that s106 or Community Levy funding will be key towards funding this scheme over the five year period 2013/14 to 2017/18 £90,000
22	Leisure and Culture	Pelsall Common	78,400	61,600	61,600	61,600	61,600	324,800	Landscape improvement - Health opportunities, access for the disabled, heritage features, footpaths, seating, signs, recreational facilities, heathland restoration etc. The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. Funding would be sought from HLF, Big Lottery, DEFRA Nature Improvement Areas, Landfill Tax Credits, s106, partnership funding bids £324,800
23	Leisure and Culture	Pleck Park	110,000	135,000	75,000	55,000	110,000	485,000	Long-term improvement - Bring Park Lodge back into use, additional health facilities and further landscape works to maintain Green Flag status. Anticipated that s106 or Community Levy funding will be key towards funding this scheme over the five year period 2013/14 to 2017/18 £485,000

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £	FUNDING BODY/DETAILS OF THE PROJECT
24	Leisure and Culture	Reedwood Park	115,000	330,000	385,000	275,000	115,000	1,220,000	Landscape improvement plan - Would be reliant on the capital receipt from the sale of the former Reedwood Golf Course - Health opportunities, access for the disabled, heritage features, footpaths, seating, signs, recreational facilities, heathland restoration etc. Eradication of Japanese Knotwood. The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. Funding would be sought from HLF, Big Lottery, DEFRA Nature Improvement Areas, Landfill Tax Credits, s106, partnership funding bids £1,220,000
25	Leisure and Culture	The Croft	66,000	0	0	0	0	66,000	Landscape improvement - To provide improved pedestrian access to the Croft and play area, seating, bins, signage and soft landscaping £66,000
26	Leisure and Culture	Willenhall Memorial Park	123,250	23,750	0	0	0	147,000	Landscape improvements to Willenhall memorial park, to include the building of a regional skate park, and improved pedestrian and vehicular access around the park with repairs to existing pathways and boardwalks. Required match funding from mainstream resources.
27	Leisure and Culture	Arboretum Play Area	0	220,000	220,000	165,000	110,000	715,000	To replace and improve the out-of-date and unsafe children's play area. The scheme would be spread over the 2013/14 to 2017/18 period. Initial capital required to pump prime the external funding bids. Operationally the play area should be usable to end of August 2012 £1,115,000 (total project costs)
Total Leisure and Culture			2,032,865	2,086,150	2,389,300	1,811,700	1,759,500	10,079,515	
28	Regeneration	Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative – Heritage Lottery Fund	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000	Heritage Lottery Fund
29	Regeneration	Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative - VIEW	100,000	0	0	0	0	100,000	Visionary Investment Enhancing Walsall
30	Regeneration	Black Country Enterprise Zone - Darlaston Site Investigation Programme	847,250	0	0	0	0	847,250	Growing Places Fund
31	Regeneration	Noirit Site Infrastructure	987,189	0	0	0	0	987,189	Growing Places Fund
32	Regeneration	Black Country Property Investment Programme	3,075,490	2,390,367	251,249	0	0	5,717,106	European Regional Development Fund
Total Regeneration			5,159,929	2,390,367	251,249	0	0	7,801,545	
TOTAL GRANT / EXTERNAL FUNDED			30,326,601	20,792,198	14,880,062	11,829,662	11,009,866	88,838,389	

Draft Budget 2013/14: Recommendations of the Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue budget proposals 2013/14 at the panel's meeting on 13 November 2012. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 12 December 2012.

In response to Member questions regarding deletion of posts, the Panel heard that jobs were being insourced to the Local Authority and the number of hours staff worked were being reduced rather than the number of posts reduced. In order to make efficiencies, management layers were being taken out to make services leaner. The Panel requested further information on this and asked to be kept informed of proposals for the Social Care and Inclusion Portfolio budget.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue budget proposals in respect of the services falling within their remit, and will receive and consider any revised draft revenue budget proposals and the draft capital programme during December 2012 / January 2013, 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 Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel noted the detailed responses to questions relating to the budget and had no further comments at that time.

Author

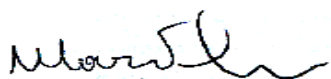
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Councillor Marco Longhi
Chair, Health Scrutiny and Performance
Panel

26 November 2012

Draft Budget 2013/14: Recommendations of the Community Services and Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Community Services and Environment Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue budget proposals 2013/14 at the panel's meeting on 14 November 2012. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 12 December 2012.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue budget proposals in respect of the services falling within their remit, and will receive and consider any revised draft revenue budget proposals and the draft capital programme during December 2012 / January 2013, 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 financial plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 and draft revenue proposals be noted.

Author

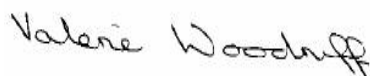
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Councillor V. Woodruff
Chair, Community Services and Environment
Scrutiny and Performance Panel

30 November 2012

Draft Budget 2013/14: Recommendations of the Social Care & Inclusion Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue budget proposals 2013/14 at the panel's meeting on 20 November 2012. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 12 December 2012.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue budget proposals in respect of the services falling within their remit, and will receive and consider any revised draft revenue budget proposals and the draft capital programme during December 2012 / January 2013, 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 Executive Director emphasised that although there was a reduction in the budget it was his intention to do more with less. He also explained that significant year on year savings had been achieved through a number of measures. This included vastly reducing the number of people being placed in residential care with individuals instead being supported to remain independent for longer within their local communities. Members expressed concerns regarding the availability of respite care to which they felt carers were entitled. Officers explained that the investment made in the Care Quality Assurance Team to ensure quality in the local care market would assist in the availability of respite care. However, Members expressed the hope that it would be possible for the council to be able to continue to offer some direct provision.

The Panel Resolved:

That the financial plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 and draft revenue proposals be noted.

Author


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Councillor Brian Douglas-Maul
Vice-Chair, Social Care and Inclusion Scrutiny
and Performance Panel

30 November 2012

Draft Budget 2013/14: Recommendations of the Children's and Young People Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Children's and Young People Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue budget proposals 2013/14 at the panel's meeting on 26 November 2012. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 12 December 2012.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue budget proposals in respect of the services falling within their remit, and will receive and consider any revised draft revenue budget proposals and the draft capital programme during December 2012 / January 2013, 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

Debate

Members considered the report and expressed concern that there was a -90k operational saving in relation to Corporate Parenting within the proposed budget. It was noted that this related to under spend, however, it was asked why the money had not been spent in such a critical area. In response, it was stated that until the Improvement Plan was completed the level of resource required was unclear. Once the Improvement Plan had been agreed a report would be submitted to Council setting out the level of resource required.

Further concern was expressed in relation to the policy saving of -£254k in relation to Integrated Young Peoples Support Services. It was suggested that any reduction in spend could impact heavily upon schools' existing resources and social exclusion. The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services explained that a more strategic approach would be adopted with provision across the board being reviewed. Walsall Council would work with providers to offer the best service whilst targeting support where it was most needed.

The Assistant Director (Preventative & Targeted Services) advised that there had been a shift away from youth to integrated young people's services. Attention had moved away from universal services to targeting resource to reach the vulnerable and most at risk. Positive relationships existed with schools and a joined up, co-ordinated approach was required. Officers were also meeting with Prospects, the provider commissioned to operate the service, whom appeared willing to identify efficiencies and adopt new ways of working.

The Panel Resolved:

- 1) That feedback from public consultation on the budget in relation to services within the remit of the Panel be considered at the meeting scheduled to be held on 8 January, 2013;
- 2) That the financial plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 and draft revenue proposals be noted;

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Rose Collinson
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Councillor Cassidy
Chair, Children's & Young Peoples
Scrutiny and Performance Panel

30 November 2012

Draft Budget 2013/14: Recommendations of the Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue budget proposals 2013/14 at the panel's meeting on 27 November 2012. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 12 December 2012.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue budget proposals in respect of the services falling within their remit, and will receive and consider any revised draft revenue budget proposals and the draft capital programme during December 2012 / January 2013, 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 financial plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 and draft revenue proposals be noted.

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Tim Johnson
Executive Director

Signed:



Councillor L. Harrison
Chair, Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel

30 November 2012

Draft Budget 2013/14: Recommendations of the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel following consideration of the draft revenue budget proposals 2013/14 at the panel's meeting on 29 November 2012. This will enable consideration by Cabinet on 12 December 2012.

All scrutiny and performance panels have received draft revenue budget proposals in respect of the services falling within their remit, and will receive and consider any revised draft revenue budget proposals and the draft capital programme during December 2012 / January 2013, 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

Members of the Panel considered the budget and challenged officers in respect of: the proposed reduction in the communications budget, the costs of value for money reviews undertaken by external audit and operational savings in relation to the reorganisation of support services. Responses were provided explaining that the communication service was being redesigned and that anticipated savings would have an impact on existing posts. The fees for external audit value for money reviews had reduced by circa 90k as the Council had sound financial systems in place and so were low risk which reduced the amount of audit time required. In relation to the reorganisation of support services it was explained that this was directorate wide across all functions which senior management had committed to delivering savings.

The Panel Resolved:

That the financial plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 and draft revenue proposals be noted.

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Signed:



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30 November 2012

Signed:



Councillor S. Coughlan

Chair, Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel