

Cabinet – 23 January 2013

Corporate Budget Plan and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2013/14

Portfolio: Councillor C. Towe – Finance & Personnel

Related Portfolios: All

Service: Finance – council wide

Wards: All

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report presents the final draft revenue and capital budget plan for 2013/14 following consideration of the draft budget proposals by scrutiny panels and public consultation, for recommendation to full Council, along with draft precepts.
- 1.2. This report also sets out the treasury management and investment strategy as required by the CIPFA Code of Practice. It includes details on the Prudential Code Indicators (PCIs) for the next three years and asks Cabinet to approve them and recommend adoption of these to full Council. The strategy both complies with the Local Government Act 2003 and also provides an additional framework over and above the statutory minimum for monitoring performance.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note and approve:

Revenue

- a) That at the time of despatch of this report, the precepting authorities (fire and police) had not formally notified the authority of their final council tax levels. (We have been advised that they will both be approved following meetings scheduled for early February, so we will provide final figures at the Council meeting on 21 February 2013).
- b) That at the time of despatch of this report, the levy authorities (Environment Agency and Centro) had not formally notified the authority of their final demand. Current estimates have been used for Centro based on informal communication, but subject to formal approval, with the assumption that the Environment Agency levy will not change from 2012/13. (The final levies are expected to be approved early February, and will be included within the final papers to Council).

- c) That the aggregate income includes the council tax freeze grant for 2011/12, with the 2012/13 grant falling out in 2013/14.
- d) The Walsall council draft net council tax requirement for 2013/14 of £85.55m - resulting in an increase of 1.85% to the council's own band D council tax of £25.62.
- e) Subject to Council approving the budget, that Cabinet approves the budget plan and all the recommendations, proposals and changes to policies and procedures set out in the plan, and further delegates authority to the relevant executive directors to implement the same.
- f) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Finance Officer to make any necessary amendments, in consultation with the portfolio holder for finance and personnel and the Leader, to take account of the final levies, precepts which have not yet been notified, any changes arising from final technical guidance on the new Business Rates Retention scheme, and to make any necessary amendments to the statutory determinations and council tax bands to take account of those changes and the resulting final analysis of the budget for 2013/14 and for amendments to those to be submitted and recommended to Council at its meeting on 21 February 2013.

Capital

- g) The capital programme for 2013/14 of £40.19m, comprising mainstream (council funded) capital of £9.91m and externally funded schemes of £30.28m. Additionally, the leasing programme totals £4.48m of new capital expenditure in 2013/14.

Treasury Management

- h) The 2013/14 treasury management and investment strategy document set out in **Section 2** and the adoption of the Prudential Indicators set out in **Annex 6**.

2.2 To note, endorse and recommend the following to Council, subject to final approval of precepts and levies, receipt of the final settlement and final specific grant allocations:

2.2.1 Revenue

- a) The recommendations of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in respect of the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the budget calculations and the adequacy of reserves as set out in **Annex 3**.
- b) That the net draft levies below for outside bodies **be noted**. The final levies are expected to be approved early February, so any changes will be reflected in a revised resolution to be provided to the Council meeting of 21 February 2013. An estimate has been used within this report based on informal notification from the authorities).

DRAFT LEVY	AMOUNT (£)
West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority	14,314,000
Environment agency	80,532

- c) Council on 7 January 2013 approved the localised council tax support scheme 2013/14, and approved changes to council tax discounts for empty properties and second homes. These changes have been reflected in the council tax base, which was also approved at Council, and all changes are reflected in this report.
- d) That approval be given to an opening working balance for 2013/14 set at a prudent level in line with the council's medium term financial strategy.
- e) That the following statutory determinations **be noted and approved** (references are to the Local Government Finance Act, 1992) with subsequent changes in the Localism Act 2011:
- I. **£637,922,260** being the aggregate gross expenditure, which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Localism Act 2011. This includes collection fund deficit of £583,000.
 - II. **£552,370,345** being the aggregate income which the council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Localism Act 2011.
 - III. **£85,551,915** being the amount, by which the aggregate at (e) (I) above exceeds the aggregate at (e) (II), calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Localism Act 2011, as its council tax requirement for the year.
 - IV. **£1,410.26** being the amount at (e) (III) above, divided by the council tax base of **60,664.11**, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 31B of the Localism Act 2011, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year (average council tax at band D)
 - V. Valuation bands

Being amounts given by multiplying the amount at (e) (iv) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5 (1) of the Local Government Act 1992, is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the council in accordance with Section 30 and 36 of the Act as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands.

A	B	C	D
£940.17	£1,096.87	£1,253.56	£1,410.26
E	F	G	H
£1,723.65	£2,037.04	£2,350.43	£2,820.51

- f) That the **estimated** precept from the Fire and Civil Defence Authority and the **estimated** precept for the Police Authority, issued to the council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below **be noted and approved** and that the final figures **be substituted** for these provisional ones once they are available at the Council meeting on 21 February 2013.

PRECEPTING AUTHORITY	VALUATION BANDS			
Police	A	B	C	D
	£66.30	£77.35	£88.40	£99.45
	E	F	G	H
	£121.54	£143.64	£165.74	£198.89
Fire & Civil Defence	A	B	C	D
	£31.89	£37.20	£42.52	£47.83
	E	F	G	H
	£58.46	£69.09	£79.72	£95.66

- g) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at (e) (v) and (f) above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30 (2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the amounts of council tax for 2013/14 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

A	B	C	D
£1,038.36	£1,211.42	£1,384.48	£1,557.54
E	F	G	H
£1,903.65	£2,249.77	£2,595.89	£3,115.06

- h) That notice **be given** of the council tax within twenty one days of it being set by publishing details of the same in the "Walsall Advertiser" newspaper circulating in the Authority's area.
- i) That the Chief Financial Officer **be instructed** to take all necessary action in relation to council tax, community charge and national non-domestic rates, including, where appropriate, the signing of all documents, the giving of notices and the taking of necessary steps to ensure collection thereof.
- j) **Approve** the budget plan, including the opening cash limits, savings and investment proposals set out in the annexes.

2.2.2 Capital

- a) That the draft capital programme set out in the following tables **be approved** bearing in mind the principle that unless affordable from within current resources, specific projects funded by unsupported borrowing will not be commenced until a payback agreement is in place. Schemes funded from grant will commence when final allocations are published. Reserve list items will only commence should funding become available during the financial year.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14	
MAINSTREAM (COUNCIL FUNDED) SCHEMES	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Arboretum Play Area	175,000
Walsall Arboretum Restoration Programme – Illuminated Park proposals	270,000
Willenhall Memorial Park	180,000
Greenspace Improvement Plan	100,000
Allotment and Community Garden Strategy – Borneo Street	50,000
Roadway extensions in Streetly Cemetery	150,000
Headstone safety in Cemeteries	80,000
Willenhall Lawn Cemetery extension	120,000
Highways Maintenance	1,450,000
Verge Parking	250,000
Retained Housing Land	100,000
Health Through Warmth and related Retro Fit schemes	470,000
Demolition of Redundant Buildings	200,000
Regenerating Walsall	200,000
Civic Centre Essential Maintenance	566,306
Improving the customer experience when visiting the Council House - includes front of house facilities	700,000
Shop Maintenance	120,000
Aids and Adaptations (statutory element)	1,000,000
Preventative Adaptations - part of the transformation of Social Care (non-statutory element linked to Aids and Adaptations above)	750,000
Essential Enhancement to Data Security Systems	60,000
Bring your own device security layers	70,000
Council wide IT planned rolling replacement and upgrade: Telephony consolidation	50,000
Council wide IT planned rolling replacement and upgrade: Upgrade of Windows	705,700
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.	21,120
General reactive/planned property maintenance	500,000
Asbestos Removal	155,000
Control of Legionella	275,000
Work resulting from the statutory testing of building services	300,000
Fire Risk Assessment	200,000
Leasing versus Buy	340,000
Risk Management	100,000
Uninsured property damage	200,000
Total	9,908,126

NON-MAINSTREAM CAPITAL PROGRAMME – SCHEMES FUNDED FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES 2013/14	
NON MAINSTREAM SCHEMES	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Basic Need	2,097,621
Devolved Formula Capital	662,580
Capital Maintenance	3,530,556
Local Transportation Plan Highway Maintenance	1,945,000
Local Highways Maintenance funding	352,000
Low Emissions Town & Cities	100,000
Disabled facilities grant	1,351,000
Gypsy & Travellers	20,000
Darlaston Strategic Development Area Access	10,880,000
Local Transport Plan (excluding contribution to Darlaston Strategic Development Agency)	1,115,000
Local Sustainable Transport Fund	260,000
Personal Social Services Grant	769,958
Blackwood Park	95,700
Play Strategy	512,000
George Rose Park	50,000
High Heath Park	129,515
Holland Park	230,000
King George V Playing Fields	280,000
Kings Hill Park	55,000
Health in Parks	30,000
Bentley Green Spaces	88,000
Oak Park and Walsall Wood	40,000
Palfrey Park	30,000
Pelsall Common	78,400
Pleck Park	110,000
Reedwood Park	115,000
The Croft	66,000
Willenhall Memorial Park	123,250
Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative – Heritage Lottery Fund	150,000
Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative - VIEW	100,000
Black Country Enterprise Zone - Darlaston Site Investigation Programme	847,250
Noirit Site Infrastructure	987,189
Black Country Property Investment Programme	3,075,490
Total	30,276,509

LEASING PROGRAMME 2013/14	
PORTFOLIO	NEW EXPENDITURE £
Transport and Environment portfolio	4,412,657
Business Support portfolio	69,000
Total	4,481,657

CAPITAL PROGRAMME RESERVE LIST ITEMS 2013/14	
NON MAINSTREAM SCHEMES	ESTIMATED VALUE £
Refurbishment of Fryers Road Transfer Station / HWRC site	250,000
Hatherton multi story car park	200,000
Generic highway improvement	125,000
Darlaston Town Hall	500,000
Aids and adaptations	500,000
Health through warmth and retro fit schemes	330,000
Preventative adaptations	250,000
Total	2,155,000

2.2.3 Treasury Management

- a) That the 2013/14 treasury management and investment strategy document set out in **Section 2**, and the adoption of the prudential indicators set out in **Annex 6**, be approved.
- b) That decisions to effect movements between conventional borrowing and other long term liabilities, such as leases, be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.
- c) That decisions to use capital receipts or unsupported borrowing within the framework of approved prudential indicators be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer.

2.2.4 ***A final resolution will be despatched or tabled at Council to include final levies and precepts and any final amendments to the budget, including any changes in the final settlement, specific grants and council tax bands.***

3. Report detail

- 3.1 The council's budget is a financial representation of the organisation's plans. It is constructed as an integral part of the council's planning processes and aligned to its priorities and objectives. The attached budget plan sets out the revenue and capital plans for service delivery for 2013/14 and beyond.

4. Council priorities

- 4.1 The budget process follows council priorities, including the agreement to use a value for money strategy to drive through savings proposals linked to working smarter and service redesign.

5. Risk management

- 5.1 Budget Plan: The council reviews corporate financial planning and budget principles in accordance with the medium term financial strategy (MTFS). The budget setting process includes a comprehensive financial risk assessment to determine key risks and their impact on the budget. Services also undertake risk assessments of their

budgets by identifying risk factors, potential changes to service delivery and funding streams. This ensures that adequate budgetary provision is available to cover unforeseen future events. This successful approach is now embedded and is used to inform the level of earmarked and general reserves.

- 5.2 The identification of risks, and level of reserves, is referred to in the CFO statement at **Annex 3**. It is, however, highly unlikely that all risks identified will arise. Managers are required to deliver services within the available budget. Any known changes in service demand or costs arising from legislative or government demands are identified and dealt with, within the overall draft revenue budget, as an investment bid. The level of reserves is sufficient to cover the high and medium risk items. Any in-year use of general reserves may require replenishment to ensure the opening level of reserves is as required by the MTFS.

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 Councils must set and maintain a budget sufficient to cover known expenditure and deal with unknown contingencies. CFOs are required to report to members on the robustness of the estimates used for the purpose of calculating the budget and the adequacy of the proposed reserves. This is provided at **Annex 3** of the budget plan.
- 7.2 The Local Government Act 2003 and supporting Regulations require the council to 'have regard to' the Prudential Code and to set prudential indicators for the next three years to ensure that the council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable. The Act requires the council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an annual investment strategy (as required by investment guidance issued subsequent to the Act); this sets out the council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments. This is provided at **Annex 4 to 6** of the budget plan.
- 7.3 In recent years central Government has capped the level of council tax rises. For 2013/14, the Government have announced that local authorities will need to seek approval of their electorate via a local referendum if they propose to increase council tax levels above 2% of their relevant amount of council tax (i.e. excluding levies). Capping principles are determined on a year by year basis.

8. Property implications

- 8.1 There are direct implications from this report as part of the draft capital programme, with the earmarking of some capital receipts, and investment into council assets.

9. Staffing implications

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

10. Equality implications

- 10.1 Equality impact assessments have been undertaken on the budget, the impact of proposed savings and on capital projects. Impact assessments have been updated as the budget has progressed and action implemented where applicable.

11. Consultation

- 11.1 The council is statutorily obliged to consult with representatives of non-domestic ratepayers before setting the budget for the following financial year and a meeting with business representatives was held on 20 September 2012.

Comprehensive public consultation was conducted in two phases, as detailed below.

Phase one July to September;

- Residents were able to respond online, in writing, by email, text message, telephone or via Facebook and Twitter. Information was posted on the council's website www.walsall.gov.uk/budget_consultation and promoted in the local press. Views expressed in the councils borough wide survey 'Your place, your well-being' were also used.
- In addition to the above, face to face discussions and interviews were held with the Youth of Walsall group 'YOW', business representatives and with people visiting the councils First Stop Shop and Park Street in Walsall town centre.

Phase two 24 September to 23 November 2012;

Following the publishing of the council's draft budget proposals for 2013/14, a month of public consultation began. Responses were gathered in the following ways;

- Face to face discussions with members of the public in the First Stop Shop
- Face to face at First Stop Express bus locations around the borough
- The distribution of 10,000 'Budget: Have your say' prepaid comment postcards (distributed in free newspapers and available in libraries)
- Website with an online response form www.walsall.gov.uk/budgethaveyoursay
- Weekly quarter page adverts in the Express and Star and one full page advert in the Chronicle including a freepost reply slip
- People could also give their views via email, letter, text message or telephone

In addition, JNCC's consult with employee representatives and discuss budget options, and schools are consulted on school budgets.

- 11.2 A detailed report was presented to Cabinet on 24 October 2012 as part of the first draft budget proposals, with an update to Cabinet on 12 December 2012. Draft savings proposals with direct impact on services were integral to the second phase of public consultation and findings are reported at **Annex 9**. Cabinet have used this to inform their final budget recommendations to Council. The following adjustments have been made to the original draft budget proposals:
- Removal of the £20,000 saving for a 5 pence increase in paid school meals charges.
 - Removal of the £22,248 saving in the provision of music support services.

- Reduction in the grounds maintenance saving by £110,000 to allow robust weekend cover of parks and greenspaces to be maintained.
- Reduction in the extension of the brown bin collection closedown over the winter period by a further one month rather than two as originally planned, reducing the saving by £35,000.

11.3 Service managers of all levels are responsible for delivering targets and service outputs on time, to standard and within budget. With their teams, they are involved in budget construction, bidding for investment and working up savings proposals. The corporate management team and Cabinet have continuously reviewed the evolving budget. All scrutiny panels received the draft revenue budget proposals in November 2012. The second draft budget report including the draft capital programme 2013/14 was referred on to scrutiny panels in December 2012 / January 2013, where the draft programme has been noted, with no proposed recommendations.

11.4 The treasury management strategy has been approved by the finance Treasury Management Panel (an internal governance arrangement comprising the Chief Financial Officer, Head of Finance and Corporate Financial Systems and Treasury Manager) and Audit Committee. All officers involved in treasury management follow approved treasury management policies and procedures.

Background papers

- Various financial working papers.
- Financial Plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 - Draft Revenue Budget Proposals for consultation – Cabinet 24 October 2012
- Financial Plan 2013/14 to 2017/18 – Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for consultation – Cabinet 12 December 2012
- Budget Consultation Feedback 2013/14
- Council Tax Base 2013/14 – Council 7 January 2013
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Equality Impact Assessments
- Council and service risk assessments

Authors:

Vicky Buckley, Head of Finance, ☎ 01922.652470, buckleyv@walsall.gov.uk

Stuart Wootton, Financial Planning Manager, ☎ 01922.652348, woottons@walsall.gov.uk



James Walsh
Chief Finance Officer
 18 January 2013



Councillor C Towe
Finance and Personnel
 18 January 2013

Corporate Budget Plan and Treasury Management and Investment Strategy

2013/14

January 2013

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1. Purpose of this document

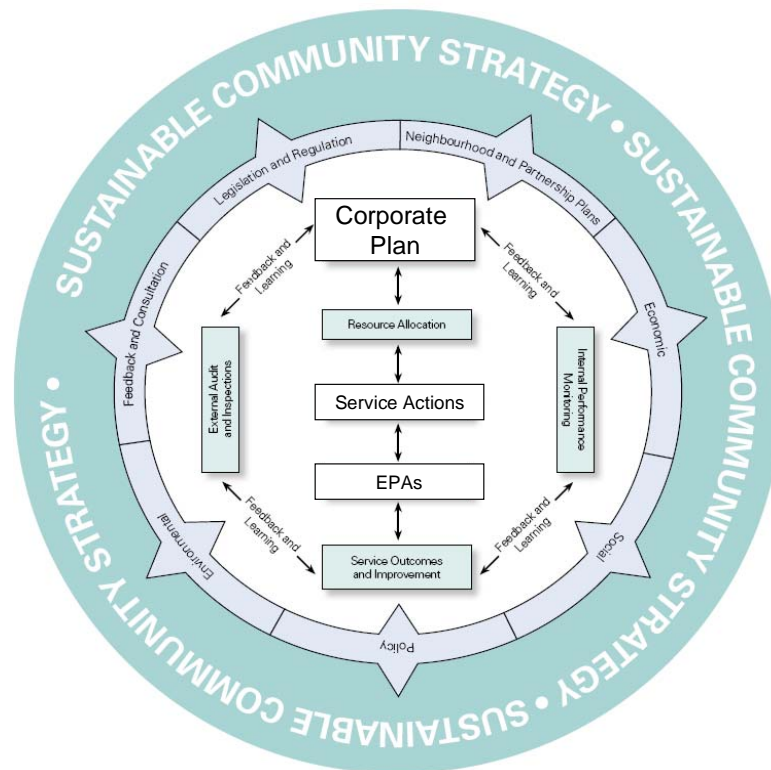
The council's budget is a financial representation of the organisation's plans for the forthcoming financial year and beyond. Therefore, the budget is constructed as an integral part of the council's planning processes and aligned to its priorities and objectives:

- the sustainable community strategy, in conjunction with our partners
- the council's vision, aims, objectives, policies and strategies
- portfolio plans for future service delivery
- the medium term financial strategy

The above plans and strategies are informed by an understanding of the people, nature and demographics of our Borough, captured within a comprehensive document "People & Place Perspectives: A Picture of our Community". This combines a range of primary data, analysis and stakeholder feedback, and has been used, with other information, to undertake needs analyses to support the design and delivery of our services, through service planning and therefore demonstrated in our budget plans.

The diagram below shows how services are designed, delivered and performance managed, and shows how financial planning connects to the council's aims and objectives. This shows how services and activities are regularly measured and monitored to enable effective decision making, helping to ensure the council delivers efficient, customer focussed services that provide real value for money.

Figure 1: The Council's planning framework



2. The Council's Vision for the Borough

Through the framework provided by the Walsall Partnership, the council has worked with other local organisations including the police, the NHS, local businesses and community & voluntary groups, to develop a clear vision for the borough of Walsall, looking ahead to the year 2021. This vision is set out in detail in partnership plans for the borough, including the Sustainable Community Strategy, the overarching community plan for the borough.

Our shared vision for the borough is that 'Walsall will be a great place to live, work and invest, where...

- people get on well with one another
- people can get around easily and safely
- people support and look after one another
- there are more and better jobs for local people
- people can live an independent and healthy life
- there are a wide range of facilities for people to use and enjoy
- people consider the impact of what we do now on future generations
- high-quality and distinctive designs of buildings and spaces exist
- growing up is as good as it can be and young people fulfil their potential
- people are our strength and have the skills and attitude required by employers
- everyone has the chance to live in a home fit for their purpose and fit for the future
- people feel proud to live in Walsall.

This is the council's vision for the borough of Walsall, its communities, and its residents - it is our focus as we plan our services, and allocate resources, for the year ahead, and into the future. We recognise the diversity of our communities and the different needs of different areas. We have established six Area Partnerships, each made up of between two and four council wards. Each Area Partnership will:

1. Engage with local communities to identify issues and agree the key priorities for the Area to be included in the Area Plan;
2. Empower communities to solve local problems by supporting local action and giving people influence over the resources allocated to their Area;
3. Co-ordinate service providers and hold them to account for delivery, to ensure better outcomes for our communities and a more effective use of resources.

We want Area Partnerships to become a powerful partnership between communities and organisations, to be a driver for improvement, efficiency and better outcomes locally and for Walsall as a whole. Working smarter means increased working across services and agencies at a local level, to meet local needs.

Each Area Partnership is working to develop its own Area Plan showing how the priorities contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy will be delivered in the Area. Area Plans reflect local circumstance, and include actions to address locally determined priorities where there is evidence of need and where engagement has demonstrated strong local demand. Each 'workstream' has been developed locally through Area meetings. Whilst action to tackle anti social behaviour and crime, or to achieve a cleaner, greener Walsall, are priorities for all Areas, the range of initiatives to address those priorities and to achieve improvements may differ from Area to Area, reflecting local concerns, with services focussing on local issues.

The Sustainable Community Strategy is currently being refreshed, and any changes will be reflected in the council's Corporate Plan.

In considering resource allocation, funding for the development of services has been met from the redirection of existing resources, the implementation and rollout of systems thinking and other models of service delivery efficiencies; and a review of income sources. The budget process considers the council's priorities – what does it want to do, to what standard and what results does it want to achieve and at what cost (i.e. what services will it fund, what can it afford).

Council has formally adopted the marmot objectives:

- Give every child the best start in life.
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives.
- Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable communities.
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.

In addition, the following will also need to be considered :

- The level of funding anticipated (subject to Government direction).
- Income that can be generated (through the charging policy, increased charges, new charges, new grants, etc).
- The levels of balances required for financial prudence and to proactively manage the council's risks.
- The methods of service delivery that will deliver value for money (e.g.: in-house, partnerships).
- Stakeholder consultation and lobbying.

Our Priorities

Whilst working towards this shared partnership vision for 2021, it is important that as an organisation we focus on what we need to deliver in the shorter term. As such we have committed to three priorities to focus on between now and 2014. These are: communities and neighbourhoods; the economy; and health and well-being as shown in **figure 2** below. These priorities will support our ambition to make Walsall a great place to live, work and invest and they will be supported by our core values.

Figure 2: The Council's key policies



Communities and Neighbourhoods

- Residents are happy with local services
- Residents feel they can influence decisions locally
- Streets are well maintained and clean
- Residents recycle more waste
- Communities feel safe from crime and anti-social behaviour
- Young people engage in positive activities
- More residents volunteer locally
- Communities are cohesive

The Economy

- Residents are supported to sustain / gain work
- Our living / housing environments retain and attract the workforce required to develop our economy
- Businesses are satisfied with the support they receive from the council
- Workforce skills are improved / developed to match current and future business needs
- Climate for a thriving local economy is supported where existing companies and jobs are sustained
- New environments are supporting the creation of new companies and sustainable jobs
- Child poverty levels are reduced and family well-being and prosperity is improved

Health and Well-being

- Fewer infant deaths
- Less childhood obesity leading to healthier adult lifestyles
- More people take part in healthy physical activity
- Gaps in life expectancy in the least and most deprived areas of the borough are reduced
- Fewer vulnerable adults and older people need intensive support, and for shorter periods
- More vulnerable adults live meaningful lives in their own homes, with fewer people living in long term residential or nursing care
- Fewer unnecessary hospital admissions, and more rapid discharge home from hospital
- Fewer children need to be looked after by the council but those children who do, stay in the system for less time

3. Our Purpose

In order to achieve this shared vision the council has a clear focus on what it needs to achieve, reflected in our Corporate Plan which can be accessed via our website, <http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/corporate-plan>. This plan provides a focus for the whole council – the decisions that are taken, and the actions that are taken as a result by each of our directorates, and the services, teams, and individual members of staff working within them.

The council's stated purpose is to:

Maintain and improve the physical and economic environment for the health and well-being of all our residents within financial constraints. Operate efficiently and collaboratively within a one council model and with partners to ensure value for money for tax payers and other funders

The council exists to benefit the public, responding to their needs to ensure the delivery of effective local services. We do this with only limited resources and so must always work to ensure that public money is targeted to where it is most needed and used in the most efficient way possible. This means we need to listen to what local people want and build up a thorough understanding of their needs and wishes. It also means we need to look outside our own organisation and work with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors.

This plan will be achieved through the council working more smartly in the way it operates. Working Smarter is an ambitious change programme that attempts to bring this about through taking out waste and spending less, improving customer service and changing the way we do our business. But as well as a specific programme of change, working smarter is also a culture that will become embedded within the council, underpinned by nine key principles:

- Right first time
- Devolved problem solving
- Accountability for your actions
- Take personal responsibility
- Control exercised at the lowest possible level
- Unity of purpose - one council
- We exist only to serve residents
- Innovate to improve
- Mutual trust and integrity

The Way We Work

The council is committed to delivering for our customers in a way that is right, fast and simple.

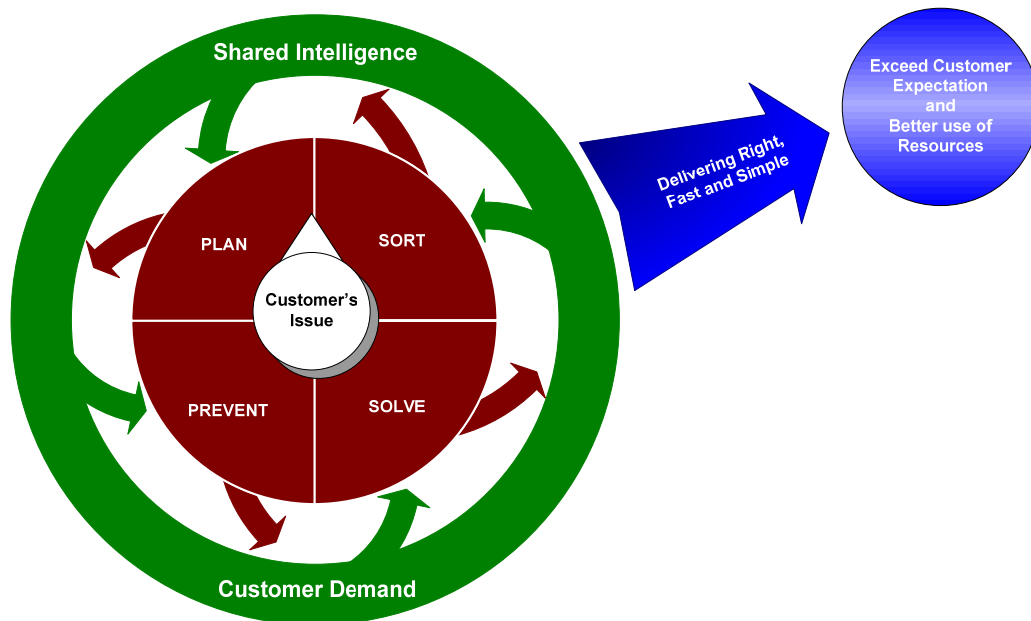
Right - We should strive to ensure our customers' needs are met effectively. The way we work should drive out the need to repeat processes because an issue was not resolved first time around. Right also means that appropriate action was taken and all necessary information was taken into account.

Fast - All processes should be stream-lined in such a way as to avoid unnecessary delays and improve efficiency.

Simple - We recognise that not every issue is simple but our processes or communications should never make it more complicated than it needs to be. Our aim should always be to make things as simple as possible for our customers.

If we do this then we will meet and even exceed customer expectations and make better use of our resources. It will be achieved through an operating system that empowers front line staff and encourages joint working. This way of working is set out in **Figure 3** below.

Figure 3- Delivering Right, Fast and Simple



The model explained

Different issues will require a different type of delivery. There are four types of delivery that have been identified; these are Sort, Solve, Prevent and Plan.

- **SORT** – frontline workers are empowered to fix simple problems;
- **SOLVE** – more complicated problems are fixed using a team-based approach, potentially involving multiple services and partners;
- **PREVENT** – processes are redesigned to avoid problems repeating themselves;
- **PLAN** – anticipated future demand requires strategic priorities to be set in a way that allows demand to be met.

All four delivery types inform, and are informed by, intelligence about customer demand and other influencers (e.g. national policy).

Our Values

This way of working requires every member of staff to act in a way that supports the model. A set of values have been developed to guide us in our day-to-day work, governing our contact with people and those who use and rely upon our services, and our relationships with partner organisations. These values are:

- We strive to exceed the expectations of our **customers**
- We **collaborate** effectively
- We strive to achieve **value for money**

4. Understanding our community

Using data and feedback

The Walsall Performance Framework is underpinned by the use of primary data, analysis and stakeholder feedback to undertake needs analysis to support the design and delivery of services. Assessments of Community Safety, Children and Young people, Economic and Health and Well-Being datasets together help provide this understanding. 2011 saw a refresh of the national census; updated census results for the borough will start to be available from late 2012. In the meantime some key socio-demographic headlines illustrating the wider context in which the council works include:

The latest population estimates give Walsall a population of 269,300 (based on Census 2011 data released in December 2012), which is a 6.3% increase on 2001 census (253,300).

The borough's population structure is broadly similar to the national one:

- A peak of people in their early 60s, corresponding to the post-World War 2 baby boom. As these people retire in the next few years, their skills and experience will be lost from the workforce.
- and people in their 40s, from a peak in births in the 1960s. There was a drop in births around the start of the millennium, but the rate appears to be increasing slightly again.

This structure has implications for Walsall's future, particularly due to the changing size of the potential workforce and the number of older and younger people that will be dependent on the rest of the population for support. Walsall has a relatively high dependency population. 17.6% of the population are above 65 years compared to 16.5% nationally. Having fewer people of working age is likely to increase the need for council services. 32.6% of residents are aged under 25, compared to a national average of 30.7%. (ONS 2010 Mid Year estimates)

- Latest figures (November 2011) show 6.6% of Walsall's working age population claiming Jobseeker's Allowance compared with 3.8% for Great Britain (Source: Nomis)
- For all out-of-work benefits, in May 11, Walsall's claimant rate was 17.6% of the working age resident population, compared with 11.8% for Great Britain (Source: Nomis)
- The Indices of Deprivation 2010 (ID 2010) provides a *relative measure of deprivation* in small areas across England. According to a recent update deprivation has worsened and Walsall is now the 30th most deprived local authority (out of 326), putting it in the most deprived 10% of districts. Walsall is more deprived in relation to the rest of England in 2010 than it was in 2004, when it was within the most deprived 15%. Within Walsall, there is considerable variation between the levels of deprivation across the borough.
- According to the 2001 Census, just over 85% of Walsall's residents are white British, meaning that almost 1 in 6 Walsall residents are from a minority ethnic group. More recent estimates suggest this figure has increased by 5,600 to 2007, driven by migration and higher than average birth rates.
- Of the approximately 34,400 minority ethnic residents in Walsall, their backgrounds are predominately Indian (40%), Pakistani (27.1%), Bangladeshi (7.3%) and Black groups (10.2%)

- Almost a quarter (25%) of Walsall's housing stock was owned by registered social landlords, including Walsall Housing Group (WHG) and Walsall Association of Tenant Management Organisations (WATMOS). (Source: CLG 2010)

Results from the recent 'your place your well being survey' highlights that the relative order of residents' priorities for improvement has changed, as a reflection of the current economic climate with recession related concerns becoming more salient. Whilst road and pavement repairs, clean streets and low crime levels continue to feature as key priorities job prospects has now also become a key priority for residents. Also now one third of respondents state that affordable decent housing (33%) is an important factor in their local quality of life (their fourth in the list of QoL importance). These concerns are exemplified amongst younger respondents, the unemployed, families by ethnicity and geographically. For example young people in Walsall are considerably more likely to say they would like to see improvements in local job prospects (54%), wages and the cost of living (27%) and affordable decent housing (30%) than corresponding borough averages (35%, 21% and 17%).

Overall, two-thirds (68%) of Walsall residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, though there are notable geographic differences, with the more affluent wards generally more positive about their local areas than more deprived wards. Almost half (48%) of residents are satisfied with the way Walsall council runs things and this has improved significantly (+15 percentage points) since the Place Survey in 2008.

Fair, accessible and equitable service delivery

The council endeavors to make sound financial decisions that lead to excellent services and value for our communities. It makes sure that decisions taken are in line with the general public sector equality duty in having due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
- foster good relations between people from different groups.

To these ends:

- Information to customers about services is provided in accessible formats, based on their particular needs as far as reasonable and within resources available.
- Staff are competent to serve diverse groups of customers and receive training to understand barriers experienced by people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- Managers are competent to and actively demonstrate their commitment to equality in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, career development, pay, training, promotion and welfare.
- Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent in equality and diversity and that Walsall council's workforce, as far as reasonable, reflects the make-up of the local population.
- Managers are responsible for assessing equality impact on key decisions and initiatives affecting customers and staff. This is to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics. This assessment is done by carrying out equality impact assessments.

Equality Impact Assessment on 2013/14 Budget process

Under the remit of the Corporate Equality Group, the Finance and Equality, Safety and Wellbeing teams made an initial assessment of the 2013/14 revenue and capital budget proposals. All managers responsible for proposals were required to submit an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) or provide justification as to why one was not necessary. The EqIAs and justifications were considered and advisory feedback provided by Equality, Safety and Wellbeing.

For every assessment there were four possible outcomes:

1. No major change required - When no 'any potential for discrimination or adverse impact' is identified and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
2. Adjustments were needed to remove barriers or to better promote equality.
3. Continue despite possible adverse impact - For important relevant proposals, compelling reasons were needed.
4. Stop and rethink the proposal - Actual or potential unlawful discrimination is identified, the proposal was reviewed

An action plan was produced if outcomes 2, 3 or 4 applied. The council considers the budget proposals for 2013/14 are fair and fit for purpose.

Budget Consultation

Listening to local people

For our services to meet the needs of local residents, and of the community at large, it is essential that our plans and policies reflect the views of local people, and others who use our services. We aim to be a listening organisation and we use a wide range of consultation methods to understand better what matters to residents. As a result, we have amassed a great deal of information which has been used to inform both the service planning and budget processes.

Budget consultation 2013/14

For many years we have undertaken specific consultation to inform our budget setting processes. The budget plan has been informed by a broad range of consultation findings, undertaken in line with the new Walsall Partnership consultation and engagement strategy and principles of the Local Compact.

2013/14 budget consultation process

Each year the council consults residents and stakeholders as part of its budget process. This year budget consultation has been open to all residents and stakeholders in the form of on line feedback to key questions, face to face discussions and interviews held with Youth of Walsall groups, business representatives, people visiting the First Stop Shop, views expressed in the borough wide survey, and formal on line budget consultation of revenue proposals impacting on the public. The council is statutorily obliged to consult with representatives of non-domestic ratepayers before setting the budget for the following financial year. Findings from consultation have been reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny throughout the process. As far as possible, and in response to these findings, the budget focuses on protecting front line services.

Section 1 – Revenue and Capital Budget Plan

5. Financial planning and management: matching resources to the vision

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The MTFS is a strategic framework and policy document within which the council's finances are constructed and managed. It is part of a suite of policy documents that together comprise the council's approach to effecting sound governance and good practice (i.e. the Walsall Performance Framework). It is the translation of our vision, aims and objectives into a financial plan, which thereby facilitates delivery of these through the service planning process.

The MTFS is a key document in bringing together the level of available resources with the demands for service delivery and investment, facilitating sound financial and service risk and opportunity management. It also links to the impact on the council's capital resources and external funding opportunities.

Figure 4 shows the relationship between the various components of the financial framework. The MTFS is the overarching corporate financial policy sitting below the Corporate Plan and above the other elements of the financial cycle. It is the driver for all other financial activity, which is aligned with service planning and performance management activities within the Walsall Performance Framework. Below the MTFS sit the other financial strategies; the capital strategy and the treasury management strategy.

The main objectives for the council relate to maintaining good underlying financial health, adoption of a longer-term perspective, a desire to deliver good quality, value for money services which are modern, efficient, effective, and fit for purpose and to ensure this approach facilitates delivery of the council's vision, aims and objectives.

For a number of years the council has adopted a policy-led, medium term approach to financial planning. We seek to ensure our budgets are clearly linked to our vision, aims and objectives. We are committed to maintaining financial stability and delivering value for money through effective and efficient services.

The main objective for the council is to maintain good long-term financial health. Achieving this allows us to deliver good quality, value for money services, shaped by our customer demand. Services that are modern, efficient, effective, and fit for purpose. This requires a framework that delivers both continuous, adaptive improvement and core strength.

How we will achieve this is through:

1. Financial Governance and Leadership
2. Financial Planning
3. Finance for Decision making
4. Financial Forecasting and Monitoring
5. Financial Reporting

Figure 4: Financial elements of the Walsall Performance Framework

THE FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK					
CATEGORY	OVERALL	REVENUE	CAPITAL	TREASURY MANAGEMENT	RISK MANAGEMENT
Strategies	Medium Term Financial Strategy				
			Capital Strategy	Treasury Management (TM) Strategy	Risk Management Strategy
Guidance	CIPFA and technical guidance	Budget Guidelines	Capital Guidelines	CIPFA Code of Practice for TM	Risk Management Toolkit
Plans	MTFP	Annual Budget	Capital Programme and Asset Management Plan	Treasury Policy Statements	Risk Management Action Plans
Governance	Constitution	Budget Management and Control Manual And the Annual Governance Statement		Prudential Indicators & Annual Report	Risk Register reporting and regular review
	Contract and Finance Rules				Audit Committee Reports and Annual Report
	Internal and External Audit Plans and our response to inspection and audit				

Financial Governance and Leadership

1. Our top management will be financially literate and able to understand fully the financial environment in which the council operates.

Financial Planning

1. Our financial planning will be inextricably linked to the council's strategic and corporate planning process. Our financial plans will reflect the councils key strategic priorities.
2. An annual medium term financial plan, covering a five year time horizon, will integrate current expenditure plans and investment programmes, with cash-flow and balance sheet projections, developed in the context of a longer-term strategy, which supports the council's strategic plan.

Finance for decision making

1. In developing our strategic and Corporate Plan we will consider the value for money achieved by allocating resources to different activities.
2. We will understand the financial implications of current and potential alternative policies and, programmes, and activities.
3. We will analyse our cost profiles and cost drivers and how they will behave under different circumstances
4. We will understand the whole-life costs associated with capital investment.

Financial Monitoring and Forecasting

1. Top management will assure itself that financial performance to date and forecast financial outturns are in line with the plan, including cash-flow and balance sheet projections.
2. Variances will be identified as soon as possible, so that management can either take corrective action to manage unfavourable variances or apply any favourable variances to corporate priorities.
3. The underlying costs of the organisation's key activities and how these are profiled over time will be monitored and reviewed.
4. Financial information will be integrated with non-financial performance and activity information. Together, such information forms the basis for financial forecasts and enables value for money to be monitored.
5. The financial information used both for setting the budget and internal accountability, monitoring and forecasting throughout the year is derived from the same systems that are used to generate the results reported externally in the organisation's statutory financial statements.

Financial Reporting

1. To run the organisation effectively, top management will have up-to-date financial and non-financial performance information on a timely basis.
2. Reports will be presented in a form that is tailored to user needs, is easy to understand and highlights the key financial issues that they need to be aware of.
3. For its part, top management needs to provide timely, accurate and balanced information about its stewardship and use of resources and its non-financial performance to the organisation's different stakeholders. Such information will be presented in a form tailored to meet their needs.

The Budget Process and Financial Arrangements

The budget process is a continuous annual cycle. Budgets are prepared using approved budget guidelines and updated as required. The draft budget provides for inflationary pressures (i.e. contractual inflation).

Process and timetable

A robust budget process is used within the overall context of the MTFS using comprehensive budget guidelines and a detailed project timetable. The process starts annually in the spring/summer and the revised draft budget is complete by November/December to coincide with the draft government settlement. This enables budget meetings to take place with Cabinet, and formal scrutiny and public consultation. The final budget is set by full Council in February.

Member involvement

Both informal and formal member involvement is extensive, particularly through the cabinet portfolio holder for finance and personnel, individual portfolio holders in conjunction with executive directors, and budget meetings with scrutiny panels. Cabinet consider budget reports and have special meetings as required. Presentations and briefings are also made to political groups.

Consultation

Internal and external consultation is extensive using focus groups, face to face discussions, on line budget consultation, presentations and reports. Consultation with residents and stakeholders is internally facilitated, with views being reflected in the final budget. The consultation process included feedback from the borough wide survey, and use of an on line consultation programme including feedback from tailored face to face public consultation.

Scrutiny

All scrutiny panels have the opportunity to scrutinise the draft budget. In addition, the corporate services panel scrutinises financial monitoring, budget and general finance related Cabinet reports.

Challenge

The draft budget is challenged many times; including at meetings of various directorate management teams, by the corporate management team, during budget meetings and during the scrutiny process itself.

Budget monitoring

Services finances are frequently and regularly reported to directorate management teams. Corporate finance reports are considered by the corporate management team on a regular basis, and by Cabinet on a quarterly basis. Scrutiny panels and Audit Committee also receive a quarterly monitoring report. Reports are open, transparent and written in plain English. The employee performance assessment process also requires review of financial performance for individual managers.

Ownership and accountability

The budget progresses through various filters during construction including endorsement by services and the corporate management team. Managers are accountable for delivering services within budget and implementing investment and savings proposals.

Current financial position

This is reviewed and reported consistently throughout the year to services, corporate management team, Cabinet, Scrutiny Panels and Audit Committee.

Key assumptions

The estimates used in the budget are derived from current intelligence, and prevailing trends. Demand changes are identified and are reflected in budget increases, where applicable. Fees and charges are reviewed annually and changes are reflected in the overall budget. The capital receipts used to fund the capital programme are based on professional estimates both of timing and value and are considered adequate to fund the programme. .

Financial risks

The budget setting process includes a corporate financial risk assessment to determine key risks and their impact on the budget. Services undertake comprehensive risk assessments of their budgets by identifying risk factors, potential changes to service delivery and funding streams. This ensures that adequate corporate budgetary provision is available to cover unforeseen future events. This successful approach has been in place for several years and is used to inform the level of earmarked and general reserves.

Managers are also required to deliver services within the available budget. Any known changes in service demand or costs arising from legislative or Government demands are identified and dealt with within the overall draft revenue budget as investment bids. The budgeted opening level of reserves is sufficient to cover the assessed financial exposure to the council. Any use of reserves in-year would require replenishment to ensure an opening general reserve required by the MTFS.

Included in the risk assessment is an analysis of the economy and pressures going forward. The economy has been subject to significant and rapid change. Funding remains uncertain beyond 2014/15 (see section 8: medium term financial outlook for more detail). Inflation has been low, however we are already seeing an increase and some sectors are predicting a sharp increase. Bank rates are expected to remain low at 0.5%, until 2015 when they are expected to be 1.0%.

The budget in context

The budget reflects the vision, aims, objectives and policies of the council and is constructed with that in mind. The budget has been constructed in accordance with the principles and direction of the MTFS. Specific allocations are made to fund particular priorities. All efficiencies are appraised to ensure accuracy of costings and deliverability. Individual officers are identified as accountable for their implementation. The council is working to improve performance outcomes on a range of activities. Plans link budget provision with corporate, portfolio and service priorities and budget provision is identified for the priorities outlined in the council's vision document.

Internal Audit

The council maintains a properly resourced internal audit function, and works with a private sector partner in delivering the annual audit plan. The annual audit plan is devised using a modern and comprehensive risk assessment approach. The service examines on a cyclical basis the adequacy of various systems, processes and arrangements within the council to ensure our financial management arrangements are sound

Staff

Staff engaged in financial management activity are recruited using a robust process which tests abilities, experience and competence. Each person has access to both general training and development and specific tailored training according to the needs of their jobs. Relevant financial and accountancy qualifications are required for senior finance posts, and all qualified staff are required to participate in the official continuing professional development schemes of their professional institutes.

6. Summary of the 2013/14 Revenue Budget

2013/14 Revenue Budget Headlines

The revenue budget has been constructed in accordance with the MTFS and all relevant corporate financial protocols and presents a balanced budget, resulting in:

- A focus on a policy-led, medium term, risk assessed budget setting approach using corporate portfolio priorities established by cabinet,
- A total net council tax requirement of **£85.55m**
- A council tax increase of 1.85%, excluding precepts, equivalent to a Band D Council Tax of **£1,410.26**
- A council tax increase of 1.67%, including precepts, equivalent to a Band D Council Tax of **£1,557.54** subject to confirmation of final precepts
- Provision for inflationary pressures of **£2.87m**
- Provision for other known budget pressures, including demographic and cost pressures, and reduced levels of income or grant, of **£6.74m**.
- Full year impact of growth approved in previous years of **£0.27m**
- New savings of **£13.20m**
- Full year impact of savings approved in previous years of **£2.87m**
- Appropriate use of prudential borrowing to support capital investment where affordable and sustainable with revenue costs being reflected in this report
- Opening general reserves in line with the council's MTFS

The financial implications arising from the draft capital programme 2013/14 are contained within the draft revenue budget.

Net Council Tax Requirement

The gross revenue expenditure budget for 2013/14 will be **£637.92m**, and gross income will be **£552.37m**, resulting in a net council tax requirement of **£85.55m**.

It has been possible to commit to £9.88m (**Table 1 and 4**) to address key priorities and funding of essential cost pressures. This includes the second year investment for job creation – working with Walsall businesses to promote economic regeneration within the borough. There is also provision to fund inflationary pressures (i.e. contractual), and corporate cost pressures to fund for example, the revenue implications of the capital programme, pay and grading and pension realignments. Income targets have also been corrected in some areas, and also to address the impact from reduced levels of grant.

This commitment has been made possible by planned improvements in efficiencies and other savings.

The change in council tax requirement from 2012/13 to 2013/14 is shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1 : Net council tax requirement 2013/14		
	£m	Reference
2012/13 Approved by Council on 20 February 2012:	109.25	
<i>Cash Limit Changes :</i>		
Inflationary pressures	2.87	Table 4
Corporate cost pressures	6.61	Table 4
Service cost pressures	0.13	Table 4
Full year effect of previous years investment	0.27	Table 4
Full year effect of previous years approved savings	(2.87)	Table 5
New savings 2013/14	(13.20)	Table 5
Reduction in Formula Grant funding after rolled in grants	6.20	
Council tax freeze grant – removal of 2012/13 grant	2.73	
Grant / Income changes (including change in council tax benefit scheme, New Homes Bonus, etc)	(27.02)	
Collection fund deficit	0.58	
2013/14 Net Council Tax Requirement	85.55	Annex 1
Council Tax Increase	1.85%	

Figure 5 below provides a breakdown of the net spending by portfolio and **figure 6** by directorate.

Figure 5 – Net council tax requirement by portfolio

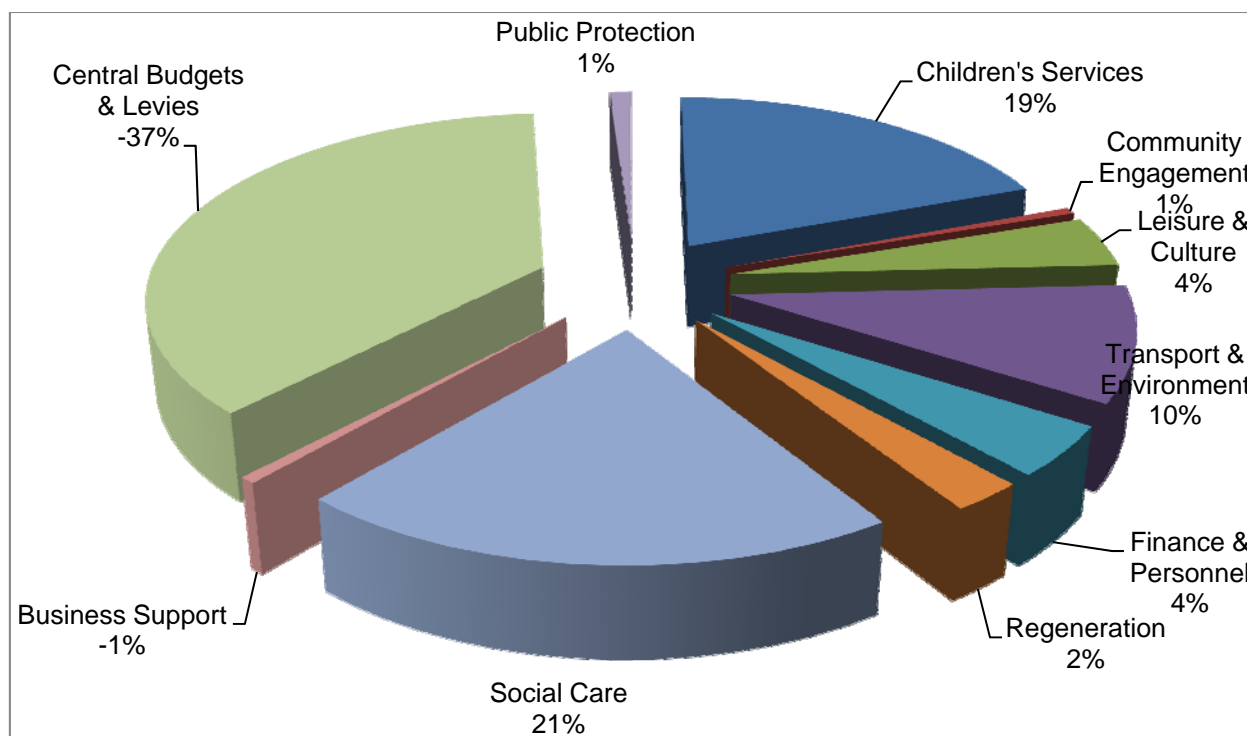
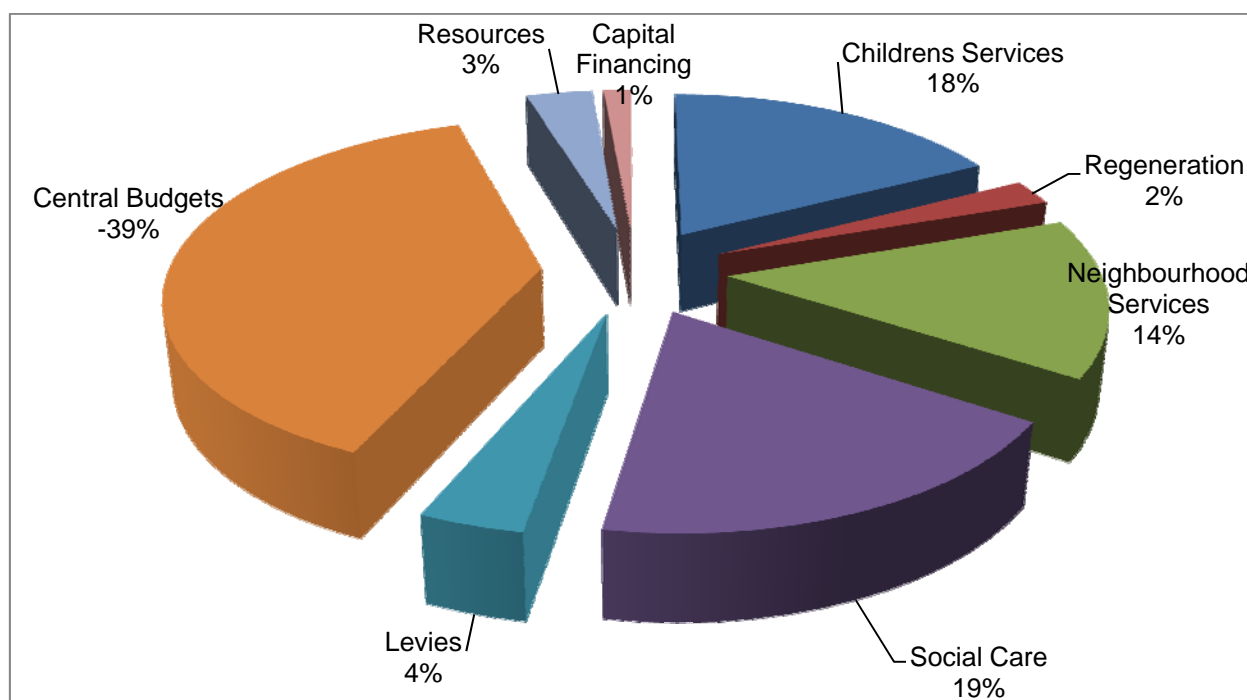


Figure 6 – Net council tax requirement by directorate



Note: the central budgets is shown as net income as it includes Revenue Support Grant, Business Rates (local share) income and top up grant totalling £162.85m.

This would result in a band D council tax for the Walsall Council element only of £1,410.26, representing an increase from the 2012/13 levels. Most properties in Walsall (67.38%) are in bands A or B. (**Annex 2**). **Table 2** shows the calculation at Band D.

Table 2: Net Council Tax Requirement and Council Tax Levels 2013/14		
Element of budget	2013/14 budget and grants £	Council Tax Band D £
WMBC element - required from council tax	85,551,915	1,410.26
Police precept (estimated)	7,846,074	99.45
Fire precept (estimated)	3,773,701	47.83
Total from council tax	97,171,690	1,557.54

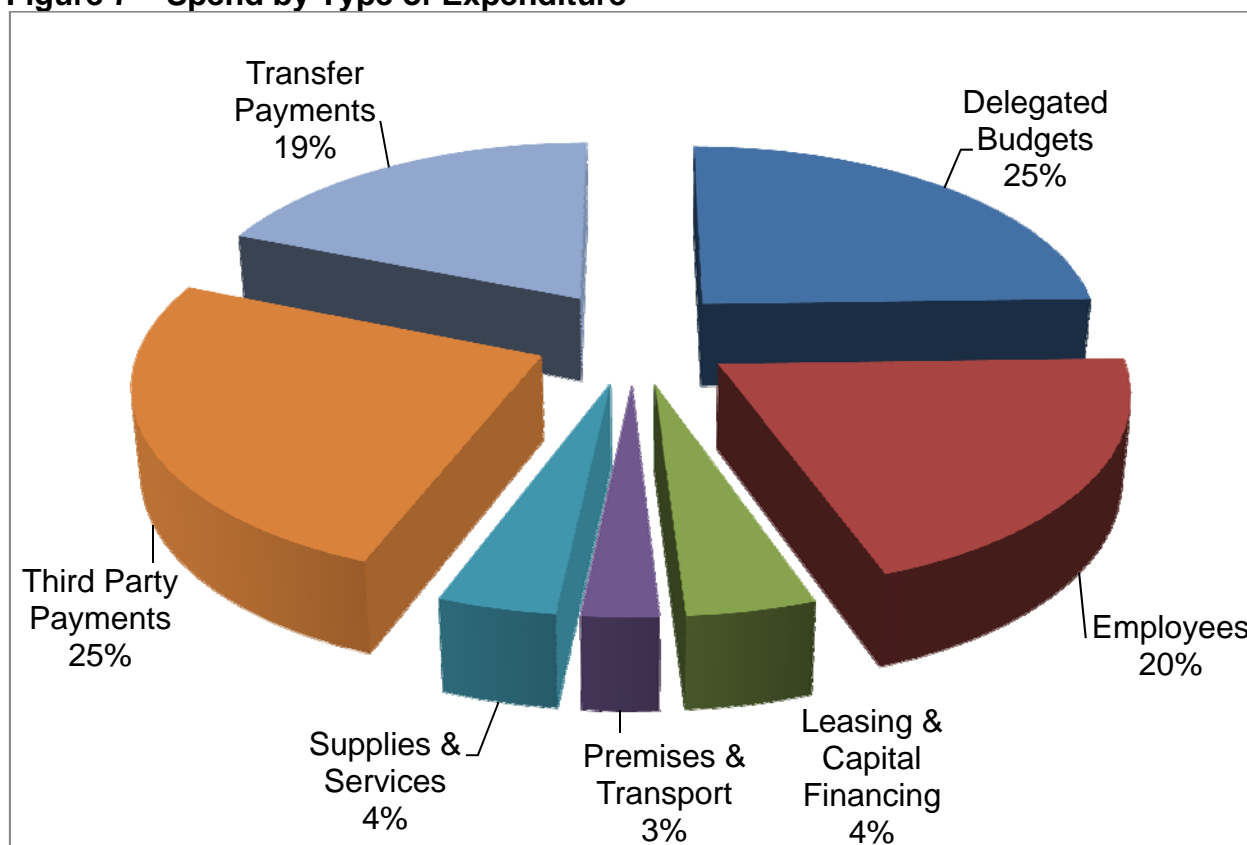
NB: based on an approved council tax base of 60,664.11 band D equivalents.

Expenditure analysis

Table 3 details gross expenditure by category of spend and **figure 7** by type of expenditure.

Table 3: Expenditure by Category of Spend	
Type of Expenditure	£ million
Employees	128.05
Premises and Transport	16.77
Supplies and services	25.91
Third Party Payments	161.74
Delegated Budgets	156.61
Leasing and Capital Financing	28.34
Transfer Payments	120.50
Total Expenditure (excluding Internal Recharges)	637.92

Figure 7 – Spend by Type of Expenditure



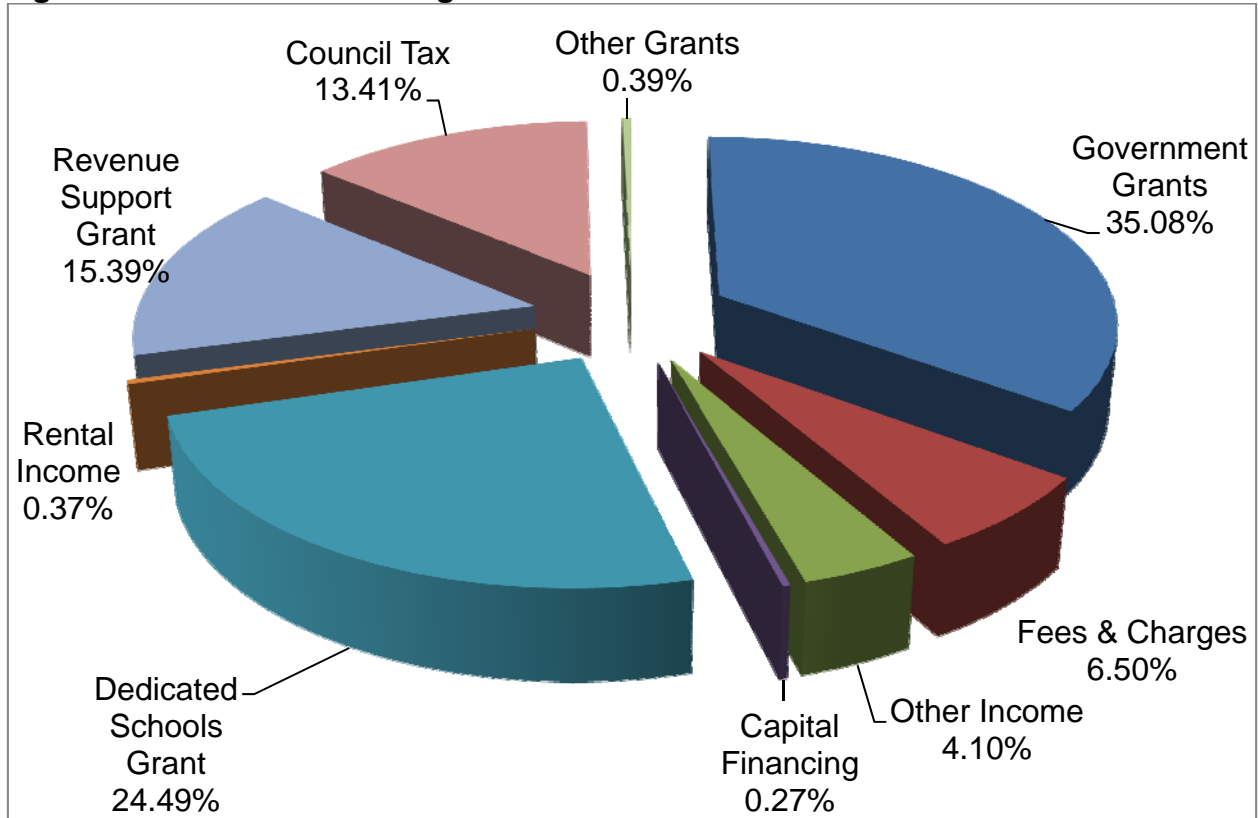
Notes

- *Transfer payments include expenditure such as special education needs, rent allowances and social services direct payments – for example payments for which no goods or services are received in return by the local authority.*
- *Delegated budgets include budgets for schools, community associations and allotments.*

Income analysis

The council receives income from a number of sources including council tax, central Government grant and specific grants to help pay for certain services including schools and social care. The council also charges for parking, use of leisure facilities and other services. In 2013/14 the council tax will account for 13.4% of total income. **Figure 8** shows all the main sources of income.

Figure 8 – Sources of funding



Inflationary Pressures / Financing Options / Service Cost Pressures

The 2013/14 revenue budget includes an increase of £0.27m in growth which relates to investment decisions made by Council in previous financial years where a part year cost effect only was included in the relevant year. A further £2.87m of inflationary (contractual) pressures are funded.

In addition further growth totalling £0.13m have been identified as a very high priority by Cabinet as being essential to meeting service cost pressures and reduced levels of income and grant, with £6.61m to cover corporate cost pressures. This includes £1m within Children's services for Looked After Children and Safeguarding and £0.28m for discretionary housing payments. It also covers a provision to fund corporate cost pressures, adjust for income shortfall and to address the impact from reduced levels of grant. The second year of the 'Job Creation' scheme is also funded. These are summarised in **Table 4** overleaf. The budget assumes that any education-related pressures are accommodated from schools grants.

Portfolio	Inflationary Cost Pressures £'000	Corporate Cost Pressures £'000	Service Cost Pressures £'000	FYE of Previous years £'000	Total Pressures £'000
Children's Services	171	1,000	0	0	1,171
Community Engagement	0	0	0	0	0
Leisure and Culture	51	0	0	0	51
Public Protection	0	0	0	0	0
Transport and Environment	964	0	424	0	1,388
Regeneration	25	0	0	0	25
Business Support	1	0	0	0	1
Finance and Personnel	2	0	100	-53	49
Social Care and Health	1,359	396	-396	323	1,682
Central budgets	294	5,215	0	0	5,509
Levies	0	0	0	0	0
Total Cost Pressures	2,867	6,611	128	270	9,876

Savings and efficiencies

In order to set a balanced budget, and after a review of available resources from central Government grant and council tax, and taking into account additional known and likely pressures, new savings of £13.20m are included in the revenue budget. Those savings requiring executive approval to proceed were approved by Cabinet on 24 October 2012. Further full year effect savings of £2.87m are included relating to decisions taken in relation to previous years savings. Details can be found in each portfolio cash limit in **Annex 10**, and are summarised in **Table 5** below. The savings have enabled Cabinet to use available resources to target priority services.

Portfolio	New Savings £'000	FYE of Previous years £'000	Total Savings £'000
Children's Services	(2,629)	(30)	(2,659)
Community Engagement	(240)	0	(240)
Leisure and Culture	(1,618)	(186)	(1,804)
Public Protection	(154)	0	(154)
Transport and Environment	(2,052)	0	(2,052)
Regeneration	(1,690)	0	(1,690)
Business Support	(1,833)	(99)	(1,932)
Finance and Personnel	(1,149)	(334)	(1,483)
Social Care and Health	(1,838)	(1,500)	(3,338)
Capital Financing	0	(316)	(316)
Central budgets	0	(400)	(400)
Total Savings / efficiencies	(13,203)	(2,865)	(16,068)

Government central funding – Business Rate Retention

The Government provides funding to councils through a grant redistribution system previously referred to as formula grant, which included the redistribution of business rates collected and revenue support grant.

The Government is replacing the way it funds councils with a new scheme known as Business Rate Retention from April 2013. This will have considerable impact on the level of funds the council has to run its services. The principles of the new scheme are as follows and these have been reflected in the revenue budget:

- Business rates local share - **£32.772m** - the local share is not guaranteed and is based on the council retaining 50% of what we actually collect in rates in 2013/14. The £32.772m is determined by the NNDR1 return which shows Walsall own estimate of what it will collect in rates in 2013/14). This is £637k below the baseline figure of £33.409m provided in the draft settlement figures announced on 19 December 2012 (what the Government estimates that Walsall will collect and retain in local business rates). Should the council collect anything up to £2.45m less than the £33.409m, then this will have to be borne by the council in full. Volatility in business rates will therefore need careful monitoring throughout the year.
- Top up grant – fixed by the government for 2013/14 and to be increased by RPI for future years - **£31.903m** in 2013/14. Some authorities collect more business rates than they previously received back in the Formula grant redistribution system, and are therefore required to pay a tariff to Government in excess of their allocated share. Councils like Walsall who collected less locally under the old system, will be allocated a top up grant from 2013/14.
- Revenue Support Grant - fixed by the government for 2013/14 and to be increased by RPI for future years - **£98.173m** in 2013/14. This includes £44.571m of specific grants that have been rolled into this single funding mechanism, which includes council tax support (replacing council tax benefit), early intervention grant, homelessness prevention, lead local flood authority grant, and learning disability and health reform grant.

The Government published the draft grant settlement on 19 December 2012 for 2013/14 and 2014/15. The final settlement for 2013/14 is due to be announced late January.

Central Government grant is a complex calculation within various blocks based on relative needs, population, demographic data, the tax base and “floor damping”. This has been retained under the revised funding mechanism.

Government announced that local authorities will face an average 1.7% reduction in “*spending power*”, with no authority experiencing a decrease of more than 8.8%. Spending power encompasses an individual authority’s council tax requirement, formula grant, specific grants and NHS funding for social care (the latter being spend which the council may have an influence over but does not control).

Walsall’s adjusted formula grant was equal to the national average in 2012/13 of -7.6%. The national comparisons have been made on central grant allocations excluding rolled in grants, thus Walsall is shown below the national average of 0.9%. The use of floor damping means our 2013/14 grant has been reduced by £8.2m (in addition to £3.8m in the previous year settlement period for 2012/13). The indications are that this ‘damping’ method will continue to be used. The government grant allocation for Walsall is set out in

Table 6 and Walsall's movement compared to the metropolitan average in **Table 7**.

Table 6 : Government Grant Allocation			
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
	£m	£m	£m
Relative Needs Amount	114.2	103.3	99.6
Relative Resource Amount	-15.9	-15.1	-14.5
Central allocation – a 'top up' per head	35.5	31.6	37.4
Adjustment to Formula Grant baseline	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total grant £m	133.8	119.8	122.5
Floor Damping	-7.2	-3.8	-8.2
Total grant (adjusted for damping) £m	126.6	116.0	114.3
Grants rolling in to Formula Grant	10.5	10.4	54.9
Council Tax Freeze Grant 2011/12	0.0	2.7	0.0
Central Education Services within LACSEG	0.0	0.0	-6.3
Adjusted grant (incl rolled in grants)	137.1	129.1	162.9
Formula grant from previous year £m	153.0	*139.8	**169.1
Grant increase/-decrease (adjusted) - £m	-15.9	-10.7	-6.2
Grant increase/-decrease (adjusted) - %	-10.4%	-7.6%	-3.8%

*Adjusted 2011/12 grant to include council tax freeze grant for comparative purposes

**Adjusted 2012/13 to include rolled in grants for 2013/14

Table 7 : Increase/(- Decrease) in Adjusted Government Grant Allocation					
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Walsall	3.50%	3.00%	-10.4%	-7.6%	-0.9%*
Metropolitan Borough Average	2.90%	2.50%	-11.3%	-7.6%	-1.9%

*Comparisons nationally have been made on the change in grant funding excluding rolled in grants.

The table above, derived from Government data, shows that that our provisional 2013/14 settlement of £163.485m (adjusted for expected changes to the baseline to **£162.848m** as above) represents a £6.2m or 3.8% reduction in funding over the adjusted 2012/13 figure of £169.1m, which includes the effect of rolled in grants for council tax support, early intervention, homelessness prevention, lead local flood and learning disability.

In respect of council tax support grant – this replaces council tax benefit which is being abolished in April 2013. Government announced a 10% reduction in the grant, equivalent to a £3.3m reduction for Walsall, and required authorities to adopt local schemes for implementation. Cabinet recommended that the £3.3m reduction be managed by finding alternative savings and not to passport the cut to benefit claimants. Council approved the local scheme for Walsall on 7 January 2013.

There is a further reduction in grant, not included in the above, of £2.73m arising from the fall out of the 2012/13 one off council tax freeze grant. Additionally, changes to the way academies are funded has resulted in further grant reductions. The total reduction for

Walsall is therefore £13.9m, amounting to a **7.7% reduction on 2012/13 grant** levels. This reduction has a significant impact on the level of services the council can afford to provide. Any budget requirement over and above the level of grant has to be borne either via council tax payers and/or users/recipients of services.

It is anticipated that we may receive returned funding during the year in relation to top sliced grant for New Homes Bonus Scheme and capitalisation / safety net within the business rates retention scheme if not utilised by Central Government – however this is subject to final notification in as late as March.

The council has had to identify options to meet this reduced funding envelope.

Other funding changes

Transitional grant – £100m allocation has been set aside by the DCLG for one year for 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.

Collection Fund

The collection fund is separate to the revenue general fund which accounts for income collected from council tax. In January of each financial year, an in-depth appraisal is undertaken to assess the estimated level of collection (as aggregated to include that relating to the current and previous years), the likely balance of the fund and to advise the precepting authorities (Fire and Police) of their share of the surplus/deficit to enable them to take this into account in their own budget calculations. Any surplus or deficit calculated as at January 2013 will impact on the final council tax increase/net budget requirement. The assessment undertaken in January 2013 revealed an estimated deficit of £0.58m for the year.

Referendum

In recent years central Government has capped the level of council tax rises. Capping principles are determined on a year by year basis.

Since 2012/13, each authority is required to determine whether their council tax increase requires a referendum seeking the support of the local electorate. Schedule 5 of the Localism Act introduced a new chapter into the Local Government Finance Act 1992, making provision for council tax referendums to be held if an authority increases its council tax by an amount exceeding principles determined by the Secretary of State and agreed by the House of Commons.

On 8 October 2012, the Government announced their intention to reduce the current referendum trigger from 3.5% to 2% for 2013/14. A council tax referendum will only be required when an authority / precepting authority increases council tax above the prescribed level as annually set by the Secretary of State. This would mean if a local authority seeks to raise its relevant basic amount of council tax by more than 2%, local people would have the right to keep council tax bills down through a binding referendum veto. Walsall's increase is below the 2%.

Levies and Precepts

Table 8 shows the levy to be made on Walsall Council by the West Midlands Passenger Transport Authority and the levy by the Environment Agency.

As this report has been dispatched and considered prior to the Integrated Transport Authority Board approving the levy, the assumed levy is in line with previous forecasts. The final levy will have implications on final council tax levels due to the impact on the Alternative Notional Amount – the figures authorities must use when determining whether the increase in their relevant basic amount of council tax in 2013/14 is excessive, and whether a referendum will be triggered (based on net council tax requirement less levies, divided by tax base). For the Environment Agency levy, we have assumed no change from 2012/13.

Table 8: Levies 2013/14				
Levy	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	Increase / (Decrease) £	Increase / (Decrease) %
WM PTA	14,271,461	14,314,000	42,539	0.30
Environment Agency	80,532	80,532	0	0.00
Total	14,351,993	14,394,532	42,539	0.30

Walsall's precepting authorities are the West Midlands Police and Fire & Civil Defence Authorities, as shown in **Table 9** below.

Table 9: Precepts 2013/14				
Precepting Authority	2013/14 Amount £	Band D 2013/14 £	Band D 2012/13 £	Band D Increase %
WM Police	7,846,074	99.45	99.45	0
WM Fire and Civil Defence	3,773,701	47.83	47.83	0
Total	11,619,775	147.28	147.28	0

Reserves

The council's strategy is to continue to demonstrate financial stability and ensure council and service wide financial pressures are well managed. The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) advises on this in accordance with best practice, professional opinion and the council's MTFS. The Government is reviewing the funding of local government, including central funding, and specific funding for services transferring for Public Health, which increases the financial risk to the council. Reserves as at 1 April 2013 are expected to be at the higher threshold of the MTFS requirement to cover this increased risk – prudent action to ensure we provide for risks in accordance with our financial strategy, including those relating to the new central Funding methodology and business rate volatility; and further risk as outlined in Annex 3.

In accordance with sections 25 – 27 of the Local Government Act 2003 and to comply with CIPFA guidance on local authority reserves and balances, the CFO is required to formally consider and report to members upon the robustness of the estimates used for the

purpose of calculating the budget and the adequacy of reserves and balances in respect of the 2013/14 budget. This section of the report has been written by the council's CFO (Assistant Director of Finance), and deals with the requirements of the Act and professional guidance. Consideration of all these issues has been comprehensive and complex. **Annex 3** provides further information and signposts to the various activities, documents and other evidence that have contributed to the decision and declaration, and does not seek to reproduce them here.

Financial Risk and the Medium Term

The budget setting process includes a comprehensive financial risk assessment to determine key risks and their impact on the budget. Services also undertake risk assessments of their budgets by identifying risk factors, potential changes to service delivery and funding streams. This ensures that adequate budgetary provision is available to cover unforeseen future events. This successful approach has been in place for several years and is used to inform the level of earmarked and general reserves.

Managers are also required to deliver services within the available budget. Any known changes in service demand or costs arising from legislative or Government demands are identified and considered within the overall draft revenue budget as investment bids. The budgeted opening level of reserves is sufficient to cover the assessed financial exposure to the council. Any use of reserves in-year may require replenishment to ensure an opening general reserve required by the MTFs.

Included in the risk assessment is an analysis of the economy and pressures going forward. The economy has been subject to significant and rapid change. Funding remains uncertain beyond 2014/15. Inflation has been low, however we are already seeing an increase and some sectors are predicting a sharp increase. Bank rates are expected to remain low at 0.5%, until 2015 when they are expected to be 1.0%.

7. Summary of the 2013/14 Capital Programme

The council has an asset portfolio of around £500m. Therefore managing and maintaining these assets is a key issue for the council to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose and their value is maintained. The capital programme is key to delivering the councils vision and pledges.

Due to the diverse nature of capital expenditure, each capital scheme impacts on residents in different ways according to their use of council facilities and services. Cabinet approved the current Capital Strategy on 15 December 2010 for the period up to and including 2013/14. This document drives the construction and management of the capital programme. The strategy reflects and enables delivery of the council's vision and priorities and approved schemes must deliver that aim. It also requires the council to optimise successful partnership working for example through the Walsall Partnership, NHS Walsall, registered social landlords and regionally with other councils.

The capital programme has been constructed within the principles outlined in our Capital Strategy, which was assessed as good by the former Government Office West Midlands (the highest category available).

The 2013/14 capital programme totals £40.19m (excluding leasing) and is presented in three parts:

- Mainstream programme (£9.91m) - funded through unsupported capital borrowing and capital receipts (**Table 11**). Of this £2.07m is identified for capital investment earmarked reserve projects.
- Non-mainstream programme (£30.28m) - funded from capital grants (**Table 12**).
- Leasing programme of £4.48m – revenue costs of which are funded from service revenue budgets (**Table 13**).

Capital resources will continue to be limited in the future inevitably placing more pressure on existing programmes. Future funding will be more reliant on the council's ability to secure capital receipts from sale of land and buildings or afford additional borrowing. A strategic review of assets is currently being undertaken as part of the 'Asset Management' project, which will inform the revision of the Capital Strategy and formulation of future years capital programmes.

Mainstream Programme: Funded from Walsall's own resources

Funding

The council's mainstream capital programme is normally funded from supported and unsupported borrowing, capital receipts, and the carry forward of unspent allocations from previous years.

Supported borrowing allocations allow the council to borrow up to the amount of the allocation and Government provide an amount within Walsall's grant allocation to fund the cost of borrowing (debt charges). The settlement announced by the Government on 13 December 2010 stated that there will be no supported borrowing for 2 years from 2011/12. No specific allocations have been announced for 2013/14 onwards.

Funding for schemes previously supported by borrowing will now be provided by Government grant, but indications show that the amount of grant available is considerably reduced.

General unsupported borrowing relates to additional borrowing which is funded from the council's own resources – generated through savings, and/or paid for via council tax. Councils 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 £7.7m of additional unsupported borrowing to fund high priority items in 2013/14.

Capital receipt projections of £1.5m for 2013/14 are based on professional estimates of property colleagues. **Table 10** shows currently estimated resources to fund the mainstream capital programme for 2013/14.

Table 10: Estimated Mainstream Capital Resources				
Category	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	2016/17 £m
General unsupported borrowing	6.59	4.63	4.67	4.76
Specific unsupported borrowing	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73
Capital receipts projected	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50
Previous years underspends	0.42	0.00	0.00	0.00
Surplus capital receipts from 2012/13	0.67	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Mainstream resources	9.91	6.86	6.90	6.99

Capital Schemes

For 2013/14, services were asked to review approved schemes in 2012/13 and the expected rephasing or underspends expected to help fund future capital programmes. In addition, new bids were considered in line with the capital strategy and portfolio plans. Details can be found in **Annex 11a**, and are summarised in **Table 11** below.

Table 11: Mainstream Capital Programme 2013/14 by Portfolio			
Portfolio	New Allocations £'000	Earmarked Reserves £'000	Total Mainstream £'000
Children's Services	0	0	0
Community Engagement	0	0	0
Leisure and Culture	1,125	0	1,125
Public Protection	0	0	0
Transport and Environment	1,800	0	1,800
Regeneration	3,256	1,430	4,686
Business Support	907	0	907
Finance and Personnel	0	640	640
Social Care and Health	750	0	750
Total Mainstream Capital	7,838	2,070	9,908

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.

All capital schemes were prioritised by the capital strategy board and CMT prior to formal approval by Cabinet for recommendation to Council. 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 for the next three years.

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 **Annex 11b**.

Externally Funded (Non-Mainstream) Programme

Full details of externally funded schemes can be found in each portfolio plan in **Annex 11c**, and summarised in **Table 12** below. Many of these are indicative allocations pending formal notification from the respective funding bodies, and the capital programme will be adjusted in year to reflect known allocations. Certain schemes can go ahead as these are either fully funded by grant or have the necessary mainstream match funding already approved. If grant or mainstream funding is unavailable the schemes cannot go ahead.

Portfolio	Government Funding £'000	Third Party / External £'000	Total Funding £'000
Children's Services	6,291	0	6,291
Community Engagement	0	0	0
Leisure and Culture	0	2,033	2,033
Public Protection	0	0	0
Transport and Environment	3,512	0	3,512
Regeneration	12,511	5,160	17,671
Business Support	0	0	0
Finance and Personnel	0	0	0
Social Care and Health	770	0	770
Total Externally Funded Capital	23,084	7,193	30,277

Leasing Programme

The 2013/14 leasing programme totals £4.48m, summarised in **Table 13** below. Leasing minimises the call on capital resources by spreading the acquisition cost over some years. Revenue funds are needed to finance operating leases, which are included in the revenue budget.

Portfolio	New Expenditure £'000	New Leasing £'000
Children's Services	0	0
Community Engagement	0	0
Leisure and Culture	0	0
Public Protection	0	0
Transport and Environment	4,412	113
Regeneration	0	0
Business Support	70	0
Finance and Personnel	0	0
Social Care and Health	0	0
Total Leasing Programme	4,482	113

8. Medium term financial outlook – 2014/15 plus

The council has a longstanding commitment to medium term financial planning. In conjunction with work ongoing to revise and enhance the Vision, we are ensuring that resources are available to deliver our aims and objectives and the priorities that flow from that.

Key sources of funding, in particular fees and charges, Government grant and specific grant are assessed on a regular basis, along with emerging cost pressures. The focus is on forward planning to ensure financial risk is managed and mitigated and all known liabilities are funded, including the cost of capital investment decisions.

The future financial environment continues to be challenging for councils. 2014/15 will be the second of a two year settlement. We are uncertain on the direct funding implications for the years beyond 2014/15, although assumptions have been made in our medium term financial plan around overall reductions to Government spending for this period. One of the major thrusts will be for local authorities to keep the business rates generated within the area rather than pooling for national redistribution.

Table 14 shows the anticipated further reduction in 2014/15 Government funding:-

Table 14 : Formula Grant Funding 2014/15 onwards			
	2013/14	2014/15	Movement
	£m	£m	£m
Government central funding	162.85	148.48	14.37

This reduction of £14.37m, based on the provisional settlement announced on 19 December 2012, relates to an anticipated **8.82% reduction in funding** over 2013/14 funding.

Beyond 2014/15, funding allocations remain highly uncertain. The only certainty is that funding will decrease - the question is by how much? Various forecasts exist, but we are anticipating reductions of a further 7.2% for 2015/16 and 6.5% for 2016/17.

The medium term outlook is currently being assessed, with a number of planning scenarios being drawn up. A budget framework will be issued over the coming months to all services to commence the budget process beyond 2013/14.

It is essential that in setting a budget for a particular year, the council has regard to the medium term outlook. The medium term financial goals and targets are updated annually, including using a comprehensive risk assessment approach to analysing and assessing the appropriate level of reserves.

9. Portfolio Plans – 2013/14 onwards

9.1 Children’s Services Portfolio Plan

A. Summary of Services within the Portfolio

Preventative and Targeted Services	Effectiveness, Improvement & Contract Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serco Contract; • Intelligence Management • Strategy / Service Planning; • Partnership Performance Management
	Integrated Young People's Support Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information, Advice and Guidance; • Targeted Youth Support; • Youth Justice Service; • Positive Activities for Young People; • Active Involvement of Young People; • Education Business Partnership; • Work to prevent Teenage Pregnancy; • Parent Partnership for SEN pupils ; • Early Intervention for vulnerable children and families
	Prevention, Workforce Development Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Assessment Framework; • Area Family Support Teams; • Troubled Families • Children’s Workforce Development; • Children's Centres; • Parenting; • Think Family; • Early Years;
	Education Services (Serco)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serco provided education services • Transfer of education services to council • Developing New relationship with Schools • LA Education functions provided by the council
Specialist Services	Corporate Parenting - Placements and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placements services (Adoption, Fostering and Residential Care • Contact and assessment • Disability Service • CAMHS • Sufficiency and Placement Commissioning • Corporate Parenting Board
	Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible Individual for LA • Independent Reviewing Officers • Safeguarding Board • Child Death Overview Panel
	Vulnerable Children and LAC service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable Children SW teams x6 • Initial Response Teams x3

- LAC Teams x 3
- Transition and Leaving Care

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives and Priorities

Walsall council fully supports the Children and Young People's Partnership vision that:

*We want all children and young people in Walsall to be **healthy, happy and safe, to be loved, valued and respected** and to have **high aspirations for a successful future.***

Our objective is that all children are;

1. Safe and supported
2. Healthy and Well
3. Aspiring and attaining
4. Socially included and able to become successful adults

In delivering improved outcomes, our key drivers are:

- Keeping children and young people safe and cared for and positively engaged in their communities
- Providing targeted preventative and early help and support – the right support to the right children, at the right time in the right place
- Championing all children and young people to aspire and achieve and support them in a successful progression to adulthood
- Supporting schools in the drive for high educational standards for all children and young people, especially the most disadvantaged groups - agree
- Ensuring access to adaptable and flexible services provided by a range of providers offering choice and value for money that meet local needs

Priorities

- Improve Safeguarding practice by delivering the Inspection Improvement Plan to ensure rapid and sustainable change for children and families
- Improve educational attainment for all children and narrowing gaps for those children who are disadvantaged and in need
- Manage successful transfer of services from Serco and establishment of new ways of working with schools and academies in Walsall to achieve best outcomes for children and young people
- Ensure right support at right time for vulnerable children and families – through early help and support to better meet local need, including redesigning of Children's Centres
- Reduce number of youth anti social behaviour (ASB) orders and young offenders – ensuring quality practice to meet requirements of Youth Justice Board (YJB) inspectorate (Inspection due 2012/13)
- Mobilise council and partnership leadership and resources to mitigate the impact of increasing poverty and work to improve children's outcomes, thus investing to save increasing costs to the council and partners

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

Schools now have the statutory responsibility to provide/secure impartial universal careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) to young people. The Local Authority retains the statutory duty to ensure more targeted support is available for those young people at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) or those young people who are currently NEET. In view of these changes the council needs to review the current provision and reduce the extent and range of support provided through the IAG contract with Prospects by £254k. It will be essential in this changed context to work closely with schools, the college, local learning and skills providers and regeneration partners to ensure we collectively deliver on our responsibilities to all young people, particularly the most vulnerable.

During this period, the council will cease its contract with SERCO for education functions by April 2013 and set out arrangements to fulfil its Local Authority role and responsibilities to champion educational achievement for all children and young people, and in particular to:

- ensure fair access to all schools for every child
- promote a diverse supply of strong, effective schools
- improve educational attainment for all children and to narrow gaps for those children who are disadvantaged and in need.

Central government have indicated through business rates consultation that the Early Intervention Grant (EIG) will be reduced in 2013/14 compared to 2012/13. Based on current consultation, Walsall's allocation was £15.39m in 2012/13 but would fall to £11.26m in 2013/14. This is a reduction of £4.13m or 26.8%. EIG funds activities such as Children's Centres, disabled children short breaks, connexions and many other programmes. Government have indicated that for the two year old funding currently in EIG, responsibility will move from the EIG and local authorities will receive funding through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

ii. How will you ensure you achieve the above Aims, Objectives, Priorities (what activities / services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?

In the context of reduced resources across the public sector partnership, the Children's Services directorate will need to be reshaped to reflect:

- the significant safeguarding improvement agenda it must meet;
- its responsibilities to co-operate with other partners to secure an effective early help and prevention offer matched to local need;
- its educational functions and the need to forge a new relationship with schools and other learning providers.

The focus will be to ensure that those children most in need of protection and at risk of serious harm will be protected (these include Children in Need, Children on a child Protection Plan and those Children Looked After).

Support will be targeted to vulnerable children so that emerging problems wherever

possible are dealt with before they become more serious. This includes those children with special educational needs and disabilities. Work from Children's Centres will be targeted at those children most in need. Clear pathways to provision and thresholds will be established across the children's partnership.

These reductions in budget, at a time of increasing demand, will mean that we must work differently and focus on maximising the impact we have on the learning and life-chances of children and families by making sure that what we do both across the council, and in partnership, is as effective and efficient as possible. We will monitor and measure what we do across the directorate and through council scrutiny as well as be accountable to the Children's Improvement Board and external inspection and review.

1. Safe and supported

This objective will be delivered as these services will be protected. It will be important to improve our practice effectiveness, reduce delay and drift and ensure at every level of Children's Services we are working with the right children and families at the right time, in the right way.

2. Healthy and Well

It will be essential that the refocusing of our Children's Centres and the reshaping of the Youth Services is targeted on those children and young people in most need and is informed by evidence based practice, to ensure we reduce any negative impact on health and well-being of children and young people

3. Aspiring and attaining

Overall education budgets are reducing locally and nationally. At the same time there is a shift of responsibilities which gives schools and educational providers greater accountability for the attainment for children and young people in Walsall. Ensuring a strategic local overview is key to preventing a negative impact on children's learning chances.

4. Socially included and able to become successful adults

Reductions and changes to Targeted Youth Support and IAG will mean an increased risk of more young people becoming socially excluded and/or at risk of becoming NEET. It will be important that schools, the college learning and skills partners provide impartial IAG effectively and well to their students. It is also essential that we work together to discharge our collective responsibility to ensure all young people are supported to gain good qualifications and skills and can access quality advice and guidance that enhances their employability prospects.

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10a**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Children's Services portfolio is £66.13m. Excluding accounting changes as a result of a change in Government treatment of Early Intervention Grant amounting to £15.402m and the new Education Services grant of £3.8m, the movement from 2012/13 is -£1.49m.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, the proposed capital programme for the Children's Services portfolio is £6.29m - all external funded.

9.2 Community Engagement Portfolio Plan

A. Summary of Services within the Portfolio

The services to the Community Engagement portfolio include:-

- Area Partnerships
- Community Development

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives, Priorities

- Devolution through an Area Partnership model.
- Creating and sustaining a vibrant voluntary and community sector.

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

It is proposed that the service will initially develop and then deliver against a model for change based on the principles of devolution which will help “empower” local communities to take greater control of their lives and the decisions which impact on them.

There will be no change to the funding amounts for each Area Partnership of £40K, however, the funding will be via a replenishment each year rather than a dedicated budget.

Within the initial period it is envisaged that there will be a culture of change that will emanate from the “Community Engagement” portfolio that draws key services towards a greater focus around locality and the differences between areas. To this end devolved budgets will be explored, tools such as participatory budgeting and the potential for the voluntary and community sector to deliver better services to the community at less cost than is currently afforded. All of this work will sit within the context of “working smarter”.

ii. How will you ensure you achieve the above Aims, Objectives, Priorities (what activities / services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?

A model for change based on Area Partnerships and devolution is currently being developed through Cabinet and Corporate Management Team. This work also includes support to further develop Walsall’s Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), particularly with respect to VCS infrastructure either at a Borough wide level or within localities.

The service will deliver against a refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and refreshed Area Plans. Delivery against these documents and the degree to which they achieve their purpose will be monitored/measured against their objectives and for the Area Plans, their relevant actions. This work will be monitored not only by Cabinet, Council and Scrutiny, but also by agreed partnership support arrangements, including the Walsall Borough Management Team.

In addition to the above, supporting work with the Voluntary and Community Sector within Walsall currently includes providing Council funding through the Community Engagement portfolio, for a range of community based activity. This work is supported by a number of

Grant Agreements, whose current objectives will continue to be assessed against community need and as appropriate refreshed. Alongside this there will be a drive to improve Walsall's ability to attract external grant funding either directly by the Council or in particular via the Voluntary and Community Sector.

As a final point the viability of key sites as "community hubs" to provide important services to local communities will be assessed to establish how they might be sustained and further developed into the future. Delivery against such arrangements will be monitored through the achievement or otherwise of "Community Hub" business planning objectives pertinent to each venue and their immediate locality.

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10b**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Community Engagement portfolio is £1.89m, showing a movement of £240k from 2012/13. However, this reduction of £240k represents only a funding change and overall total spend will remain unchanged.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, there are no capital projects included in the draft programme for the Community Engagement portfolio.

9.3 Leisure and Culture Portfolio Plan

A. Summary of Services within the Portfolio

Greenspaces and grounds maintenance:

- Countryside sites, Park ranger service, greenspaces improvements, allotments, grounds maintenance

Bereavement and Registration:

- Streetly Crematorium, 8 Cemeteries (Bentley, Bloxwich, James Bridge, North Walsall, Ryecroft, Streetly, Willenhall Lawn and Wood Street Cemetery), Registration service (Births, deaths and marriages), shared Black Country Coroner service (with Sandwell, Dudley and Wolverhampton), Post Mortem service through Walsall Manor Hospital

Sport and Leisure:

- Oak Park Leisure Centre, Bloxwich Leisure Centre, Gala Baths, Darlaston Swimming Pool, Sneyd Water sports Centre, Walsall (Aldridge) Airport Environmental & Outdoor Education Centre, Sports & Health Development, Town Hall Management (Walsall & Darlaston), Development and Box Office, Behavioural Improvement team

Catering Services:

- School catering service for 64 schools, Walsall Town Hall Restaurant, catering in park pavilions (Willenhall and Palfrey)

Technical, Safety and Administration:

- Overall health and safety management within Leisure and Community Health, administrative and business support, Borough-wide Safety Advisory Group (SAG) Chair

Libraries:

- Operating through a network of 16 branch libraries, mobile library services and a school's library support service

Museum services:

- Through Walsall Museum and the Leather Museum

Archive and local history services:

- Through the Local History Centre

Arts services:

- The New Art Gallery
- Forest Arts centre and music service
- Creative Development Team

Adult and Community Learning, Apprenticeship Training and Training to support local Companies: Through Walsall Adult and Community College (WACC)

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives, Priorities

On behalf of the Leisure and Culture Portfolio, the Leisure and Community Health Service seeks to “*maintain and improve the health and well-being of all Walsall’s residents.*”

This is delivered through the provision of a range of indoor and outdoor sports, leisure and recreation opportunities, the delivery of healthy and nutritional school meals, the availability of sports and health development, outdoor education and behavioural improvement

The objective is to get more people doing more activity, becoming healthier, being happier whilst also achieving a variety of health improvements such as weight loss, smoking cessation, less stress and fewer days off sick.

The Streetpride service will develop and maintain the Borough's greenspaces to ensure they are enjoyed and used by all the community. This will include countryside sites, our major strategic parks, other greenspaces and allotments.

Libraries Heritage and Arts will offer residents of all ages a wider range of facilities and cultural experiences to use and enjoy and help to make Walsall a place that they can enjoy and be proud to live in. Services will also offer children and young people opportunities to learn, discover and develop to fulfil their full potential.

In line with the priority to support business, libraries will offer access to up to date business information and encourage new business by offering small business start up packs. Through free access to computers and basic skills courses they will help people develop their learning and skills to help them into employment.

In line with the council's commitment to improve residents' prospects to secure and retain work, manage their own health and wellbeing and be active citizens, the College offers a range of courses that address skills for life, skills for employment, and skills for active citizenship as well as Apprenticeship training designed and delivered in collaboration with local employers.

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

Leisure and Community Health

Catering Services:

- It is envisaged that savings will arise from a change in the way that free school meals are charged to schools based on actual costs.

Greenspaces

Following the merger of Green Spaces into Street Pride there will be an ongoing service redesign to deliver operational efficiencies from 2013/14 to 2016/17.

Libraries, Heritage and Arts

The level of savings required require a radical rethinking of how services are delivered in line with Vanguard and Working Smarter principles. Opportunities to develop joint working with partners such as Social Care and WACC will help identify savings for the council and retain local access to services, information and guidance.

The New Art Gallery:

- A service redesign will review activity and seek to deliver some functions in new ways. In 2013/14 the vacant audience development post will be deleted and the Creative Development Team (CDT) will be commissioned to deliver a cultural events programme with the programme funding identified for audience development. If the New Art Gallery is successful in bidding to host the Turner Prize in 2015 it will require maximum accessibility and a fully focussed and flexible staffing structure.

Forest Arts Centre and Music Service:

- Forest is now recognised as a regional hub for the Music Service and has restructured its services to deliver this new way of working through a commissioning model. It is expected that the Government plan to deliver Cultural Hubs will follow a similar model and Forest is seeking to position itself to undertake this role as well.

Walsall Adult Community College (WACC)

- WACC is largely externally funded by the Skills Funding Agency and receives income to support fees from individuals and contributions to the costs of training from employers. The contract with the Skills Funding Agency is agreed annually and will remain under pressure over the next three years. WACC has modelled a 1% decrease year on year and undertakes an annual review of its staffing and resources expenditure to reflect this potential reduction as well as routinely bidding for external funds from other sources, increasing fee income and implementing waste reduction strategies and innovations in teaching and learning practices.

ii. How will you ensure you achieve the above Aims, Objectives, Priorities (what activities/services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?

Leisure and Community Health:

- In conjunction with NHS Public Health, a range of measurable targets will be developed reflecting the aim to deliver increased attendances by existing users, more new users, and reductions in Body Mass Index (BMI).

Street Pride:

- We will continue to maintain parks, grass areas, shrub beds, trees, horticultural and outdoor sports facilities to the highest possible standard with the resources available. This will necessitate increasing prioritisation to protect the most important locations and activities.

Libraries, Heritage and Arts:

- Ongoing review and redesign of the services and systems in keeping with working smarter principles around the “customer experience”.
- Considering opportunities to develop partnerships with other agencies and services to enhance the offer to residents, share premises or offer access to other services and consider, where appropriate the outsourcing of activities.
- Optimising systems and streamlining key processes to improve efficiency and effectiveness; take out waste and free up staff time to add value at the front line service.
- Develop partnerships with local communities to deliver local access to services and the use of volunteers to add value to services.

- Making effective use of partnerships both within the council and with external partners to deliver enhanced services such as learning hubs, ICT based skills training and reading and literacy groups for people with special needs.
- Improved procurement to drive down costs e.g. libraries are part of a Black Country Consortium for purchasing stock.
- Generating additional income, service redesign and restructures, with flexible working practices introduced.

Walsall Adult Community College

- We will continue to target resource savings through our sustainability strategy at a rate of £40,000 per year and monitor the utilisation of our teaching staff to ensure all staff are fully utilised on provision that draws funding from the Skills Funding Agency. We will also improve the efficiency of classes by increasing the ration of students to teachers to a class average of 12:1. This will enable us to reduce our staff costs in line with projected funding reductions and maintain a ratio of 65% staff costs to turnover.

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10c**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Leisure and Culture portfolio is £15.01m, showing a movement from 2012/13 of -£1.79m.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, the proposed capital programme for the Leisure and Culture portfolio is £3.16m - £1.13m funded from mainstream (council's own resources) and £2.03m from external sources.

9.4 Public Protection Portfolio Plan

A. Summary of Services within the Portfolio

Services to Public Protection include:

- Trading Standards and Licensing
- Environmental Health
- Community Safety

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives, Priorities

- Prevention and reduction of Anti Social Behaviour
- Citizens are healthy
- Deliver the Community Safety Plan
- Environmental Enforcement

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

Trading Standards, Licensing and Environmental Health

Within 2013/14 the suggested savings come from some reduction in supplies and services together with flexible working arrangements becoming permanent, the use of flexible retirement and half of an enforcement officer post being made redundant.

Community Safety

In 2013/14 the community safety service will be adapting to a new commissioning environment that will be led by an elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). During this period it is anticipated that the Government's White paper 'Putting victims first - more effective responses to antisocial behaviour' will continue on its passage through Parliament. This will be a year of change in which we will hear the PCC's priorities for future funding. To accommodate transition there are no recommended savings in 2013/14 from council mainstream budgets, however the service will be looking as always for more effective and efficient ways to deliver the community safety agenda.

ii. How will you ensure you achieve the above Aims, Objectives, Priorities (what activities / services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?

Trading Standards, Licensing and Environmental Health

The proposed budget reductions for Trading Standards, Licensing and Environmental Health for the next financial year will require a slight service redesign to allow us to continue to provide current services with a minimum of detriment to performance. Effectiveness will be measured by performance monitoring.

Community Safety

The Community Safety services objectives, outcomes and purpose will be supported at current levels during 2013/14 thus providing the service with a window of time to work with the new Police and Crime Commissioner as they become established and their agenda becomes known. It will be important during this time to seek to develop a model for change that is consistent not only with the new commissioning environment but one that is able to respond to new ways of delivering a Community Safety Service within new Government frameworks and policies. At the time of writing for example, we are already aware of the Government's thoughts on how Anti-Social Behaviour might be tackled differently in the future, as the white paper 'Putting victims first - more effective responses to antisocial behaviour' makes its passage through Parliament.

The success of the service will be measured through the Borough's Community Safety Plan which is supported and performance managed by the Safer Walsall Community Safety Partnership.

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10d**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Public Protection portfolio is £3.55m, showing a movement from 2012/13 of -£0.31m.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, there are no capital projects included in the draft programme for the Public Protection portfolio.

9.5 Transport and Environment Portfolio Plan

A. Summary of Services within the Portfolio

Services within the Environment and Transport Portfolio include:

- Traffic and transportation
- Car parking
- Gateways and corridors
- Strategic transport and highways
- Waste management
- Emergency planning,
- Clean and green agenda
- Pollution control,
- Street cleansing
- Cemeteries and crematoria.

Engineering and Transportation Services:

Engineering and Transportation Services provide a range of statutory and non-statutory services and are made up of several teams consisting of Pollution Control, Transportation and Forward Planning, Roadworks Management, Structures and Geotechnics, Highways Maintenance, Public Lighting, Traffic Management Urban Traffic Control and Parking Services, and Major Projects and Minor Improvements scheme delivery. The service also operates the Winter Service. The service is essential in assisting the economy and for regeneration of the borough with private sector and public sector within the requirements of the duty to cooperate as defined in the Localism Act. The Emergency Planning Team provides a service that ensures a managed and coordinated response to meet all locally and significant events.

Street Pride:

The services currently provided by Street Pride include:

- Waste Management and Cleansing: Domestic Waste Collection including Bulky Collections, Trade Waste Collections, Kerbside Garden Waste Collection, Dry Recycling Collections, Education Initiatives, Waste Disposal, Street Cleansing including Town Centre Gold Standard and Public Conveniences Cleansing.
- Fleet Services: Management of Council Vehicles, MOT / Garage Facilities
- Policy and Performance: Management and Administration, Policy Improvements and Initiatives, Performance Review and customer consultation

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives, Priorities

1. We will continue to deal effectively with the poor condition of many of the Borough's roads and to do this we will invest an additional investment in more planned maintenance. This will provide a durable solution which will help avoid more costly repairs in the longer term
2. We will review town centre parking to balance the needs of visitors, traders and residents
3. We will continue the successful trials to provide more energy efficient street lighting without compromising on road safety.

4. We will take enforcement action against double yellow parking outside schools and fine drivers who use bus lanes illegally
5. We will continue the popular and successful household waste collection service and identify new ways to improve further our already impressive recycling rates.
6. We will continue to promote a clean and green environment throughout the borough.

These priorities sit within the council's Corporate Plan framework as approved by Council in April 2011:

- Communities and neighbourhoods;
The economy, and;
- Health and wellbeing.

The outcomes we will achieve for communities and neighbourhoods are that:

- Residents are happy with local services
- Residents feel they can influence decisions locally
- Streets are well maintained and clean
- Residents recycle more waste
- Communities feel safe from crime and anti-social behaviour
- More residents volunteer locally
- Communities are cohesive

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

Engineering and Transportation:

Service levels are primarily governed by national and local regulation and legislation. Following earlier service reviews and the associated identification of efficiencies (utilising LEAN and Vanguard techniques), improved systems and processes have been introduced to ensure effective service delivery. The staff employed total some 90 excluding those on casual and temporary contracts. The proposals have been designed to minimise any impact on delivery of capital projects meeting the requirements of the Local Transport Plan. As part of the process to implement the identified savings a full review of the management structure is underway and the service restructure will take into account the outcome of recent Vanguard and efficiency reviews within the service.

The service has a gross revenue budget of some £16m. Services are delivered utilising DfT capital resources, grants, and fees and are dependent on income such as that received from our parking service to maintain a balanced budget. The service has already outsourced the lighting (PFI contract over 26 years), and highways services (approx £7m per year up to 2015).

We operate many shared contracts and in partnership with adjacent Black Country and West Midlands authorities. The Emergency Planning Manager operates a shared service with Sandwell. Sandwell assist Walsall with structural engineering support. This will be developed further in areas such as framework contracts for delivery of projects and Black Country shared services such as Urban Traffic Control (UTC) and parking.

The major impact of the cash limited budgets will be on works' budgets. In comparison with other authorities, this council currently funds a higher proportion of its highways maintenance expenditure from its revenue budget as opposed to its capital programme. A capital bid for £250,000 in 2013/14 is included in the budget to address this, allowing for a revenue saving of £250,000 to be offered up.

Walsall's industrial legacy has left significant amounts of contaminated land and as such there is a major need for regulation, assessment and remediation to protect the public but also to assist the future regeneration of the borough. The budget proposals will protect our ability to deliver on this obligation particularly in relation to high priority locations.

Street Pride:

The cash limited budgets within Street Pride will be met mainly through further efficiency savings. The principal efficiencies are as follows:

- Domestic refuse collection crews will be reduced from 15 to 14 in 2013/14. This is an operational efficiency derived from an increase in productivity with no adverse impact for the public.
- Garden waste collection crews (brown bins) will be reduced from 7 to 4 in 2013/14, with the service using agency staff and hired vehicles during the peak season. This is an operational efficiency derived from an increase in performance targets with no adverse effect to the public.
- Trade waste collection crews will be reduced from 4 to 3 in 2013/14 as a result of changes to customer base, operational service re-design and round optimisation.
- Procurement of waste collection vehicles will be financed differently resulting in savings in each of the four years.
- There will be a change in the Gold Standard for street cleansing in Walsall Town Centre as a result of operational changes and improved efficiency of resources without an adverse effect on standards.
- Service redesign and general reduction in waste collection, street cleansing and grounds maintenance will result in reduced fleet running costs (fuel, repairs etc).

In addition, public conveniences are proposed to be closed in 2013/14. Bloxwich and Walsall Bus Station toilets will remain open. Walsall toilets are managed under contract with Centro.

Finally, an extended garden waste collection closedown will be introduced from the autumn of 2013 with a closedown in the winter for 4 months when the requirement for collection of green waste from the public is significantly reduced.

- ii. How will you ensure you achieve the above Aims, Objectives, Priorities (what activities / services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?**

Engineering and Transportation:

As indicated above, the services will be resourced and modified to ensure efficiency and effectiveness to meet minimum requirements. The PFI funded street lighting service is required to meet full output specifications and performance measures will be used to assess and confirm (or otherwise) the meeting of these requirements.

Performance and delivery of the service is managed across the West Midlands via a robust governance process. Highways condition surveys, coordination with Black Country and West Midlands authorities and public perception surveys will also be used to measure performance.

The car parking and parking enforcement services will be monitored using current performance measures.

We will continue to liaise with Regeneration over the provision of car parking in our town centres to help ensure we have the right car parks in the right locations.

Further 'invest to save' initiatives will be implemented to safeguard against further energy price increases and ensure appropriate capital bids are considered.

Resources will be effectively used to ensure capital schemes are delivered to meet DfT programmes and the associated grant conditions.

Street Pride:

The refuse collection and disposal services will be monitored using current Waste Data Flow and the calculation for relevant National Indicators (NI 192 and 193). It is likely there will be some negative impact on recycling rates with reduced tonnage of green waste collected.

Resources for street cleansing will be maximised to ensure that we continue to remove litter, fly tipping, and graffiti and deal with other environmental crime, particularly from identified priority locations. Performance will be measured using relevant performance indicators including National Indicators NI 196 and NI 196

We will continue to maintain and operate the council's fleet of vehicles and equipment which will be rationalised where necessary to match service needs and maximise value for money.

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10e**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Transport and Environment portfolio is £33.97m, showing a movement from 2012/13 of -£1.78m. Excluding accounting changes for realignment of leasing, and funding changes of £250k for which capital funding will replace revenue, the net change will be -£0.41m.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, the proposed capital programme for the Transport and Environment portfolio is £5.3m - £1.8m funded from mainstream (council's own resources) and £3.5m from external sources.

There is also £4.4m of additional vehicle expenditure to be funded from leasing in 2013/14.

9.6 Regeneration Portfolio Plan

A. Summary of Services within the Portfolio

- Strategic Regeneration
- Development & Delivery
- Planning & Building Control
- Property Services
- Housing Services

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives, Priorities

“Create the conditions for sustained economic growth by supporting the growth of business and jobs in Walsall, ensuring Walsall people have the right skills and environment to make the most of opportunities”

Manage our assets well:

- Stimulate private investment
- Support service delivery
- Reduce costs & liabilities

Support our town and district centres:

- Improve footfall
- Increase investment
- Improve customer experience

Create the right sites for business:

- Attract new business
- Retain existing business
- Raise external reputation of Walsall
- Create future supply
- Business friendly council

Support business growth:

- Understand & respond to new & existing business needs
- Retain & increase jobs
- Promote Walsall to new investors
- Improving transport links to improve infrastructure opening up employment sites
- Improving traffic flows within Walsall and our connections to others
- Improving public transport

Address unemployment:

- Reduce worklessness & resulting demands
- Raise aspirations
- Increase spending & demand in Walsall economy

Improve skills:

- Improve chances of getting & keeping a job
- Improve future resilience & employment flexibility

New and better homes:

- Respond to housing need
- Improve existing homes
- Create new homes

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

Property

Operational efficiencies in areas of building security; repairs and maintenance; materials and use of external design consultants have been proposed. Historical underspends have previously existed against these activity areas and it is considered lower risk to target these areas for savings in 2013/14. It is not anticipated that any changes in employee numbers or organisational structures will be necessary to deliver these savings. The size of the property estate will continue to reduce as part of the agreed Smarter Workplaces activity. This will dovetail with a wider review of asset use during 2013/14.

Development and Delivery

Operational efficiencies through service redesign within the markets will be delivered reflecting the overall reduced service across the borough. There will also be a modest increase in market rents payable on Walsall Market. The market rent change is anticipated to generate £100,000 of additional income. A policy decision to implement this has been taken by Cabinet, following consultation.

Strategic Regeneration

There are no budget changes planned for this period.

Planning and Building Control

Removal of three existing vacant posts in directorate support.

Housing

Management will be streamlined and service delivery more integrated. Services will become more efficient and effective by designing and reviewing against customer demand and what matters to customers. Fee income for the delivery of capital works schemes will increase.

ii. How will you ensure you achieve the above Aim, Objectives, Priorities (what activities / services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?

Property

This will be achieved by regular monitoring and reporting within the service area against clear baseline budget positions by named budget managers. This activity will be supported by Finance.

Development and Delivery

This will be achieved by regular monitoring and reporting within the service area against clear baseline budget positions by named budget managers. This activity will be supported by Finance. All services will remain within approved cash limits through active external

contract and internal budget management.

Strategic Regeneration

All services will remain within approved cash limits through active external contract and internal budget management. Remaining service delivery will be re-focussed against key customer priorities established at the time of loss.

Planning and Building Control

The service has recently been redesigned in order to achieve the required savings and we will continue to review the needs of our customers in any further redesign.

Housing

This will be achieved by regular monitoring and reporting within the service area against clear baseline budget positions by named budget managers. This activity will be supported by Finance.

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10f**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Regeneration portfolio is £8.67m, showing a movement from 2012/13 of -£2.85m. Of this, £1.09m relates to removal of one-off funding in 2012/13, resulting in an adjusted reduction of -£1.76m.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, the proposed capital programme for the Regeneration portfolio is £22.36m - £4.69m funded from mainstream (council's own resources) and £17.67m from external sources.

9.7 Business Support Services

A. Summary of Services provided by the portfolio

Communications, Marketing and Consultation:

- Public relations and media management; reputation management; communications strategy, planning and campaign delivery; media monitoring and evaluation and reporting; internal communications; social media; digital and websites (including council websites and internet); marketing (including income generation and the promotion of venues e.g. New Art Gallery, through to the promotion of services e.g. fostering and adoption); marketing (publications and promotional materials, sponsorship and advertising)

Shared Services and Procurement:

- ICT services and support; procurement; print and design

Business Improvement:

- Business information and intelligence, business analysis, service re-design; systems thinking training; programme and project management; governance reviews (of strategic programmes or projects); freedom of information act/data protection act (co-ordination and management of all enquiries); customer complaints - statutory (social care and children's) and non-statutory; ombudsman - (co-ordination and management of issues and relationship with ombudsman); policy co-ordination (maintenance of strategies and policy database, production and distribution of monthly policy round-up and legislation tracker, ad hoc support to policy development); strategic planning (production of Corporate Plan and contribution to other strategic documents).

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives, Priorities

Communications, Marketing and Consultation:

- To let me know what the council does and how I can access the 800 services delivered I need in a way that suits me.
- To tell me (and a range of other customers, including the media) honestly what the council is doing.
- To provide a two-way communications service to internal departments and to support them in the delivery of their service priorities

Shared Services and Procurement:

- To reduce my council tax bill by working in a way that makes best use of money.
- To help my council procure the best value for money.
- To allow me to access council services that are efficient at a time and place that I choose.

Business Improvement:

- To listen to what I tell the council and help change the council to focus on me.

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

Communications, Marketing and Consultation:

Our communications will be better targeted to meet the needs of our public service delivery. We will only do marketing work that has demonstrable value to our customers.

Shared Services and Procurement:

We will negotiate better so that our contracts with others give improved value for money for Walsall people.

ii. How will you ensure you achieve the above Aims, Objectives, Priorities (what activities / services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?

- We will remain best in class when we compare ourselves with our Black Country neighbours.
- We will deliver significant financial savings through contract negotiation. Additional to the savings set out attached, a contract negotiation team is being established to provide council wide support to the delivery of more efficient, value for money contracts. Contracts to the value of c£240m are managed by the council. A saving of £1.5m is assumed within the draft revenue budget 2013/14 as a reasonable estimate of what can be achieved from the work of the team.
- We will get even better value for money from our communications activity.

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10g**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Business Support portfolio is £7.63m (excluding internal income), showing a movement from 2012/13 of -£1.96m.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, the proposed capital programme for the Business Support portfolio is £0.91m - all funded from mainstream (council's own resources).

There is also £0.07m of additional vehicle expenditure to be funded from leasing in 2013/14.

9.8 Finance and Personnel Portfolio Plan

A. Summary of Services provided by the portfolio

Finance:

- Accountancy, financial reporting, financial management, financial systems, financial strategy and planning, budget setting, financial support and advice to directorates
- Risk and Insurance - claims handling, insurance fund management, risk management
- Treasury Management including cash management and banking
- Financial administration – Accounts payable and receivable, debt management and recovery

Internal Audit:

- An assurance service that provides an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the control environment
- Advisory and related client services which are carried out to improve services and to add value, including the impact of proposed policy initiatives, programmes and projects as well as emerging risks
- Prevention, detection and investigation of fraud and corruption; and other irregularity

Benefits and Revenues as part of “*Money, Home, Job*”:

- Advice, customer application support, assessment, revision, payment, recovery of overpayments, customer queries, complaints and appeals of the following benefits:-
- Housing and council tax benefit; including administration of the housing benefit subsidy and grant claims and returns.
- Discretionary housing payments
- Free school meals
- The prevention, detection and investigation of benefit fraud and error, including the application of sanctions.
- Training and advisory sessions delivered to partner organisations.
- Council tax - billing, collection, recovery and enforcement
- Non domestic rates (business rates) - billing, collection, recovery and enforcement
- Banking hall – corporate income collection service, including cheque processing, car parking money, external payment facilitator (WHG, south staffs water), social care payments, petty cash, internal payment facilitator (most council service transacted).
- Welfare rights unit – income maximisation, debt advice, benefits based charging scheme (previously the fairer charging scheme)

Human Resources:

- Human Resources (HR) Direct, Intranet/HR portal
- Payroll and pensions/transactional services
- HR Specialist Services. The teams within this service are business partner (directorates support), wellbeing and equality and learning and development

Legal and Democratic Services:

- Legal Services providing legal advice and dealing with litigation
- Constitutional advice

- Administration of the council's formal decision-making processes
- Elections and electoral registration

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives, Priorities

Finance and internal audit:

- Enable the council to be financially stable, well governed, making the best use of money the council is given, and providing the citizens and businesses of Walsall the services they require.

Benefits and Revenues as part of 'Money, Home, Job':

- The benefit service will deliver the right benefit to the right person at the right time.

Revenues:

- The revenue service will ensure customers receive the right bill first time without delay and have a choice of how to pay their council tax or business rates. The service will also help customers to maximise their welfare rights income and offer debt advice for those who are in greatest need.

Human resources:

- Human resources will work with local community partners to promote 'local jobs for local people'; continue to engage and involve staff; reduce sickness absence; support a healthy workforce; continue to manage the TUPE transfers in and out of services; successful implementation of pay and grading; successful restructuring and realignment of services

Legal and Democratic services:

- Support the councillors to do the best job they can the citizens and businesses of Walsall. Enable the citizens and businesses of Walsall to trust the integrity of the Council and what it does and provide the legal services that they require.

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

Finance:

- Final accounts and grant claims will be completed swifter, with time required for audit reduced by senior officer review.
- Claims handling will be improved in insurance.
- The value for money provided through financial administration will continue to improve.

Benefits and Revenues as part of 'Money, Home, Job':

- Customers will get better help, more quickly through the implementation of the 'Money, Home' Job' operating model

Human resources:

- Our training budget will be focused on key priorities.

Legal and Democratic services:

- The service will focus even more effectively on the priorities of its customers.

- ii. **How will you ensure you achieve the above Aims, Objectives, Priorities (what activities / services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?**

Finance

A financially stable authority, where resources are matched to priorities money spent, in a lawful way that delivers the most efficient and effective services. The council will remain an ongoing concern, with appropriate levels of reserves to meet its future commitments. The council will pass its value for money judgement as assessed by external auditors. The accounts will have an unqualified approval reported to audit committee. Budgets will be set and adhered to. The balance sheet will show appropriate ratios borrowing will not be excessive; investments will be prudent; we will pay our suppliers within approved timescales and we will collect our income appropriately and in a timely manner.

Internal Audit

The audit plan will be completed and appropriate level of assurance given by the head of internal audit to the Audit Committee, in their annual report.

Human Resources

The council will become an organisation with a modern flexible workforce employing employees with the right skills in the right place at the right time. The council will be seen as an employer of choice with a modern pay and reward package. The council will be an organisation recognised as having modern and fit for purpose human resource processes and procedures. The council will be an employer recognised as being in the forefront of equal opportunities and the provision of support for a healthy work life balance.

Benefits and Revenues as part of 'Money, Home, Job'

The right benefits will be provided to customers without delay. Council tax or business rates will be collected from the citizens of Walsall having delivered the right bills, first time without delay. The service will also have made available welfare rights officers to meet customer demand for income maximisation and debt matters across the borough.

Legal and Democratic Services

Legal and Democratic services will ensure that the council acts in a lawful manner in its decision-making, in accordance with legislation and the council's constitution. It will provide a timely effective service that is valued by its clients and citizens of Walsall, whilst at the same time providing value for money

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10h**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Finance and Personnel portfolio is £27.21m (excluding internal income), showing a movement from 2012/13 of -£1.56m.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, the proposed capital programme for the Finance and Personnel portfolio is £0.64m - all funded from mainstream (council's own resources).

9.9 Social Care and Health Portfolio Plan

A. Summary of Services within the Portfolio

The portfolio covers social care services for adults and older people with physical disability, sensory impairment, learning difficulties, mental health issues, substance misuse, autism, HIV/AIDS. Specifically we offer:

- Response, information, advice and signposting
- Preventative services, community alarms, tele-care, tele-healthcare
- Enablement and re-ablement
- Assessment and review
- Resource allocation and support planning
- Safeguarding of vulnerable adults
- Whole sector workforce planning and development
- Commissioning of services including residential, nursing, day care, home care, extra care (incl. Housing 21), supporting people and the learning disability and integrated community equipment pooled budgets
- Shaping and development of adult social care market
- Quality assurance of services
- Direct service provision: reablement, response, day and respite care, adult placements
- Housing related support for vulnerable groups

B. Portfolio Aims, Objectives, Priorities

Our operating model describes our approach:

“to support people to maximise their independence, health and well being and thus to ensure they have an amount of service that leads to personal outcomes in line with this goal”.

In addition, we focus on arranging services in ways that actively re-able people to regain a higher level of independence and well being, thereby reducing the amount of support needed over time.

The broad aims are:

1. To help citizens to access universal services
2. To assist citizens to access mainstream services
3. To provide access to a range of community based health and social care services
4. To prevent citizens becoming socially excluded and needing more intensive and costly health and social care services by providing a range of practical services close to home
5. To reduce dependence on services, and support independence and self directed support
6. To commission good quality services that provide real choices for citizens to achieve their outcomes

C. Service Design (informed by customer demand)

i. How will activities change between 2012/13 and 2013/14?

1. Continuation of our resettlement programme.

2. Reducing staffing and overheads costs (by deletion of vacant posts / redundancies / introduction of 1.5% vacancy management saving; reduction in stationery and materials budgets)

ii. How will you ensure you achieve the above Aims, Objectives, Priorities (what activities / services will be provided) within the cash limited budget available, and how will you measure this?

Our operating model aligns our objectives and outcomes to our service design. We will therefore continue to:

1. Arrange and deliver statutory services (assessment, support planning and review)
2. Provide information, advice and signposting for all service users and carers
3. Arrange and in some cases provide a range of preventative and re-ablement services
4. Fund personal budgets based on assessed need, within reduced available resources
5. Safeguard vulnerable adults and older people
6. Shape the social care market so that it can respond to the needs of vulnerable adults and older people during a period of reducing state resources

We will continue to measure the achievement of our objectives and outcomes through rigorous monitoring and management of activity and budgets, using statutory indicators and returns, and other intelligence such as complaints and compliments, supplementing these with local indicators where justified (for example in relation to response, information, advice and signposting, preventative services and re-ablement).

D. Draft Revenue Budget 2013/14

The provisional revenue budget for 2013/14 is attached at **Annex 1**. The detailed portfolio revenue cash limit is attached at **Annex 10i**, which summarises the proposed cash limit for 2013/14, and the proposed change in activity required from 2012/13.

In summary the proposed net budget for 2013/14 for the Social Care and Health portfolio is £70.54m. Excluding accounting changes as a result of a change in Government treatment of Learning disability and public health reform funding, the movement from 2012/13 is -£1.66m.

E. Future capital requirements

The draft capital programme for 2013/14 and future years is attached at **Annex 11**. In summary, the proposed capital programme for the Social Care and Health portfolio is £1.52m - £0.75m funded from mainstream (council's own resources) and £0.77m from external sources.

Section 2 – Treasury Management

Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2013/14 Onwards

Members consider the treasury management and investment strategy each year as a requirement of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services; the updated version (revised November 2010) of which Cabinet formally adopted on 22 March 2010.

The suggested strategy for 2013/14 onwards in respect of the following aspects of the treasury management function is based upon the treasury officers' views on interest rates, supplemented with leading market forecasts provided by the council's treasury adviser, Sector.

The strategy covers:

Annex 4

- Treasury limits in force, which will limit the treasury risk and activities of the council
- The current treasury position
- The borrowing requirement
- Debt rescheduling and debt repayment
- Local Authority Mortgage Scheme(LAMS)

Annex 5

- Borrowing Objectives
- Investment Objectives
- Creditworthiness policy
- Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement 2012/13 onwards

Annex 6

- National and Local Prudential and Treasury Indicators

Annex 7

- Economic Outlook and Interest Rate Forecast
- Policy on use of external service providers

Annex 8

- Glossary of Terms (includes explanation of Treasury Management technical terms)

ANNEX 1: SUMMARY OF CORPORATE REVENUE BUDGET 2013/14 BY PORTFOLIO

PORTFOLIO / SERVICE / LEVY	2012/13 BASIC FORECAST £000	IN YEAR MOVEMENTS £000	BUDGET REFRESH £000	2013/14 BASIC FORECAST £000
Children's Services	54,601	1,659	11,363	67,623
Community Engagement	2,064	62	0	2,126
Leisure and Culture	18,019	-1,225	-34	16,760
Public Protection	3,971	-113	-152	3,706
Transport and Environment	34,601	1,149	-1,119	34,631
Regeneration	10,328	1,191	-1,184	10,335
Business Support Services	311	-304	-35	-28
Finance and Personnel	15,605	683	-122	16,166
Social Care and Inclusion	66,379	459	5,353	72,191
SUB TOTAL SERVICES	205,879	3,561	14,070	223,510
Capital Financing	23,285	0	0	23,285
Removal of impact of depreciation	-17,658	0	0	-17,658
Non-service specific /central items	-116,612	-3,922	-31,254	-151,788
SUB TOTAL CENTRAL ITEMS	-110,985	-3,922	-31,254	-146,161
Levies:				
PTE	14,271	2	41	14,314
Environment Agency	81	0	0	81
NET REVENUE EXPENDITURE	109,246	-359	-17,143	91,744
(Use of)/contribution to reserves	0	0	0	0
GRAND TOTAL COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT	109,246	-359	-17,143	91,744

FYE OF PREVIOUS APPROVED SAVINGS £000	FYE OF PREVIOUS APPROVED INVESTMENT £000	NEW SAVINGS / EFFICIENCIES £000	NEW COST PRESSURES £000	AMENDED FORECAST 2013/14 £000
-30	0	-2,629	1,171	66,135
0	0	-240	0	1,886
-186	0	-1,618	51	15,007
0	0	-154	0	3,552
0	0	-2,052	1,388	33,967
0	0	-1,690	25	8,670
-99	0	-1,833	1	-1,959
-334	-53	-1,149	102	14,732
-1,500	323	-1,838	1,359	70,535
-2,149	270	-13,203	4,097	212,525
-316	0	0	0	22,969
0	0	0	0	-17,658
-400	0	0	5,509	-146,679
-716	0	0	5,509	-141,368
0	0	0	0	14,314
0	0	0	0	81
-2,865	270	-13,203	9,606	85,552
0	0	0	0	0
-2,865	270	-13,203	9,606	85,552

ANNEX 2 : COUNCIL TAX DATA 2013/14

1. COUNCIL TAX EXCLUDING PRECEPTS (WALSALL COUNCIL ONLY)

A. LEVELS FOR PROPERTIES WITH TWO OR MORE RESIDENTS (67% of Properties)

BAND	WEIGHT	2012/13 C.TAX	2013/14 C.TAX	ANNUAL CHANGE	ANNUAL INCREASE
		£	£	£	%
A	6/9	923.09	940.17	17.08	1.85%
B	7/9	1,076.94	1,096.87	19.93	1.85%
C	8/9	1,230.79	1,253.56	22.77	1.85%
D	9/9	1,384.64	1,410.26	25.62	1.85%
E	11/9	1,692.34	1,723.65	31.31	1.85%
F	13/9	2,000.04	2,037.04	37.00	1.85%
G	15/9	2,307.73	2,350.43	42.70	1.85%
H	18/9	2,769.28	2,820.51	51.23	1.85%

2. OVERALL COUNCIL TAX INCLUSIVE OF PRECEPTS

A. LEVELS FOR PROPERTIES WITH TWO OR MORE RESIDENTS (67% of Properties)

BAND	WEIGHT	2012/13 TOTAL C.TAX	2013/14 WMBC C.TAX	ESTIMATE - ACTUAL T.B.A		OVERALL (INC PRECEPTS)
				2013/14 FIRE PRECEPT	2013/14 POLICE PRECEPT	2013/14 TOTAL C.TAX
		£	£	£	£	£
A	6/9	1,021.28	940.17	31.89	66.30	1,038.36
B	7/9	1,191.49	1,096.87	37.20	77.35	1,211.42
C	8/9	1,361.71	1,253.56	42.52	88.40	1,384.48
D	9/9	1,531.92	1,410.26	47.83	99.45	1,557.54
E	11/9	1,872.35	1,723.65	58.46	121.54	1,903.65
F	13/9	2,212.78	2,037.04	69.09	143.64	2,249.77
G	15/9	2,553.20	2,350.43	79.72	165.74	2,595.89
H	18/9	3,063.84	2,820.51	95.66	198.89	3,115.06

B. LEVELS FOR PROPERTIES WITH ONE RESIDENT (25% DISCOUNT) (33% of Properties)

BAND	WEIGHT	2012/13 TOTAL C.TAX	2013/14 WMBC C.TAX	ESTIMATE - ACTUAL T.B.A		OVERALL (INC PRECEPTS)
				2013/14 FIRE PRECEPT	2013/14 POLICE PRECEPT	2013/14 TOTAL C.TAX
		£		£	£	£
A	6/9	765.96	705.13	23.91	49.72	778.76
B	7/9	893.62	822.65	27.90	58.01	908.56
C	8/9	1,021.28	940.17	31.89	66.30	1,038.36
D	9/9	1,148.94	1,057.70	35.87	74.58	1,168.15
E	11/9	1,404.26	1,292.74	43.84	91.16	1,427.74
F	13/9	1,659.58	1,527.78	51.82	107.73	1,687.33
G	15/9	1,914.90	1,762.83	59.79	124.31	1,946.93
H	18/9	2,297.88	2,115.39	71.74	149.17	2,336.30

3. SPREAD OF PROPERTIES

The proportion of properties within Walsall MBC within each Council Tax band at 1st December 2012 is as follows:

BAND	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOTAL
PROPERTIES (No)	48,340	25,121	17,415	9,743	5,351	2,285	718	52	109,025
PROPERTIES (%)	44.34	23.04	15.97	8.93	4.91	2.10	0.66	0.05	100
CUMULATIVE TOTALS	67.38%								
	83.35%								
	92.28%								

**4. WEEKLY INCREASE IN COUNCIL TAX (WALSALL MBC
ELEMENT)**

BAND	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	0.33	0.38	0.44	0.49	0.60	0.71	0.82	0.99

ANNEX 3

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (CFO) REPORT ON ROBUSTNESS OF THE BUDGET AND ADEQUACY OF RESERVES - SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Context

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 (S25-S27) and to comply with CIPFA guidance on local authority reserves and balances, the Chief Finance Officer is required to formally report to members on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves. The CFO is appropriately qualified under the terms of S113 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. In signing off this overall revenue budget report, the signature of the Assistant Director of Finance who holds the post of CFO constitutes the formal declaration required under the Act that these conditions are met (based on the available information at the time of signing).

Adequacy of reserves

The CFO assesses and determines the appropriate level of reserves (including schools reserves) and provisions using a variety of mechanisms, including;

- Being significantly involved in the budget setting process, the annual financial cycle, and engaged in the strategic leadership of the organisation as an attendee of the corporate management team;
- The annual refresh of the medium term financial strategy and involvement in the production of the Walsall planning framework within which the financial framework lies;
- Challenging the budget at various stages of construction, including the reasonableness of the key budget assumptions, such as estimates of financial pressures, realism of income targets, and the extent to which known trends and liabilities are provided for;
- Meetings with specific colleagues and partners to examine particular areas or issues;
- Review of the corporate and service financial risk assessments;
- Review of the movements, trends and availability of contingency, provisions and earmarked reserves to meet unforeseen cost pressures in the context of future pressures and issues;
- The use of professional experience and best professional judgement;
- The use of appropriate professional, technical guidance and local frameworks (CIPFA guidance, LAAP55, Local Government Act 73, Localism Act 2011);
- Knowledge of the colleagues involved in the process, particularly finance professionals, including their degree of experience and qualifications;
- Review of the strength of financial management and reporting arrangements, including internal control and governance arrangements.

This is undertaken in consultation with relevant colleagues and the Cabinet portfolio holder for finance and personnel.

It is prudent for councils to maintain an adequate level of general reserves. A risk assessed approach is used to determine the required level of general and earmarked reserves and provisions. The combined medium term financial strategy (MTFS), Cabinet budget meetings and budget preparation processes have previously been

identified by the Audit Commission as areas of good practice to be shared nationally. The twelfth edition of the MTFs was approved by Cabinet in June 2012. Reserves and contingencies are addressed within the strategy, demonstrating our acknowledgement of the importance of sound governance and the priority this issue is given.

The level of general reserves, in the same way as central contingency, is index linked to the level of the council tax requirement and continues to be informed by an annual risk assessment. The council will have opening general reserves as set out in the MTFs; the precise level determined by risk assessment. The minimum opening balance required @ 01.04.2013 is £4.2m. Reserves will be within the MTFs requirements.

The MTFs also sets out the authority's financial framework including, as the first of ten themes of operational principles, calls on reserves and contingencies. A key principle is that reserves should not be considered to be or used as a budget and any in-year calls on the working balance should be replenished. Services cannot approve unbudgeted expenditure on the assumption that it will be met from the working balance. This matter is reserved to full Council, taking advice from the CFO. A central contingency supports prudent financial management. Experience shows that this should be adequate.

In recommending an adequate level of reserves, the CFO considers and monitors the opportunity costs of maintaining particular levels of reserves and balances and compares these to the benefits accrued from having such reserves. The opportunity cost of maintaining a specific level of reserves is the 'lost' opportunity for example, of investing elsewhere to generate additional investment income, or using the funds to invest in service improvements. In assessing this it is important to consider that reserves can only be used once. Therefore, any use of general reserves above the lower minimum threshold is only ever used on one-off items of expenditure. The level of reserves is also determined by use of a comprehensive risk assessment to ensure they represent an appropriately robust "safety net" which adequately protects the council (a complex and multi-disciplinary metropolitan district local authority) against potential unforeseen and therefore unbudgeted costs.

The implementation of the new Government funding mechanism, Business Rates Retention (BRR) to replace Formula Grant, has added additional complexity and volatility into the Council's finances. Should the council collect anything up to £2.45m less than the £33.409m estimated local share of rates, then this will have to be borne by the council in full. The review of the level of reserves has therefore this year included a risk assessment of business rate collection rates and the impact of potential changes in business rate yield on the council's budgetary position.

In addition, the government's changes to the welfare system; making councils accountable for payments for crisis loans, community grants and council tax benefits have placed additional risk on the councils finances. There is a great deal of uncertainty as to real level of demand for these services, and the indirect impact of housing benefit changes cannot be fully assessed for probably until the end of the 2013/14 financial year.

The current level of reserves is appropriate. The level is considered to be sufficient in all but the most unusual and serious combination of possible events. In this context, it is considered that the current level of reserves presents an optimum balance between risk management and opportunity cost. The Chief Financial Officer is satisfied that the

benefits accrued in maintaining these at the recommended level outweigh the potential lost opportunity from investing these reserves in other ways. This maintains a suitable and sustainable level of reserves, which include ensuring sound governance and financial stability in the short and longer term.

Schools Reserves

The CFO as part of this statement is required to confirm that schools balances are adequate. In 2006/07, DfES introduced some new expectations on local authorities with regard to their schemes of financial management. Part of this legislation states that schools should have a balance control mechanism. This requirement has now been removed from 2011/12, however, in line with Government guidance, is being retained in Walsall as a transitional arrangement from 2011/12 until an alternative is implemented.

Walsall's scheme must include a provision that allows the Authority to place a control mechanism on uncommitted surplus balances. The Balance Control Mechanism (BCM) seeks to ensure that schools can build up reserves towards particular projects, through committing balances to those projects, but prevents schools from deferring implementation indefinitely. The BCM will take account of any funds paid into the school's budget share, except for funds relating to community facilities provided by the school, in accordance with Section 27 of the Education Act (2002). The scheme has applied since 1 April 2007. It allows schools to have uncommitted balances of between 5% and 8% (or £10,000, whichever is the greater) depending on the size/age range/type of the school.

The adequacy of balances is reviewed annually by the CFO. 2 primary schools are forecasting a deficit balance for 31 March 2013. An action plan has been put in place to deal with this.

The levels of reserves will be kept under regular review along with compliance with BCM through 2012/13. The overall level of reserves is considered prudent.

Use of Reserves

The above assessment demonstrates that general reserves are at an appropriate level; as determined in accordance with the MTFS and the CFO's professional advice. The MTFS allows any reserves above the level required by the MTFS to be used to fund one off items of expenditure. No general reserves below the minimum threshold are being used to support the 2013/14 budget. The risk assessment described elsewhere in this report has informed the established level of general and earmarked reserves. The council follows the CIPFA guidance (LAAP 55) on the use of reserves.

Robustness of Budget

The CFO has been involved throughout the entire budget process, including input to the drafting of the budget, the ongoing financial monitoring and reporting process, evaluation of investments and savings, engagement with members of the executive and scrutiny, advising colleagues, the public consultation process, challenge and evaluation activities, and the scrutiny and approval of various reports.

The following sections of this statement signpost to particular activities and documents and have been used by the CFO in coming to his overall conclusion on the adequacy of reserves and robustness of the estimates:

Process - a robust budget process has been used within the overall context of the MTFS. The process, timetable and the overall budget framework were approved by Cabinet.

Timetable - the process commenced in Summer 2012 and draft budget options were available in September 2012 before the draft Government financial settlement. This enabled Cabinet to meet in October 2012 to consider its priorities and draft budget proposals in the context of resources. Formal scrutiny meetings have been held in November / December 2012 and in January 2013 to consider Cabinet's draft budget proposals. Public consultation has been ongoing since August 2012.

The final budget is due to be set at Council on 21 February 2013.

Member involvement and Scrutiny - both informal and formal member involvement has been extensive, particularly through the Cabinet portfolio holder for finance, individual portfolio holders in conjunction with executive directors, and budget meetings with Cabinet. Cabinet formally considered draft budget proposals on 24 October 2012 and 12 December 2012. Scrutiny panels have each had two opportunities to make recommendations and comments to Cabinet, both on the services within their individual remit and the overall budget. Budget briefings have also been given to each political group.

Consultation - internally and externally, has been comprehensive as outlined in this and previous reports submitted to Cabinet.

Challenge - there are various points of challenge at various stages of the budget, including throughout corporate management team and Cabinet budget meetings, meetings of various directorate management teams, corporate management team meetings, stakeholder consultation and the scrutiny process.

Budget monitoring - reports continue to be submitted to Cabinet, scrutiny panels, corporate management team, Audit Committee and management teams across the council throughout the year. The council's employee performance appraisal process also requires review of financial performance for individual managers, complementary to the formal accountability process.

Referendum – Following implementation of the Localism Act 2011, councils are required to consult the electorate in the form of a referendum should a council wish to increase the council tax above a level prescribed by the Secretary of State. For 2013/14, that has been determined as 2% of the council's relevant amount of council tax (i.e. excluding levies).

Ownership and accountability - the budget has progressed through various filters during its construction including endorsement of management teams within services and corporate management team itself. Senior managers and capital project managers are accountable for ensuring services are delivered within the approved budget. The performance assessment process requires formal assessment of individual budget management responsibilities.

Current financial position - the budget is a statement of financial intent, reflecting the council's vision, plans and priorities. It also sets the financial spending parameters for each financial year and as such, the CFO assessment of the adequacy of reserves also includes the risk of services overspending and/or underspending their budgets and

the impact of this on the financial health of the council and its level of reserves. The current financial position has been reported on throughout the year.

Key assumptions

The cost assumptions and prices used in the budget are derived from current intelligence and are considered appropriate. Demand changes have been identified and are reflected in budget increases identified in the appendices where appropriate. Fees and charges have been reviewed and changes are reflected in the overall budget. The capital receipts to be used for the draft capital programme are based on professional estimates both of timing and value. The council has established performance monitoring arrangements for all key contracts.

Financial risks - the council continues to use an embedded good practice risk assessment approach both when setting the budget and in validating estimated outturns. This continues for the 2012/13 outturn and 2013/14+ budget. The prevailing level of general and earmarked reserves is considered adequate to cover all but the most unusual and serious combination of events.

The budget in context

The budget includes the allocation of financial resources to different services and projects, any proposed contingency funds, setting the council tax and decisions relating to the control of the councils borrowing requirement, the control of its capital expenditure and the setting of virement limits. The budget has been constructed in accordance with the principles and direction of the MTFS.

All cost pressures, efficiencies and savings have been appraised to ensure accuracy of costings and deliverability. Individual officers are identified as accountable for their implementation. None of the efficiencies/savings are considered to be materially detrimental to performance outcomes. The council is working to improve performance outcomes on a range of activities which are monitored throughout the year. Service plans link budget provision with corporate and service priorities. Budget provision has been identified for the pledges outlined in the council's vision document.

Summary

Best endeavours have been made to ensure that the budget and reserves are adequate using the information available at this date. The budget has been constructed with a professional policy-led medium term strategic framework, using appropriate assumptions, linking investment and spending to key priorities and having undertaken a comprehensive assessment of risk.

In summary, I can confirm that, the budget as it stands is robust, taking into account the information known at this time and that the level of reserves are sufficient to cover known events and reasonable possible events, however should a series or a combination of unforeseen or unusual events occur, the level of reserves may be insufficient.



James T Walsh, B Hum (Hons), ACMA, CGMA
Chief Finance Officer

ANNEX 4 - Treasury limits and borrowing limits

It is a statutory duty under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003 and supporting regulations, for the Council to determine and keep under review how much it can afford to borrow. The amount so determined is termed the “Affordable Borrowing Limit”. In England and Wales the Authorised Limit represents the legislative limit specified in the Act.

The Council must have regard to the Prudential Code when setting the Authorised Limit, which essentially requires it to ensure that total capital investment remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, that the impact upon its future council tax levels is ‘acceptable’.

Whilst termed an “Affordable Borrowing Limit”, the capital plans to be considered for inclusion in corporate financing by both external borrowing and other forms of liability, such as credit arrangements. The Authorised Limit is to be set, on a rolling basis, for the forthcoming financial year and two successive financial years; details of the Authorised Limit can be found in **Annex 6** prudential indicator 5. The Authorised Limit is the council’s capital financing requirement (which is a measure of the council’s need to finance cumulative capital expenditure from borrowing) plus a contingency for unexpected cash flows or emergency payments.

The current treasury position

The council is expected to end 2012/13 with a borrowing portfolio of £255m against an asset base of approximately £500m, and short term investments of between £115m and £145m. These will be proactively managed to minimise borrowing costs and maximise investment returns within a robust risk management environment. In 2013/14 estimated annual interest payments are £11.7m and investment interest income is c£1.3m. The net budget for capital financing in 2013/14 is £22.9m.

The council’s treasury portfolio position **at 30 November 2012** is comprised of:

Borrowing and investment 2012/13

	Borrowing	Investments	Net Borrowing
	£ m	£ m	£ m
31 March 2012	263.777	Cr 136.380	127.397
30 November 2012	264.420	Cr 125.500	138.920
Change in year	0.643	10.880	11.523

In addition to the above investments the council had at 30 November 2012 £23m in call accounts to fund current cash flows and possible debt repayment opportunities.

The council's treasury portfolio position at 30 November 2012 with forward projections are summarised below. The table shows the actual external borrowing (the treasury management operations), against the capital borrowing need, Operational Debt, highlighting any over or under borrowing.

	30st	1st	1st	1st
	Nov 12	Apr 13	Apr 14	Apr 15
	£ m	£ m	£ m	£ m
PWLB	116.487	116.487	106.487	106.487
Market Loans	122.000	122.000	122.000	122.000
Bonds & Temporary loans	0.900	0.530	0.530	0.530
Total excluding OLA debt	239.387	239.017	229.017	229.017
Net Other L A Debt	17.085	16.474	15.802	15.063
Total including OLA debt	256.472	255.491	244.819	244.080
Operational Debt	292.093	308.866	310.476	307.096
(Under) / Over borrowing	(35.621)	(53.375)	(65.657)	(63.016)

The borrowing requirement

The council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity and need to borrow. The output of the capital expenditure plans are reflected in prudential indicators which are designed to assist members overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

Pr1 4 is the council's capital financing requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the council's underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure which has not immediately been paid for, will increase the CFR. The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the borrowing need in line with each assets life.

The CFR includes other liabilities (e.g. PFI schemes, finance leases). Whilst these increase the CFR, and therefore the council's borrowing requirement, these types of scheme include a borrowing facility and so the council is not required to separately borrow for these schemes. The council currently has £10.4m of these schemes. Also increasing the CFR is the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS) which also does not require the setting aside of funds to repay borrowing. The following table shows the estimated movement in the CFR over the next 3 years.

	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m	Total
Net financing need for the year Draft Capital Programme	7.740	5.360	5.400	18.500
Provision for Strategic major projects and LAMS	10.000	10.000	5.000	25.000
Less MRP and other financing movements	Cr 13.285	Cr 13.500	Cr 13.530	Cr 40.315
Movement in CFR	4.455	1.860	Cr 3.130	3.185

It is prudent to reflect the possible borrowing required for large strategic projects. Such strategic projects would require business cases including repayment plans. The MRP policy (see annex 5) details the council's policies for calculating the annual amount charged to revenue for the repayment of debt. The adjustment approved relating to other local authority debt backdated enables the council's MRP profile to be flexed such the revenue costs of such major projects may be managed and contained within capital financing

Thus it is currently projected that there will be a small increase in borrowing need over the next 3 years of £3.2m.

Debt rescheduling and debt repayment

This increase in borrowing can be managed by the use of internal balances. However a £10m PWLB loan does mature in 2013/14. The borrowing requirement will continue to be monitored as will any debt rescheduling opportunities.

As short term rates on investments are likely to be lower than rates paid on current debt, consideration will also be given to identify if there is any potential left for making savings by running down investment balances to repay debt prematurely. However, these savings need to be considered in the light of the size of premiums incurred, their short term nature, and the likely cost of refinancing those short term loans, once they mature, compared to the current rates of longer term debt in the existing debt portfolio. Any such rescheduling and repayment of debt is likely to cause a shortening of the council's maturity profile. Prudential indicator 12 has been amended to enable this. All rescheduling will be undertaken in accordance with TMP 5 reported to the Treasury Management Panel at the earliest meeting following its action.

Critical to the consideration of the debt rescheduling and debt repayment is the outlook for interest rates.

Borrowing rates

The Sector forecast for the PWLB new borrowing rate is as follows: -

	Mar-13	Jun-13	Sep-13	Dec-13	Mar-14	Sep-14	Mar-15
Bank rate	0.50%	0.50%	0.50%	0.50 %	0.50%	0.50%	1.00%
5yr PWLB rate	1.50%	1.50%	1.60%	1.70%	1.80%	2.00%	2.30%
10yr PWLB rate	2.50%	2.50%	2.60%	2.70%	1.80%	3.00%	3.30%
25yr PWLB rate	3.70%	3.70%	3.80%	3.80%	3.90%	4.10%	4.30%
50yr PWLB rate	3.90%	3.90%	3.80%	4.00%	4.10%	4.30%	4.50%

A more detailed Sector forecast and economic is included in **Annex 7**.

Local Authority Mortgage Scheme (LAMS)

The council is participating in LAMS in which the mortgage lenders require a five year deposit from the local authority to match the five year life of the indemnity. The deposit placed with the mortgage lender provides an integral part of the mortgage lending, and is treated as capital expenditure and a loan to a third party. The capital financing requirement (CFR) increases by the amount of the total indemnity (£5m). The deposit is due to be returned in full at maturity, with interest paid either annually or on maturity. Once the deposit matures and funds are returned to the local authority, the returned funds are classed as a capital receipt, and the CFR will reduce accordingly. As this is a temporary (five years) arrangement and the funds will be returned in full, there is no need to set aside prudent provision to repay the debt liability in the interim period, so there is no MRP application.

ANNEX 5: TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGIES - 2013/14 ONWARDS

Walsall council has a successful track record of effective treasury management, securing low cost borrowing to fund capital investment. Our aim is to continue to do so within the requirements of the prevailing policies and codes of practice.

In order to achieve our aim:

1. All borrowing and/or investment activity will be carried out in accordance with the approved treasury management strategy and treasury policy statements and within approved prudential indicators, having the highest regard for prudence, affordability and sustainability in the longer term.
2. Appropriate use will be made of the Code for capital investment within approved prudential indicators and subject to medium term affordability.

Specific objectives have been developed to measure and guide borrowing and investment activities. These are monitored by local indicators (**Annex 6**).

BORROWING OBJECTIVES

Our borrowing objectives are:

- To minimise the revenue costs of debt whilst maintaining a balanced loan portfolio
- To manage the council's debt maturity profile, ensuring no single future year has a disproportionate level of repayments
- To maintain a view on current and possible future interest rate movements and borrow accordingly
- To monitor and review the balance between fixed and variable rate loans against the background of interest rate levels and prudential indicators.

Specific Borrowing Objectives

In response to the context outlined in **Annex 4** the following changes have been made.

- **L1.** Full compliance with the Prudential Code - **No Change**
- **L2.** Average maturity date between 15 and 25 years - **No Change**
- **L3** Net borrowing costs to be less than **11.5%** of council tax requirement and **6.5%** of council tax requirement plus NNDR contribution and – This indicator has been updated to reflected the funding regime for local government
- **L4** Actual debt as a proportion of operational debt range is maintained in the range 75%- 90% - **No Change**
- **L5.** Average interest rate for internally managed debt will be equal to or less than 4.52% - **No Change**

- **L6.** Average interest rate for total debt (including other local authority debt) will be equal to or less than 4.63%. – **No Change**
- **L7.** The gearing effect on capital financing estimates of 1% increase in interest rates increase must not be greater than 5% - **No change**

INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES

The general policy objective for this council is the prudent investment of its treasury balances;

- The council's investment priorities are:
 - The security of capital and
 - Liquidity of its investments.
- All investments will be in sterling
- The council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity.

Specific Investment Objectives

- **L8.** Average interest rate received on STI Versus 7 day Libid rate – 0.5% - **No Change**
- **L9.** Average interest rate received on:
 - (a) At call investments – **0.5% - Changed from 0.75% to reflect market conditions**
 - (b) Short term investments – **0.9% - Changed from 1.5% to reflect market conditions**
 - (c) Long term investments – **2.0% - Changed from 2.5% to reflect market conditions.**
- L10 Average rate on short term investments will be equal to or greater than **0.8%** - **Change from 1.1% due to market conditions.**
- L11. Average rate on all investments will be equal to or greater than **1%** - **Change from 1.3% % due to expected market conditions**
- L12 % daily bank balances within a target range of 98% - **No Change**

Creditworthiness policy

Approved Organisations for Investments

Only organisations that are eligible to receive investments from local authorities may be used. The council's credit worthiness policy was reviewed and approved by Council on 7 November 2011.

The Monitoring of Investment Counterparties

The credit rating of counterparties will be monitored regularly. The council receives credit rating information from Sector as and when rating changes and counterparties are checked promptly. On occasion ratings may be downgraded when an investment has already been made. The criteria used are such that a minor downgrading should not affect the full receipt of the principal and interest. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria will be removed from the list by the treasury manager, and if required new counterparties which meet the criteria will be added to the list.

ANNUAL MRP STATEMENT 2013/14 onwards

Under the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2010, local authorities have a duty to produce an annual statement on its policy for making a minimum revenue provision (MRP).

For the financial years 2013/14 onwards the authority will be adopting the following policies in determining the MRP:

1. For any capital expenditure carried out prior to 31 March 2008 the authority will be adopting the regulatory method. This is where the MRP will be 4% of the opening capital financing requirement (CFR) (which has been adjusted as per the 2003 regulations).
2. For any capital expenditure carried out after 1 April 2008 being financed by unsupported borrowing the authority will be adopting the asset life method (option 3). This is where MRP will be based on the capital expenditure divided by a determined asset life or profile of benefits to give annual instalments.
3. For any capital expenditure carried out after 1 April 2008 being financed by Government supported funding the authority will again be adopting the regulatory method. Where the authority considers the capital expenditure to of added significantly to the lifespan of the asset will set aside funds for repayment in line with the appropriate life span of the asset type.
4. The authority will treat the asset life as commencing in the year in which the asset first becomes operationally available. Noting that in accordance with the regulations the authority may postpone beginning to make MRP until the financial year following the one in which the asset becomes operational, there will be an annual adjustment for Assets Under Construction.
5. In all years the CFR for the purposes of the MRP calculation will be adjusted for other local Authority transferred debt.

The Regulatory Method is the calculation of MRP under the previous regulations. When MRP was set at a uniform rate of 4% of the adjusted Capital Financing Requirement. (CFR) on a reducing balance method (which in effect meant that MRP charges would stretch into infinity. This historic approach must continue for all capital expenditure incurred in years before the start of this capital financing regulations 2008.

Finance Leases

In accordance with legislation the council will make a MRP for finance leases is equivalent to the principal payment contained with the lease terms.

ANNEX 6 – CAPITAL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS FOR 2013/14, 2014/15 & 2015/16

The council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans are reflected in prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

National and local indicators that will be monitored are detailed below. Their aim is to ensure the three principles contained within the prudential code are complied with, i.e. affordability, prudence and sustainability.

National Prudential Indicators

Table 1 details the proposed national prudential indicators for Walsall council from 2013/14 to 2015/16. More details on prudential indicators 11 and 12 are shown in table 2.

Table 1: National Prudential Indicators 2013/14 to 2015/16				
No.	Indicator	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
PCI 1	Total capital expenditure	£ m 40.19	£ m 29.54	£ m 21.78
	Reduces in later years due to uncertainty on the level of future grants and other resources.			
PCI 2	Estimates of the ratio of financing costs to the net revenue stream	10.7%	10.7%	10.7%
	Net revenue stream is defined as the Council Tax support plus the NNDR contribution, Formula Grant. This indicator is supplemented by Local Indicator (L3).			
PCI 3	Estimates of the council tax that would result from the expenditure plans.	£11.48	£7.83	£7.89
	This is a notional amount indicating the amount of council tax band D that is affected by the proposed capital programme recommended in the budget report compared to existing approved commitments and current plans.			
PCI 4	Estimates of capital financing requirement.	£ m 319.279	£ m 320.889	£ m 317.509
	This represents the underlying level of borrowing needed to finance historic and future capital expenditure. To ensure that net borrowing will only fund capital, except in the short term, net external borrowing should not exceed the total capital financing requirement (CFR) in the preceding year plus estimated capital financing needs for the current and next two years. Following accounting changes the CFR includes any other long term liabilities (e.g. PFI schemes, finance leases) brought onto the balance sheet. Whilst this increases the CFR, and therefore the council's borrowing requirement, these types of scheme include a borrowing facility and so the council is not required to separately borrow for these schemes. The council currently has £10.4m of such schemes within the CFR.			

No.	Indicator	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
PCI 5	Authorised limit for external debt.	£ m 351.207	£ m 352.977	£ m 349.620
The council may not breach the limit it sets, so it is important to allow prudent room for uncertain cash flow movements and borrowing in advance of future need.				
PCI 6	Operational boundary for external debt.	£ m 308.866	£ m 310.476	£ m 307.096
This has been set at the level of the capital financing requirement less the CFR items relating PFI and finance leases.				
PCI 7	Net Borrowing exceeds Capital Financing Requirement	No	No	No
The CFR represents the underlying level of borrowing needed to finance historic capital expenditure. Actual net borrowing should be lower than this because of strong positive cash flow and balances. It would be a cause for concern if net borrowing exceeded CFR.				
PCI 8	Compliance with CIPFA Code of Practice for TM in the Public Services.	Yes	Yes	Yes
To ensure that treasury management activity is carried out within best professional practice.				
PCI 9	Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposures.	95%	95%	95%
The council cannot control interest rates, but a relatively high degree of interest cost stability can be achieved by limiting its exposure to variable rates and by managing the long-term debt maturity profile so that not too much fixed rate debt will mature in any year.				
PCI 10	Upper limits on variable interest rate exposures: 3.	45%	45%	45%
See comment under PCI 9.				
PCI 11	Lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowings: 4.	See Table 2		
Stability can also be managed by the long-term debt maturity profile so that not too much fixed rate debt will mature in any year.				
PCI 12	Upper limits for the maturity structure of borrowings:	See Table 2		
See comment under PCI 9.				
PCI 13	Upper limit for principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days.	£25,000,000	£25,000,000	£25,000,000
The council is at risk when lending temporarily surplus cash. The risk is limited by investing surplus cash in specified investments and by applying lending limits and high credit worthiness. These are kept under constant review.				

Table 2 - Prudential Indicators: Additional Information	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
PCI 11. Lower limits for the maturity structure of borrowings:			
- Under 12 Months	0%	0%	0%
- 12 months and within 24 months	0%	0%	0%
- 24 months and within 5 years	0%	0%	0%
- 5 years and within 10 years	10%	10%	10%
- 10 years and above	40%	40%	40%
PCI 12. Upper limits for the maturity structure of borrowings:			
- Under 12 Months	25%	25%	25%
- 12 months and within 24 months	25%	25%	25%
- 24 months and within 5 years	40%	40%	40%
- 5 years and within 10 years	50%	50%	50%
- 10 years and above	85%	85%	85%

Local Prudential Indicators: Table 3 sets out local PrIs proposed for 2013/14 to 2015/16.

Table 3: Local Prudential Indicators 2012/13 to 2015/16				
No.	Indicator	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
L.1	Full compliance with Prudential Code	Yes	Yes	Yes
L.2	Average length of debt	15 to 25 years	15 to 25 years	15 to 25 years
	This is a maturity measure and ideally should relate to the average lifespan of assets.			
L.3	a. Net borrowing costs as % of net council tax requirement	11.50%	11.0%	10.75%
	b. Net borrowing costs as % of council tax requirement and NNDR contribution	6.5%%	6.25%	6.00%
	This measures the net borrowing costs as % of council tax requirement and is used by CIPFA in their risk benchmarking.			
L.4	Actual debt versus operational debt within the following range	75%-90%	75%-90%	75%-90%
	This assists the monitoring of the authority's debt position.			
L.5	Average interest rate of debt excluding OLA less than	4.52%	4.52%	4.52%
L.6	Average interest rate of debt including OLA	4.63%	4.63%	4.63%
	The measure should be as low as possible. Other Local Authority debt (OLA) is managed on our behalf by Dudley council.			

No.	Indicator	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
L.7	Gearing effect on capital financing costs of 1% increase in interest rate	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
This relates risk management principles to the monitoring of the TM strategy. It measures the effect of a change in national interest rates and the effect it may have on the capital financing costs.				
L.8	Average interest rate received on STI Versus 7 day LIBID rate	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
The council aims to be gain interest on surplus funds higher than the 7 day LIBID rate. This measures performance in a changing economic context.				
L.9	Average interest rate received on:			
	(a) AT call investments	0.50%	0.50%	0.75%
	(b) Short Term investments	0.90%	1.00%	1.25%
	(c) Long Term investments	2.00%	2.50%	3.00%
L.10	Average interest rate on all ST investments. (ST and At call)	0.8%	0.9%	1.2%
A recognised PI for measuring the performance of return on investments.				
L.11	Average rate on all investments	1.0%	1.4%	1.8%
As L10 but includes investments longer than 364 days.				
L.12	% daily bank balances within target range	98%	98%	98%
This measures how good our daily cash flow prediction is. A figure of 98% indicates a high level of accuracy.				

The monitoring of the indicators supports budget monitoring and is undertaken monthly and considered quarterly by the finance treasury management panel that reports to the finance service's senior management team including the Chief Finance Officer.

ANNEX 7: ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

The Global economy

The Eurozone debt crisis has continued to cast a pall over the world economy and has depressed growth in most countries. This has impacted the UK economy which is unlikely to grow significantly in 2012 and is creating a major headwind for recovery in 2013. Quarter 2 of 2012 was the third quarter of contraction in the economy; this recession is the worst and slowest recovery of any of the five recessions since 1930. A return to growth @ 1% in quarter 3 is unlikely to prove anything more than a washing out of the dip in the previous quarter before a return to weak, or even negative, growth in quarter 4.

The **Eurozone sovereign debt crisis** has abated somewhat following the European Central Bank's pledge to buy unlimited amounts of bonds of countries which ask for a bailout. The immediate target for this statement was Spain which continues to prevaricate on making such a request and so surrendering its national sovereignty to IMF supervision. However, the situation in Greece is heading towards a crunch point as the Eurozone imminently faces up to having to relax the time frame for Greece reducing its total debt level below 120% of GDP and providing yet more financial support to enable it to do that. Many commentators still view a Greek exit from the Euro as inevitable as total debt now looks likely to reach 190% of GDP i.e. unsustainably high. The question remains as to how much damage a Greek exit would do and whether contagion would spread to cause Portugal and Ireland to also leave the Euro, though the longer a Greek exit is delayed, the less are likely to be the repercussions beyond Greece on other countries and on EU banks.

Sentiment in financial markets has improved considerably since this ECB action and recent Eurozone renewed commitment to support Greece and to keep the Eurozone intact. However, the foundations to this "solution" to the Eurozone debt crisis are still weak and events could easily conspire to put this into reverse.

The US economy has only been able to manage weak growth in 2012 despite huge efforts by the Federal Reserve to stimulate the economy by liberal amounts of quantitative easing (QE) combined with a commitment to a continuation of ultra low interest rates into 2015. Unemployment levels have been slowly reducing but against a background of a fall in the numbers of those available for work. The fiscal cliff facing the President at the start of 2013 has been a major dampener discouraging business from spending on investment and increasing employment more significantly in case there is a sharp contraction in the economy in the pipeline. However, the housing market does look as if it has, at long last, reached the bottom and house prices are now on the up.

Hopes for a broad based recovery have, therefore, focused on the **emerging markets**. However, there are increasing concerns over flashing warning signs in various parts of the Chinese economy that indicate it may be heading for a hard landing rather than a gradual slow down.

The UK economy

The Government's austerity measures, aimed at getting the public sector deficit into order over the next four years, now look as if they will fail to achieve their objectives within the original planned timeframe. Achieving this target is dependent on the UK economy

growing at a reasonable pace but recession in the Eurozone, our biggest trading partner, has depressed growth whilst tax receipts have not kept pace with additional welfare benefit payments. It will be important for the Government to retain investor confidence in UK gilts so there is little room for it to change course other than to move back the timeframe.

Currently, the UK is enjoying a major financial benefit from some of the lowest sovereign borrowing costs in the world as the UK is seen as a safe haven from Eurozone debt. There is, though, little evidence that consumer confidence levels are recovering nor that the manufacturing sector is picking up. On the positive side, growth in the services sector has rebounded in Q3 and banks have made huge progress since 2008 in shrinking their balance sheets to more manageable levels and also in reducing their dependency on wholesale funding. However, availability of credit remains tight in the economy and the Funding for Lending scheme, which started in August 2012, has not yet had the time to make a significant impact. Finally, the housing market remains tepid and the outlook is for house prices to be little changed for a prolonged period.

Economic Growth. Economic growth has basically flat lined since the election of 2010 and, worryingly, the economic forecasts for 2012 and beyond were revised substantially lower in the Bank of England Inflation quarterly report for August 2012 and were then further lowered in the November Report. Quantitative Easing (QE) was increased again by £50bn in July 2012 to a total of £375bn. Many forecasters are expecting the MPC to vote for a further round of QE to stimulate economic activity regardless of any near-term optimism. The announcement in November 2012 that £35bn will be transferred from the Bank of England's Asset Purchase Facility to the Treasury (representing coupon payments to the Bank by the Treasury on gilts held by the Bank) is also effectively a further addition of QE.

Unemployment. The Government's austerity strategy has resulted in a substantial reduction in employment in the public sector. Despite this, total employment has increased to the highest level for four years as over one million jobs have been created in the private sector in the last two years.

Inflation and Bank Rate. Inflation has fallen sharply during 2012 from a peak of 5.2% in September 2011 to 2.2% in September 2012. However, inflation increased back to 2.7% in October though it is expected to fall back to reach the 2% target level within the two year horizon.

AAA rating. The UK continues to enjoy an AAA sovereign rating. However, the credit rating agencies will be carefully monitoring the rate of growth in the economy as a disappointing performance in that area could lead to a major derailment of the plans to contain the growth in the total amount of Government debt over the next few years. Moody's has stated that it will review the UK's Aaa rating at the start of 2013.

Sector's forward view

Economic forecasting remains difficult with so many external influences weighing on the UK. There does, however, appear to be consensus among analysts that the economy remains relatively fragile and whilst there is still a broad range of views as to potential performance, expectations have all been downgraded during 2012. Key areas of uncertainty include:

- the potential for the Eurozone to withdraw support for Greece at some point if the costs of such support escalate were to become prohibitive, so causing a worsening of the Eurozone debt crisis and heightened risk of the breakdown of the bloc or even of the currency itself;

- inter government agreement on how to deal with the overall Eurozone debt crisis could fragment; the impact of the Eurozone crisis on financial markets and the banking sector;
- the impact of the Government's austerity plan on confidence and growth and the need to rebalance the economy from services to manufactured goods;
- the under-performance of the UK economy which could undermine the Government's policies that have been based upon levels of growth that are unlikely to be achieved;
- the risk of the UK's main trading partners, in particular the EU and US, falling into recession ;
- stimulus packages failing to stimulate growth;
- elections due in Germany in 2013;
- potential for protectionism i.e. an escalation of the currency war / trade dispute between the US and China.
- the potential for action to curtail the Iranian nuclear programme
- the situation in Syria deteriorating and impacting other countries in the Middle East.

The focus of so many consumers, corporates and banks on reducing their borrowings, rather than spending, will continue to act as a major headwind to a return to robust growth in western economies.

Given the weak outlook for economic growth, Sector sees the prospects for any changes in Bank Rate before 2015 as very limited. There is potential for the start of Bank Rate increases to be even further delayed if growth disappoints.

Sector believes that the longer run trend is for gilt yields and PWLB rates to rise due to the high volume of gilt issuance in the UK, and the high volume of debt issuance in other major western countries. The interest rate forecast in this report represents a balance of downside and upside risks. The downside risks have already been commented on. However, there are specific identifiable upside risks as follows to PWLB rates and gilt yields, and especially to longer term rates and yields: -

- UK inflation being significantly higher than in the wider EU and US causing an increase in the inflation premium in gilt yields
- Reversal of QE; this could initially be allowing gilts held by the Bank to mature without reinvesting in new purchases, followed later by outright sale of gilts currently held
- Reversal of Sterling's safe haven status on an improvement in financial stresses in the Eurozone
- Investors reverse de-risking by moving money from government bonds into shares in anticipation of a return to worldwide economic growth
- The possibility of a UK credit rating downgrade (Moody's has stated that it will review the UK's Aaa rating at the start of 2013).

POLICY ON USE OF EXTERNAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

The council uses Sector as its external treasury management advisers.

The council recognises that the responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.

It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources.

ANNEX 8 : GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
Aggregate start up funding assessment	The total amount of funding that has been allocated to the local government sector – often referred to as the spending control total
Authorised Limit	Level of debt set by the council that must not be exceeded.
Base budget	The amount required for services to continue at their current level, only adjusted from the previous years budget for inflationary pressures, not changes in service levels provided.
Baseline funding level	The amount of a local authority start up funding assessment which is provided through the local share of the estimated business rates scheme.
Billing authority	Walsall council is the billing authority responsible for the collection of the council tax and non-domestic rates which includes amounts from the local precepting authorities – the West Midlands Fire and Civil Defence and Police Authorities.
Bond	A government or public company's document undertaking to repay borrowed money usually with a fixed rate of interest.
Borrowing	Obtaining money for temporary use that has to be repaid.
Capital expenditure	Expenditure on major items e.g. land and buildings, which adds to and not merely maintains the value of existing fixed assets.
Capital grants	Specific targeted grants to cover capital expenditure.
Capital receipts	The proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets. Capital receipts can be used to fund new capital expenditure but cannot be used to finance revenue expenditure
Cash flow Management	The management of the authority's receipts and payments to ensure the authority can meet its financial obligations.
Central contingency	A small budget set aside each year to cover unforeseen items of expenditure.
Central share	The percentage share of locally collected business rates that will be paid to central government by billing authorities – set at 50%. This is distributed to local government through central Revenue Support Grant.
Collection fund	A statutory account which billing authorities have to maintain for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of council tax, NNDR and residual community charge accounts.
Council tax	The tax levied on domestic properties, which depends on the 'band' of value for the property based on estimated property values at 1 April 1991.
Council tax base	The total number of band D equivalent properties upon which the council tax can be levied.
Counter party limits	Maximum amount that the council may lend to other institutions will vary according to size and credit rating of other intuitions.
CPI	Consumer Price Index – measures changes through time in the price level of consumer goods and services purchased by households.
Damping	Formula Grant funding from Central Government is a finite resource and funds are distributed on the basis of formulae and demographic factors. Government ensures that all local authorities receive at least a guaranteed minimum increase in grant year-on-year. Authorities receiving grant in excess of the minimum must contribute funds to enable every council to be raised up to the minimum percentage

TERM	DEFINITION
	increase. The contributor's grant is said to have been 'dampened' or lessened. Walsall is a contributor.
Dividends	Sum to be payable as interest on loan.
Estimated Business Rates Aggregate	Total business rates forecast to be collected by all billing authorities. Two adjustments – one to address volatility in outturn to forecast, and the other to cover future appeal losses.
EU	European Union
Financial strategy	The policy whereby the council establishes the financial principles upon which it builds its revenue and capital budgets.
Formula Grant (FG)	A central Government mechanism of dividing up resources to local Government allocated from the Government comprehensive spending review.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product – the total market value of all final goods and services produced in a country in a given year, equal to total consumer investment and government spending, plus the value of exports minus the value of imports.
General fund	The main revenue account of the council which brings together all income and expenditure other than that recorded in the collection fund or housing revenue account. (Following large scale voluntary transfer of it's housing stock in March 2003, Walsall no longer maintains a separate housing revenue account).
IMP	International Monetary Fund – an organisation of 187 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world.
I-procurement	A system where goods and services are purchased electronically rather than through manual ordering systems which is intended to generate longer term savings through economies of scale and a paperless office environment.
Investment bids / strategic choices	The process by which the council establishes its changing needs and priorities for the coming year. It starts with managers submitting bids for additional funding above that included in the base budget. The submissions then go through a rigorous challenge process including director and councillor appraisal before successful bids are approved by members when the budget is set in February.
Investments	The employment of money with the aim of receiving a return.
Levies	Charges made upon the authority by organisations which serve various authorities.
Libid rate	London Interbank Bid Rate (the rate that banks are willing to borrow from each other)
LOBO	Lenders Option Borrowers Option. A type of loan arrangement.
Local share	Percentage share of locally collected business rates that will be retained by local government – set at 50%.
Liquidity	How easily an asset including investments may be converted to cash.
Long Term Borrowing	Borrowing of money for a term greater than one year.
Long Term Liabilities	Amounts owed by the council greater than 12 months old.
Mainstream funding	Mainstream funding includes supported borrowing, unsupported borrowing and capital receipts which are all described elsewhere in the glossary.

TERM	DEFINITION
Market convention	The rules and regulations by which all brokers and dealers should abide by. It includes standards of practice and calculation conventions for interest. They are defined in the London Code of Conduct (“The London Code”) published by the Bank of England.
Medium term financial strategy	A document which sets out the principles the council adopts in strategically planning its finances and setting and managing its budget.
MPC	Monetary Policy Committee – group that sets the bank base rate for the Bank of England
Multiplier	The business rates multiplier when multiplied by the rateable value of a property determines a ratepayers business rate bill.
National non-domestic rates (NNDR)	A tax levied on business properties, also referred to as business rates. NNDR poundage is set annually by the government. Rates based on properties’ rateable values are collected by billing authorities and paid into a national pool. The proceeds are then redistributed by central government as a grant to local authorities on a population basis.
Net council tax requirement	The amount of council spending needed to be financed from council tax following the receipt of specific grants, formula grant and use of reserves
New Burdens	Used by the government to keep pressure on council tax bills to a minimum.
NNDR 1	A form submitted by 31 January by a billing authority to provide an estimate of business rate income for upcoming year.
Non specified investments	Investments with a maturity exceeding a year
Operational Boundary	An indicator of the level day the authority expects during day to day treasury management activities
Other Local Authority Debt	Debt that is owed by one local authority to another local authority.
PCI	Prudential Code Indicator
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
Policy led budgeting	A system of budgeting where resources are linked to council priorities to ensure that projects with the highest priority receive the funding necessary to implement them.
Precepting authority	An authority e.g. police and fire which sets a ‘precept’ on billing authorities, who collect it on their behalf.
PWLB	Public Works Loan Board, a central government body providing loans to councils.
Proportionate share	Percentage of national business rates yield which a billing authority has collected.
Prudential Code	A framework of policies and working practices to ensure that local authorities’ capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
Recharges	A charge made between services within the council.
Reserves	The total level of funds the authority has accumulated over the years. Earmarked reserves are allocated to a specific purpose or area of spending. Unallocated reserves (also known as balances general reserves) arise from an accumulation of previous year’s surpluses and deficits and are available to support revenue expenditure.

TERM	DEFINITION
Revenue expenditure	Expenditure on the day-to-day running costs of services e.g. employees, premises, furniture and equipment.
Revenue support grant (RSG)	Part of Formula grant paid by central government. Significantly less now due to Education being funded by specific grant.
Safety net	Mechanism to protect any authority which sees its business rates income drop, in any year, by more than 7.5% below their baseline funding level.
Short Term Borrowing	Borrowing of money for a term of up to 364 days.
Stock	Subscribed capital of trading company, or public debt of nation, municipal corporation etc regarded as transferable property
Subjective analysis	An analysis of expenditure by type of expenditure e.g. employees and premises.
Supported borrowing	Borrowing where interest and repayment costs are supported by government revenue grants.
Tariffs and Top ups	Calculated by comparing an individual authority business rates baseline against baseline funding level.
Temporary borrowing	Borrowing of money for a term of up to 364 days.
Treasury management	The management of the local authority's cash flows, its borrowings and its investments, the management of associated risks, and the pursuit of the optimum performance or return consistent with those risks.
Transfer payments	Payments to individuals for which no goods or services are received in return by the local authority e.g. care for the elderly.
Treasury Policy Statement	A statement of key policies that an organisation follows in pursuit of effective treasury management, including borrowing limits and strategy.
Variable debt	This is money that has been borrowed at a variable interest rate, and as such is subject to interest rate changes.
Unsupported borrowing	Borrowing taken through the remit of the Prudential Code for which the council will not receive any government funding and will fund from own resources.
Definition of Fitch Primary Credit Rating Scales	
Long Term Ratings A: High credit quality.	A' ratings denote expectations of low default risk. The capacity for payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.
Short-Term Ratings F1: Highest short-term credit quality.	Indicates the strongest intrinsic capacity for timely payment of financial commitments; may have an added "+" to denote any exceptionally strong credit feature.
Definition of Moodys General Credit Rating	
Long-Term Corporate Obligation Ratings - A	Obligations rated A are considered upper-medium grade and are subject to low credit risk.
Short-Term Ratings – P-1	Issuers (or supporting institutions) rated Prime-1 have a superior ability to repay short-term debt obligations.



Walsall Council



Feedback from Budget Consultation Financial Year 2013/14

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Between 24 September and 23 November 2012 views about the council's draft budget proposals were gathered from almost 500 people.
- 1.2. Feedback was sought on eleven specific budget proposals including; school catering, school music service, grounds maintenance, garden waste, public toilets, council property, markets, council tax exemptions (unoccupied homes, structural alterations, second homes) and social care commissioning.
- 1.3. Feedback was gathered via a range of methods, with most being gathered face to face by council officers at locations around the borough.
- 1.4. **School catering:** Although 5p was not thought to be much, concerns were raised about the impact this may have on families with more than one child and those on low incomes who do not qualify for free school meals. Alongside the rising costs of everything else, some parents felt that the increase may mean they can no longer afford school meals for their children.
- 1.5. **School music service:** Not everyone felt able to comment on this proposal. Those who don't use the service or did not know of it were generally happy with the proposal. However, those that did comment, typically those who used the service, voiced very strong opposition to the proposal to reduce funding for the Forest Arts Centre.
- 1.6. **Grounds maintenance and green spaces:** Whilst some people felt that this service area is less critical than others, concern about the impact proposed cuts might have were widespread. Many express the need to continue to maintain parks and green spaces, as well as value these assets and the staff who look after them. Lots of people are worried that areas will look scruffy which will be bad for the borough. Many feel that a reduction will actually end up costing the council more in repairs following vandalism and the reduction of patrols may put people off visiting due to fears of safety.

- 1.7. Garden waste:** Many people feel that this is a good idea as the brown bins don't get used in the winter saying they can always take waste to the tip if needed. However, many people feel that not collecting brown bins for five months is too long and that November remains a busy period in the garden, especially collecting fallen leaves. Lots of people questioned what they are supposed to do with their garden waste during the winter, particularly those who cannot get to the tip.
- 1.8. Public toilets:** There is general agreement that the public toilets are in a poor state, but lots of people still value them and did not want to see them close. Many people were concerned that closure would have the greatest impact on older people, children and those with disabilities. Many people say that they do not or would not use the toilets, and that alternative facilities are available nearby. However, not everyone felt comfortable using alternative facilities in, for example supermarkets, particularly if they are not a customer. Residents need reassurances that it is OK to use toilets in alternative venues.
- 1.9. Reduce property expenditure:** Very few concerns were raised about reducing the number of buildings the council uses. People were happy to see the council making savings in this way, as long as it did not impact on front line service delivery.
- 1.10. Markets:** Whilst some people felt that the increase in rent was appropriate, lots of people were concerned the increase, during what is a difficult economic period, would kill off the markets. In addition, many felt that the increase would be passed on to the consumer in price rises which may in turn see people shopping elsewhere.
- People value the markets and recognised that they were struggling. Many felt that increasing rent is not appropriate and that they should be better supported. Market traders substantiated the concerns of residents saying an increase in rent may not make it profitable for them and they would therefore go elsewhere. Traders want more support from the council to help boost the trade.
- 1.11. Council tax:** There was overwhelming support for reducing exemptions for properties that are unoccupied, undergoing structural repairs and second homes.
- 1.12. Social care commissioning:** Few people felt able to comment on this proposal, however it was generally seen as a good idea and the right thing to do. Some felt that the council should respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be moved back into the borough.
- 1.13. Other comments:** Large numbers of people feel that the council has too many highly paid managers and senior officers and that streamlining should be carried out before cuts to services are made. Many felt that the number of Councillors and their expenses should be cut. Many residents do not feel that the council is operating as

efficiently as it could be and that finances are wasted. People appear to feel they are not getting value for money.

The economy, jobs and regenerating struggling towns was frequently mentioned as in need of support and investment. Many were critical of the cost of car parking in Walsall town centre, blaming the lack of free parking and high tariffs as the reason the town and the market has seen a decline.

Road and pavement maintenance and activities for teenagers remain high priorities. Lots of other comments about a variety of council and non council services were also received.

Going forward, communicating and informing residents about council services, what is being done to address their concerns and how their views have been taken into account will be important.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. On 24 September 2012 Walsall Council published its draft budget proposals for 2013/14. Following this, a month of public consultation began.

Qualitative research in the form of face to face interviews and written comments was used as a way of obtaining detailed, contextual and discursive information from local people all over the borough.

People could give their views in the following ways, (comments are referenced throughout the report as indicated in brackets);

- Face to face discussions with members of the public in the First Stop Shop (FSS)
- Face to face at First Stop Express bus locations around the borough¹ (Town name)
- The distribution of 10,000 'Budget: Have your say' prepaid comment postcards (distributed in free newspapers and available in libraries) (Post)
- Website with an online response form www.walsall.gov.uk/budgethaveyoursay (Online)
- Weekly quarter page adverts in the Express and Star and one full page advert in the Chronicle including a freepost reply slip (Press)
- People could also give their views via email (Email), letter (Post), text message or telephone

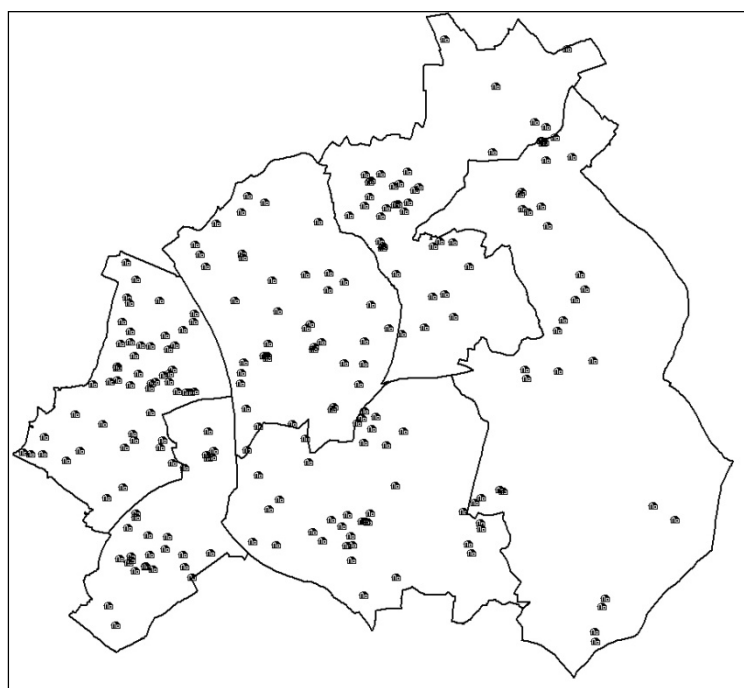
The following number of responses were generated;

○ conversations face to face	302
○ online form	78
○ postcards	69
○ calls	18
○ emails	13
○ letters	4
○ text messages	0
<i><u>Total</u></i>	<i><u>487</u></i>

For each draft budget proposal a detailed council response to the feedback gathered is included (highlighted in a grey box in this report).

¹ Towns covered; Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston, Pelsall, Pheasey, Reedswood Retail Park, Walsall town centre, Willenhall

Fig 1. The home postcodes of respondents (where a postcode was provided, 247 people)



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2.2. Qualitative research

Qualitative research is inherently different from its quantitative partner. Qualitative research derives data from observation, interviews, or verbal interactions and focuses on the meanings and interpretations of the respondents. It is not about numbers, percentages, frequencies or significance, but is primarily concerned with "Why"? Moreover, it must be remembered when interpreting the results that they are not based on quantitative statistical evidence. The findings are based on a small sample of a cross-section of residents and should not be confused with statistical representativeness.

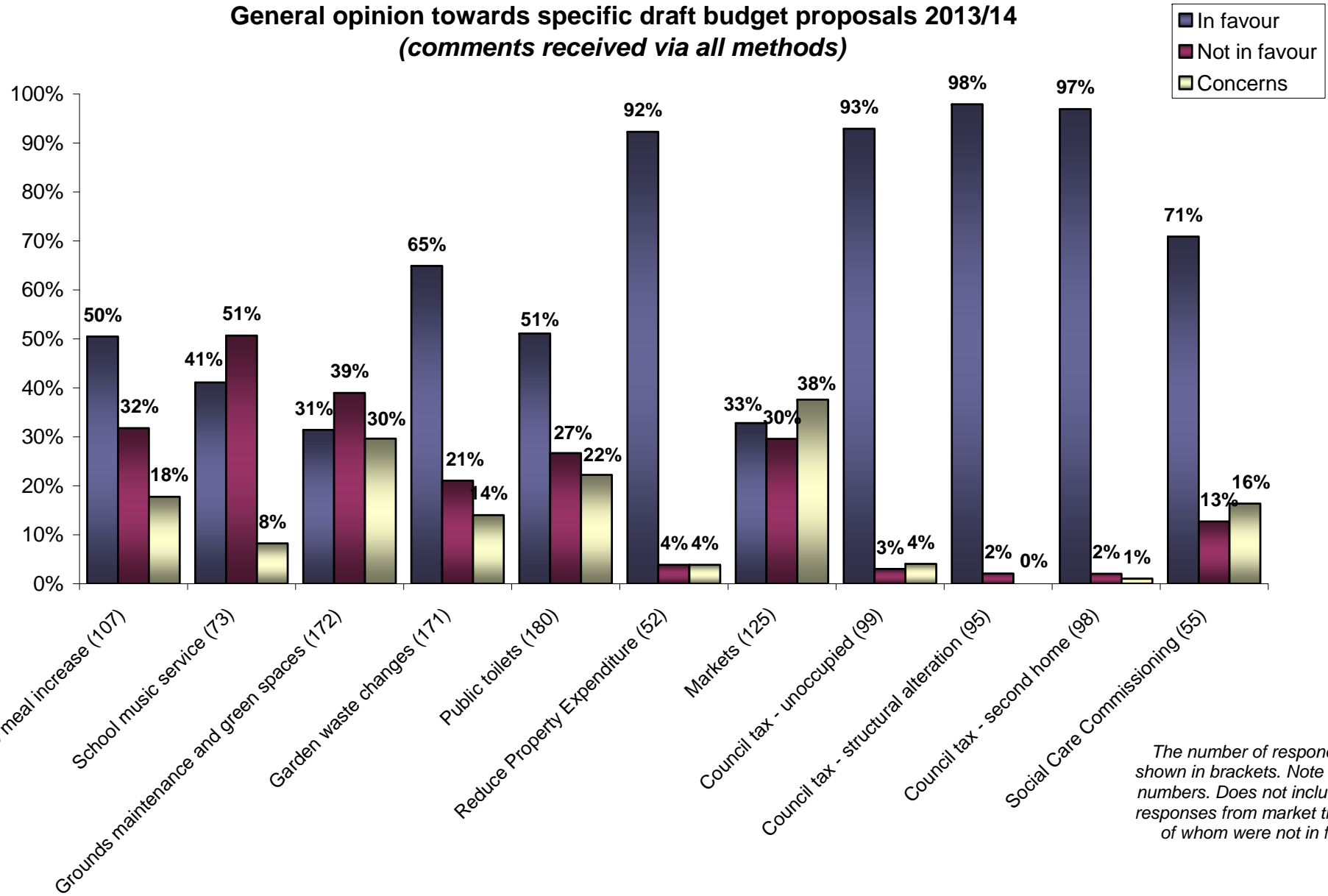
2.3. Quantifying comments

In order to provide an indication of the proportion of respondents saying they are *in favour*, *not in favour* or *have concerns* about a particular proposal, all comments received have been back coded and the results are shown in Fig 2.

Fig 2. should be considered in context of the comments received, and a summary is provided in this report. Please note that not all respondents commented on a particular proposal or provided sufficient information to allow accurate coding, as such in some cases a certain amount of judgement on behalf of the researcher has been applied.

Fig 2.

General opinion towards specific draft budget proposals 2013/14
(comments received via all methods)



- The information shown in Fig 2. shows the proposals receiving the largest proportion of comments were public toilets (180), grounds maintenance and green spaces (172), garden waste changes (171) and markets (125).
- With very few not in favour or having concerns, respondents clearly support the proposals regarding council tax and reducing property expenditure (over 90% are in favour of these proposals).
- Opinion regarding markets and grounds maintenance and green spaces is very much divided across all categories. For these proposals around a third or more express concerns, the highest across all proposals.
- Grounds maintenance and green spaces and the school music service* were the only proposals where more people were not in favour than were in favour. (* Based on 73 responses)
- Notable proportions are not in favour of or have concerns about increasing school meals by 5p and the closure of public toilets. When combining these two categories, almost equal proportions of respondents are not in favour or have concerns, as the proportion who are in favour.
- Whilst 65% of respondents are in favour of the proposed changes to brown bins (garden waste collections), a total of 35% are not in favour or have concerns. It should also be noted that not all respondents had a brown bin or used it.
- Seven in ten people are in favour of the proposal regarding social care commissioning, however only 55 people commented on this proposal.

The above points should be considered alongside the comments summarised in section 3 of this report.

3. Qualitative analysis by draft budget proposal



3.1. School catering

We'd look to put up the price of a school meal by 5p per serving and then three per cent ahead of inflation after that. Those on free school meals would be unaffected. This would still see a school meal at under the £2 mark and compares favorably with neighbouring Black Country authorities. Saving: £20,000

You said

Increasing the cost of school meals by 5p per meal received mixed responses from both parents and those who did not have school children. Many felt that 5p per meal was an acceptable increase to bear and that those who were struggling could apply for free school meals.

'5p isn't much.' Online

'My kids have packed lunches anyway so it doesn't affect me.' FSS

'I think 5p is acceptable compared to general inflation.' Online

'My child benefits from free school meals to the 5p increase would not bother me.' Willenhall

'It's still good value. I assume that if people are struggling they will be eligible for free school meals.' Walsall town centre

Some felt that a 5p increase was fine and that it is up to those on a budget to manage their finances better and prioritise.

'People waste far more quids on things they don't need, so 5p is nothing.' Walsall town centre

'Some parents need to think where they are spending their money, they can pay the extra for the school meals and reduce their spending on cigarettes and alcohol.' Walsall town centre

A number of parents and people without children felt that amidst the rising costs of household bills and other services, 5p per meal for larger families might just add to existing money pressures.

'This would affect families who are just over the limit for receiving free meals so putting an extra strain on their finances and perhaps stop children from having a proper meal each day.' Online

'I don't agree with increasing school meals. I couldn't afford another increase. I know its only 5p, but its everything else that's going up

added to it I don't claim free school meals but I may have to shortly, our money just doesn't go far enough.' Willenhall

'The proposals regarding school meals concern me, what about those parents on the breadline and who have no extra money, not good, children need their food.' Walsall town centre

'I am a single parent and I have to send my child to school with sandwiches as I cannot afford school meals so a 5p increase would be wrong.' Willenhall

Those with more than one child say that the increase would be difficult to fund.

'I'm really struggling to fund school meals so any increase would have real impact on me and my children. Sometimes it's the best meal of the day especially in the winter.' Walsall town centre

'No to school meal increases. I can't afford to pay anymore. I have four children, that's too much.' Willenhall

Response from Walsall Council - School catering

Catering Services, the Council's in-house catering provider, supplies 7,750 meals a day to some 64 schools and the current service does represent good value for money.

The proposed 5 pence increase per paid meal to £1.95 a meal, represents a 2.6% increase, broadly in-line with inflation, and broadly reflects the increase in food costs. Meal costs remain in-line with those provided by neighbouring local authorities. Some (non in-house) providers charge £2.20, however these providers do not always meet the School Food Trust's stringent nutritional food analysis targets.

Half of all respondents were in favour of the proposal whilst the remaining half were not in favour or had concerns about the price rise. Even so, the additional 5 pence increase per day x 190 school days represents an annual extra cost to the family of £9.50 per child.

Work is on-going to promote and encourage more children who are eligible for Free School Meals to take up this offer.

In response to the comments made during budget consultation, it is recommended that the 5 pence increase in meal price will not be made.



3.2. School music service

We'd look to make reduction in the diversity and quantity of music teaching support to schools and at Forest Arts Centre. Saving: £22,248

You said

Views about the proposal to reduce funding for the Forest Arts Centre were polarised. Those that did not use or benefit from the service tended to either have no comment or no concerns at all.

'Cut the music service entirely, priority should be maths and English.'
Walsall town centre

'I don't use it, so not a problem.' FSS

However individuals and those whose children or grandchildren use the services were very much opposed to the cuts. Several comments, letters and emails strongly objecting to the cuts were received. Words used to voice their opinions included 'horrified', 'disgusted', 'travesty', 'outrageous', 'upset and disappointed'.

'The music service should be increased. The concerts they put on are magnificent. The service music teachers provide benefits all children not just the middle class. Music helps build confidence, self esteem and progress in education.' FSS

'I am extremely concerned about the cuts to music support, it's a disgrace....Every child should be offered music, it is not just for those who can afford it, this is unfair, what about equal opportunity for all?'
Walsall town centre

'Facilities at the Forest Arts Centre are second to none, there is a buzzing atmosphere and the staff are excellent. The whole music support available has helped my children improve their literacy and their reading skills have vastly improved, so it is not just about music, it is much more. They offer so much to children of all background, it is not selective.' Walsall town centre

'I personally am disgusted that the council are planning to reduce the teaching support to young people at Forest Arts Centre. I go to the centre every week to join in the youth choir there and I can vouch for the centre and say how amazing it is!' Email

'The staff and volunteers work really hard to make the centre a friendly and compelling place to visit, and it would be most unfortunate if cuts meant a reduction to the programme that Forest could offer.' Email

Other comments highlighted that across the borough there is a lack of things for children and young people do and the Forest Arts Centre provides more than just a place to learn and play music. Some felt that the centre helps keep young people off the streets where they may otherwise cause anti-social behaviour, others praised the centre as a place where children and young people are able to develop their confidence, social skills and raise aspirations. Comments indicate that the centre has a very good reputation.

'I have had lots of excellent comments from friends and colleagues whose children attend the Bands at Forest Art Centre - Walsall needs these facilities and safe, educational environments for our youth (keeps them indoors and out of trouble, engaged in activities and allows interaction with each other.' Online

'Walsall Council has a good reputation for education and a national & international renowned reputation for the arts and especially with its Forest Arts Centre. Education has to be first as this, whatever the age, is the future once the recession passes and it will.' Online

Some on the other hand felt that the size of the proposed cut would have minimal impact on the service.

'Our grandchildren love the music service provided at Elmore Green Primary School. It's a shame [to cut the music service budget] but the impact is minimal.' FSS

Response from Walsall Council - School music service

In response to the clear support many people have expressed for the music service, it is recommended that the proposed saving be deleted from the draft budget.



3.3. Grounds maintenance and green spaces

We'd prune less, we'd convert shrub beds to grass areas, we'd stop weekend patrols, we'd reduce our presence on sites and we'd use fewer agency staff to cut the grass in summer and we'd review our tree operations. We'd also look to delete six posts via vacancies or redundancies. Saving £400,000

You said

Some people were wholly in favour of cuts to green spaces as it was seen as a service that is less critical in comparison to others such as social care. Also some people feel that the cuts to green spaces would have minimal impact on them.

'I don't use them so I'm not bothered' FSS

Others expressed the view that the green spaces service could be made more efficient, respondents gave examples of when they had seen staff sitting in vans not working, or where seemingly too many staff were allocated to a single job and grass being cut needlessly.

'Why are there so many workers in parks and greenspaces in Shortheath? Three to four men working in parts where you could get away with a couple..' Walsall town centre

'The grass is cut too often, more often than I cut my own lawn! Let some areas grow wild. Grass cutters can litter pick and remove dog poo instead.' Pheasey

Some people suggested making better use of volunteers or alternative approaches as ways to save money and to ensure green spaces remain looked after.

'The public who use the parks and nature reserves should help [look after green spaces] more. Other things take priority.' Pheasey

'You should maintain green spaces but there are other more important things to spend money on. Children and young people are more important than grass cutting.' FSS

'Can't people doing community service do more?' Pheasey

'Where I live on the Beacon Estate, New Invention, most of the pavements are half hard surface and half grass. This involves a lot of time taken by council workers in cutting the grass areas and removing the cuttings. I would like to suggest that the grass areas are removed and replaced with hard surfaces. Although this will have an initial cost, it would only be a one off and savings could then be made. There may

well be other situations in the Borough where the same suggestion might apply.’ Online

‘Reducing the amount of money spent on looking after green spaces, I am sure there would be alternative ways and methods of keeping these areas looking tidy e.g. no flower borders that need attending.’ Online

Many people raise concerns about what the cuts and reductions in maintenance might look like in reality and the impact this may have, one person thought that the cuts would result in the borough *‘looking like a bombsite’*. People expressed the need to ensure that the borough looks like a nice place to visit, both for residents, visitors and in order to attract investment.

‘With less maintenance green areas will look scruffy. It’s important to keep areas looking good and presentable, with fewer people this will be difficult.’ FSS

‘These places need to be kept clean and tidy.’ Pheasey

‘Walsall needs to be an attractive place to live in order to attract businesses and workers. Therefore it does not make sense to cut back on Green Spaces and Countryside Services.’ FSS

‘Do not neglect parks, playing fields and street cleaning, to do so would cause environmental filth.’ Postal

Some felt that the cuts would actually have the opposite effect and end up costing the council more in the long run.

‘With fewer patrols vandalism may go up and end up costing more.’ FSS

‘I’d be worried about less maintenance in parks and streets, leaves make paths slippy at this time of year and vandalism may increase. The community will suffer’ Pheasey

The proposed cuts to green spaces worries many people and makes some feel that the council does not sufficiently value the borough’s parks and green spaces or the staff who look after them. A ‘Save Walsall’s Greenspaces’ Facebook campaign and petition was launched soon after the budget proposals were announced, and at the time of writing 166 people had signed the petition. Petition details are shown at the end of this report.

‘The decimation of Walsall Countryside Services is a bad idea. The Rangers perform a vital role in the community supporting Friends Groups and other community based eco/environmental groups and projects for young and old alike. This is in addition to their day time jobs. Much of what they do is not paid and appears to be undervalued by councillors.’ Online

'One of the last things the council should consider cutting is the number of Countryside Services Rangers. Walsall is one of the few towns in the Black Country to have so many green spaces within the borough, it is the envy of other towns that do not have these.' Online

Many people responded saying they were worried about the proposal to reduce park patrols and the impact it will have on green spaces in terms of maintaining these areas and making people feel safer.

'What an utter disgrace cutting front line Park Ranger staff! Our parks are an asset and the ranger team are fantastic. They engage in youth intervention to help reduce ASB, tackle dog fouling, school work, community group work, partnership work, organise events, the list goes on and are value for money.' Online

'Keep weekend patrols as without them would feel less safe when walking through park.' Online

'Patrols of green spaces are important for feeling safe ad deters anti-social behaviour.' Online

Many feel that more green spaces staff are needed not less.

'We don't have enough park patrols with all the violence and vandalism that we have' Online

'I understand it is proposed to reduce the number of senior countryside rangers from an already thin on the ground 4 to 2. How can this much valued service continue to function?...Please think again about reducing this service. Once it's gone it's very hard to re-start and re-engage the public.' Online

'Park Lime Pits are a very much value the resource. I am very aware of the expertise of the Rangers who manage this and other green spaces in the borough. It is this management which keeps the spaces seemingly wild yet controlled and this requires considerable knowledge and work. It is an incredible feature to have at our disposal. The wild life is amazing and next to a town of a quarter of a million people. We should have more people, not less, working in the Countryside services.' Online

'No, no, no.....I am in complete disagreement with this proposal, we need more patrols and presence, not less.' Online

Response from Walsall Council - Grounds maintenance and green spaces

Significant budget savings are required across all service areas including parks and green spaces.

The management and maintenance of green spaces is being integrated into a broader Clean and Green service that will have responsibility for green spaces and associated activities across the whole of the borough. The service area will be better co-ordinated, have access to additional resources and be more flexible.

The changes to the parks service are intended to modernise the service and deliver services more efficiently and effectively. Our prestige parks will have an increase in staffing levels resulting in a greater physical presence during the week. These sites include but aren't limited to; Willenhall Memorial Park, Palfrey Park, George Rose Park, Kingshill Park, Leamore Park, Reedswood Park, Pleck Park, and King George V/ Bloxwich Park. This will enable multiple functions to be covered including horticultural tasks, site maintenance, litter collection, tackling anti-social behaviour, and opening and closing parks.

There will be a reduction in the number of jobs across the whole service area and some roles will be changed to minimise impact and maximise service delivery. The council recognises that Green Spaces and the Countryside Service are important to the borough's future as the recent updated Green Space Strategy illustrates. We will continue to work closely with community groups and every effort will continue to be made to ensure that all green spaces remain well-maintained and fit for purpose within available budgets. We welcome ideas from all groups with regards to savings options, priorities and alternative savings. We are constantly looking to maximise income wherever possible and reduce any unnecessary costs.

The proposed reduction in ranger services is limited to two full time equivalent posts but it is important to recognise that this will be supplemented by the wider Street Pride Service. Four Neighbourhood Ranger roles will remain and following consultation with existing employees, two Senior Ranger jobs have been reinstated to deliver the same service as at present including weekend site provision. Weekend work will be complimented through economies of scale with resources across the wider Street Pride service such as street cleansing staff supporting litter collection, play area inspections and sweeping operations. Some weekend cover will be provided with no additional costs through efficiencies within the Service.

In addition, the Arboretum will be staffed seven days a week with the existing number of gardeners and rangers. In addition, two new posts of Arboretum Manager and Head Ranger will be filled in 2013.

(Green spaces and parks continued)

In conclusion, it is recommended that, in response to feedback from the public consultation exercise, the proposed savings be reduced by £110,000 in order to allow robust weekend cover of parks and green spaces to be maintained.



3.4. Garden waste changes (Brown Bins)

Instead of not collecting garden waste for three months over winter we'd look to extend this to five months, starting in 2013, from early November to the end of March in line with many other local authorities. Saving £176,000

You said

With not every household in the borough having a brown bin, this proposal does not directly affect everyone, and as expected those without a brown bin and those who do not use their brown bin, fully support the proposals to reduce the winter brown bin collection service.

'I've got a really low maintenance garden so don't use the brown bin.'
Walsall town centre

'I'm happy with the changes to brown bins.' Walsall town centre

'I live in a flat so it doesn't affect me.' FSS

Others feel that the reduction in the service during the winter months is acceptable saying *'it's a dead month anyway'*, *'you can always go to the tip'* and *'there are other ways to manage garden waste [composting].'*

'It's OK to reduce the brown bin service over the winter, you don't really need it.' FSS

'You can stop the brown bins, people can take it to the tip if they need to.' FSS

'I'm amazed how shortening the brown bin service generates such a large amount of money. Maybe it is a bit too early, however people can take it to the tip.' FSS

'Brown bin collection is an excellent service. Reducing over the winter months makes sense. If people have huge gardens they can go to the tip.' Pheasey

'A smart proposal: Collection of garden rubbish to not be collected for 5 months (if people have plenty of notice, they can ensure any pruning, hedge trimming and those last lawn mowing sessions can be completed for the end of October and in time for last collection).' Online

However, many people express concerns about cutting the brown bin service, saying that that it may encourage fly tipping and that those without cars won't be able to take their waste away.

'I disagree strongly with the suggestion to reduce the collection of garden refuse. 1. The saving is small and I am sure the cost of clearing the probable fly tipping will be much greater. 2. Climate change has resulted in longer growing periods. My grass is still growing and shrubs have yet to be pruned. I do not think the stop date should be brought forward.' Online

'Older people and those without cars can't get to the tip, where are they supposed to take it?' FSS

Some felt that with a reduced brown bin service residents will resort to putting garden waste in with their domestic waste, which will end up costing the council more to dispose of.

'What does the council expect us to do with all the garden waste during those weeks?... According to the council website £176,000 will be saved by reducing the brown bin service by 2 months. But how much extra will have to be spent clearing up fly tipping and higher landfill charges as a result?' Email

'People will put it in their grey bin and it will actually cost more to dispose of.' FSS

'This is a backward step for both the service to residents and encouraging people to recycle. Not everyone has the capacity to compost and some of us will have no alternative but to put garden waste into our grey bins during the closed months which means we will be making landfill waste. I find that I'm gardening 10 months a year so I suggest that the maximum closed period should be 3 months.' Online

Most people tended to feel that ceasing the collection in November is too early and that people are still busy in the garden during November pruning and tidying, especially as leaves are still falling. Some people felt that a close down of 4 months would be more acceptable.

'Ok but what about all the leaves?' Pheasey

'I would not mind non collection of garden rubbish for 4 months, not 5 months, that's stretching it a bit.' Walsall town centre

'Garden Waste Changes - a five month gap is too long, leaf fall continues into November, and first lawn cuts start in March. At least give us the option of having brown bin collections in November/March.' Online

'It would be more helpful to let the new period run from mid November to mid May, since early November is the time of leaf gathering and the disposal of Summer bedding plants.' Post

Some people offered ideas as a form of compromise, suggesting that brown bins could be collected during the winter but much less often.

'Five months is a long time. Need a compromise. Look at changing frequencies.' Pheasey

'Maybe empty once a month during the winter, although if people are desperate they can go to the tip. You don't want to encourage fly tipping.' FSS

'Maybe think about altering the frequency as part of reducing the overall service i.e. maybe one collection every 6 weeks during the winter.' Pheasey

Response from Walsall Council - Garden waste changes (Brown Bins)

The amount of garden waste collected by the council during the winter months drops significantly, with many households not even putting out their brown bin for collection. It is therefore inefficient for the council to collect garden waste under these circumstances.

How long the winter closedown should operate for and when it should start and finish is being considered. Extending this period from the current three months to the proposed period of five months would save an additional amount estimated at £176,000.

Feedback indicates that most people feel that ceasing the collection in November is too early with many residents still busy in the garden and hence making use of the brown bin service. Some people felt that a close down of 4 months would be more acceptable. Reducing the closedown period to four months would result in a smaller saving of £141,000.

Changing the frequency of collections during a five month winter closedown to monthly or six weekly collections would result in minimal savings as the requirement for labour and vehicles, and therefore costs, would remain unaltered. There may be small efficiencies associated with running costs such as fuel and the use of agency labour deployed on other front line services, however savings on fixed costs such as salaries, vehicle leasing and maintenance would not be achieved. In addition, the effective communication to residents of collection dates during this period would also be problematic, leading to confusion and frustration amongst residents and poor value for money.

Small amounts of garden waste may be placed in the grey bin and, whilst this would indeed be tipped at a landfill site, the quantities involved across the borough would be relatively small.

(Garden waste changes continued)

It is acknowledged that some residents are unable to take their waste to the local tip.

Other than the odd exception, it is not considered that an extended winter closedown would result in an increase in fly tipping.

On balance, and taking into account the consultation response, it is recommended that the winter closedown period should only be extended to four months rather than five. This will result in a reduction in the proposed saving from £176,000 to £141,000.



3.5. Public toilets

Our toilets are in a really poor state of repair and we're struggling to be able to maintain them. As there are alternative public toilets nearby we'd look to close public toilets we look after in Pelsall, Rushall, Willenhall, Aldridge, Brownhills and Blakenall. We'd keep the Walsall bus station toilets which is managed on behalf of CENTRO and Bloxwich. Saving £120,000.

You said

Residents generally agree that public toilets are 'grotty' and 'disgusting'. Many believe that shutting them is the right thing to do in order to save money and that alternatives are available near by.

'Very good idea to close toilets, they are not being used for what they should be.' Online

'Public toilets are a mess and I would not use them.' Online

'The toilets are not really of good standard and I would rather not use them.' Online

'The toilets are only open 10am to 3pm anyway.' Online

'Don't know why you don't just close them. There is too much vandalism and there are other places to go.' Pheasey

'Closure of public toilets is acceptable providing there are other places like supermarket toilets to use.' Post

However, they are seen as important services for older people, people with disabilities and families, and that rather than close them they should perhaps be improved and kept open. Many people complained that there are not enough toilets. Closing the toilets in Willenhall was perceived to be a particular problem on market days.

'Keep public toilets open' Online

'A ridiculous idea, there are not enough!' Online

'Closing toilets will cause a problem for older people.' Online

'Keep Willenhall toilets open, especially on market days.' Online

Whilst some people say they would access alternative facilities in supermarkets and other venues, many people appear reluctant to use alternative toilets available in places like supermarkets because they are intended for customer use only and not the general public. Reassurances may be needed.

'No toilets are a problem. Tesco toilets are often out of order and is a big problem in Brownhills.' Online

'Supermarkets may charge people for using their toilets.' Online

'It's OK to close public toilets as long as stores are happy with the public using their toilets.' Online

'You can't expect shops to let people use their toilets.' Press

'Will shops insist that you have to buy goods in order to use toilet facilities?' Online

'You would need to put a sign up saying it was OK.' Online

Some respondents suggested introducing a charge to use public toilets or installing self cleaning toilets.

Response from Walsall Council - Public toilets

There is a requirement for the council to make revenue savings and the closure of the public conveniences is part of these savings, resulting in a saving of £120,000.

There appears to be significant support for the proposed closures although there were a number who are concerned about the effect this would have on older people, the disabled and those with young children. Some seem apprehensive about using alternative facilities available within nearby venues.

There are seven council run public conveniences, all of which have alternate facilities nearby. The alternatives, all of which are of a higher standard, include extended opening hours, regular spot checks and facilities for disabled people.

It is not proposed to close the facility at Bloxwich because of the greater distance to alternative facilities.

(Public toilets continued)

Budgets are needed not only to cover basic cleaning and maintenance, but also to cover the costs of rates, electricity, water supply, and sewage treatment. Older toilet blocks need to be upgraded to meet modern health and safety legislation and to make them fully accessible.

Many of the existing toilets are in poor condition and substantial investment is required but there is no funding to bring them up to standard.

Unfortunately, this has created an atmosphere of neglect, discouraging public use for the purposes intended and attracting anti-social behaviour, graffiti and criminal damage. This, in turn, increases maintenance costs including the regular replacement of consumables and equipment such as toilet seats. The combined effect of these factors has been to reduce usage to very low levels.

The facilities at Rushall and Brownhills have been temporarily closed since early October and there have been no complaints received as a consequence.

Consultation has been carried out with some companies where alternative provision is available some of which welcomed the opportunity for additional footfall.

The provision and maintenance of toilets in public places is at the discretion of local authorities who have a power, under section 87 of the Public Health Act 1936, to provide public conveniences, but no duty to do so. Whether or not they choose to provide these facilities is at their discretion, and has to be weighed in the balance against other local service demands.

The proposed closure of public conveniences should be seen against the background of the council remaining on a secure financial footing and preserving the potential for improving services. We must balance competing local demands for a broad range of public services against the need to avoid excessive burdens on local taxpayers. The proposed closures will make the land and/or buildings available for re-use or sale and save on ongoing repair and maintenance costs.

Due to the nature of the service, it has been difficult to quantify usage in detail and to gather a breakdown of public convenience users by equality groups. However, from a number of surveys carried out with the public around shopping habits in district and local centres, it is apparent that they mainly attract local residents who travel very short distances from their homes.

On balance, taking into account the alternative facilities available in the respective centres together with the strong likelihood that almost all visitors to the town and district centres concerned either live or work nearby, it is considered that any impact from the closure of council owned facilities

(Public toilets continued)

would be small. Extending consideration to reflect the discretionary nature of the service and the budget pressures on the Council, the proposed closures are considered reasonable. It is therefore recommended that the proposal to close the public conveniences concerned should be retained.



3.6. Reduce property expenditure

We'd look to reduce the number of buildings we use so we'll spend less on things like costly heating bills and expensive maintenance. Savings £573,161

You said

Residents agreed that it is right for the council to streamline and cut back its properties and to maximise capital income. A strong message throughout budget consultation was that people want to see the council operating as efficiently as possible and not wasting money on unnecessary expenditure.

'Continue to audit the use of buildings to eliminate wasted capacity.'
Online

'What happens to the money you make when closing down establishments like The Limes [sold on to housing market], Baytree House. Why are you not selling this land? Rushall Mews? What is happening to this land? There is considerable money to be made by selling this land or buildings for the correct market price.' *Online*

'There is lots of waste land that the council own that is dormant. They should sell the land in order to generate income.' *Willenhall*

'Turn the heating down in the Civic. We have to.' *Postal*

Some respondents urged the council not to close important public buildings such as libraries.

A few people were aware that the council had already consolidated its offices, those that were not aware were pleased to hear this. However, some people wondered whether there is room for everyone and were concerned that over crowding staff might lead to a poorer service.

Response from Walsall Council - Reduce property expenditure

The council has clearly set out its intentions and already begun to reduce necessary spending and remove unnecessary expenditure on property so that more money can be prioritised for front line services. This work continues with a better understanding about the future shape and provision of council services being developed all the time. Work that began looking at offices will now look in other types of building use so that a complete review of the ways in which the council needs properties to serve our customers takes place.

(Reduce property expenditure continued)

Some rationalisation has already taken place and in the future more employees will work from fewer, more suitable buildings which will reduce running costs and make sure that we are increasingly efficient in our use of the buildings we actually need. As well as having the right buildings in the right locations, the council is already putting place different ways of using these buildings with desk-sharing and home-working part of new ways of working which reduce the overall accommodation we need to operate in which improve services to customers and do not detract from it.

Some buildings and sites we no longer need have been or will be sold to generate capital income which funds new projects to improve service to our customers. Deciding which buildings are kept or sold will be determined by work to understand what our customers need, and where in the Borough.

Given the feedback this proposal is therefore recommended for Council approval.



3.7. Markets

Increase charges for market stalls by £5 a day – the first increase since 2009. We'd look to increase income by: £100,000

You said

Many people had no views on this proposal or felt it was fair and appropriate to increase charges by £5.

'Increases won't hurt them.' Online

'Everyone has had increases over the last few years so why shouldn't they?' Online

'There hasn't been an increase since 2009 so it's fair.' FSS

However, comments indicate widespread concern about the impact such an increase might have on the markets and the local town. In particular that an increase might see traders not coming to the town at all and it having a detrimental effect on the market, even killing them off altogether

'It would be a shame if rent rises for markets puts traders off coming to the historic market.' Pheasey

'The price for market stalls should not be increased as the current state of the markets is poor and you need to attract more stalls.' FSS

'It will hit some traders hard.' Online

'It may drive some traders out of business.' Online

'I don't agree with increasing the charges to market holders, the market is really small now, they'll just go somewhere else cheaper or charge us more.' Willenhall

Comments also reflected the public's desire to see the markets rejuvenated and improved, benefiting both traders and the local town generally.

'I'd disagree with putting up charges for market stalls. The market is already poorly attended and people are struggling to make a living, we should be encouraging market business.' Walsall town centre

'I disagree with charging more for market stalls as I think we need to invest in a quality market as this should be the jewel in Walsall's crown, attracting more footfall to the town.' Online

'Why not reduce charges to attract more traders.' Online

Market traders said

All responses received from market traders (22 at the time of writing) objected to increasing rent. Comments substantiate the concerns expressed by residents about the negative impact an increase in rent might have on markets.

'Business is already slow everyday and finding the rent in the mornings is becoming a struggle so the extra charge for rent is making me think its not worth the stand for the day with business so slow.' Trader

'Business is slow and we are struggling anyway. Putting up the rent would possibly reduce my trading days here. People already haven't got jobs and money we realise trade is down this year to last year. For some reason it is not getting better at the momemnt. I think the rent should be reduced.' Trader

Some traders feel that the rent is already too high and that a decrease would be more appropriate.

'The rent increase will make it the most expensive stall rent per footage in the country and also very little service for your money.' Trader

'The rents are already very high. Northampton are dropping their rent by 25%.' Trader

An increase in rent could see traders deciding not to stand.

'I have heard that many traders are leaving after Christmas because of rent. Please don't increase it!' Trader

'I don't think it is fair to put up rent as we are struggling enough as it is. I have already had to give up one day, it will probably mean I will have to leave altogether.' Trader

Response from Walsall Council - Markets

Average stall take-up at Walsall market is 78% (2012/13), but this is not the case at Bloxwich and Willenhall markets where it is acknowledged that trading performance is more challenged, and further pressures on the viability of those markets, such as a rent increase, could have a particularly adverse impact on the sustainability of those centres. Therefore the increase in market stall rents is restricted to Walsall market only, reflecting its relative health.

Stall rents have not increased since 2009 and have been delayed as long as possible, but are consistent with a rise in charges for other council services. A £5 increase will take the maximum daily stall rent on Walsall market to £40 (dependent on trading day and stall location).

The council recognises seasonal pressures on market traders by consistently reducing stall rents in the 'kipper' period immediately after Christmas (January), and there is a desire to continue doing this in the future.

The council also recognises the importance of Walsall market by commissioning work to explore ways in which a new high-quality market might be delivered alongside other development schemes that aim to greatly improve the attractiveness of the town centre for the benefit of traders and customers alike.

Cabinet will be asked (23 January 2013 meeting) to commit to commissioning a detailed feasibility study to better understand the costs of delivering the new market and we will work closely with market traders and customers as we progress this. In the challenging economic conditions the council would be expected to examine all options to secure funding to help make this significant investment in the town.

This proposal will therefore be recommended for Council approval.



3.8. Council tax

1. We'd close a 'loophole'. We'd look to change the amount of time people can have an empty property and is unoccupied and unfurnished. At the moment it's six months. We'd look to change that to three. We'd look to increase income by £133,872
2. We'd close a 'loophole'. At the moment, the first 12 months that a property requires structural alteration or repair an exemption can be claimed. We'd look change the amount of relief from 100 per cent to 50 per cent. We're doing this to increase income but also to press for empty properties to be brought back into use and reduce then number of derelict unoccupied properties. We'd look to increase income by £94,854.
3. We'd look to close a 'loophole'. A second home sees a 10 per cent discount. That would be ended. We'd look to increase income by £28,560.

You said

Very few people objected to the proposals to change council tax relief for empty properties, properties undergoing structural alterations and second homes.

'Council tax changes welcomed.' Online

'Agree with all Council tax proposals.' Online

'I'm pleased to see that it is not all about cutting costs but also about increasing revenues.' Online

'I think closing loopholes re council tax for second homes and empty properties is a great idea - claw some money back from people who can essentially afford it. It's not going to hit people hard who are already taking hit after hit. If you have a second home, you can afford it! The other plans seem sound, if not ideal.' Online

'If you can afford 2 homes you can afford to pay full council tax.' FSS

'We shouldn't offer any discount' FSS

One person pointed out that when dealing with a deceased property the time it takes to sort out Probate can be very long. In such cases three months was felt to be not be enough, and slightly unfair. Would allowances be made in such circumstances?

One landlord in the borough felt that 3 months is not long enough to redecorate a property and find new tenants. On person felt that the shorter

time may lead to landlords rushing to let a property and subsequently let 'any old riff raff' move in causing potential problems for neighbours.

Response from Walsall Council - Council tax

Given the overwhelmingly positive response to this proposal, cabinet will be recommending to Council the adoption of the discount scheme as outlined in the consultation. Property in probate is exempt from council tax, provided the property is not transferred to another person during that time and there will be no changes to this.



3.9. Social Care commissioning

We'd move more people back to Walsall who had traditionally been sent out of Walsall. Saving £329,000.

You said

Few people were implicated by this proposal and therefore comment and discussion was limited. Overall it was generally seen as a good idea and that it was appropriate to bring 'Walsall people' accommodated in residential care outside the borough, back into the borough. People were particularly happy as to them it made sense and saved money.

'Old people should be local and in their own environment.' Online

'This should have been done sooner.' FSS

'This could possibly increase work within Walsall, I'm happy with that proposal.' Online

One person stressed the importance of respecting the individual's and family's wishes, and that if they do not want to move back in to the borough they should not be forced to. Moving vulnerable people against their wishes could be detrimental to their health and individual circumstances should be taken into account.

'Elderly people won't want to be moved.' Willenhall

One person questioned whether the appropriate resources to accommodate and care for these people existed in Walsall.

'The movement of people back into Walsall assumes that we have the skills and expertise to look after these people in Walsall. If so, fine, but the closure of Chase Nursing Home, and my own experience shows that all is not well here. I would rather pay an extra 10% on my council

tax to ensure that the vulnerable are well looked after in Walsall.'
Online

Response from Walsall Council - Social Care commissioning

No one will be moved against their wishes. Every case is reviewed with the individual service user and their family and people will only move if they choose to. This programme is primarily for disabled people who are adults, with very few older people choosing care homes away from the borough.

Most of the people in this programme are choosing to live in their own homes in the borough with the support of a care package rather than a care home. Standards of care in care homes in the borough have been poor in some homes and the council has been insisting on higher standards. This has led to some care homes closing because they could not meet the higher standards required. The quality of care is therefore improving, people are experiencing better and more local services, and savings are being made.

Given the feedback this proposal is therefore recommended for approval by Council.

3.10. Other common themes

Many comments related to other areas of council responsibility spanning all directorates. The most common topics are briefly summarised below.



3.11. Staff, managers and Councillors

A large number of comments related to the perceived unnecessary tiers of 'highly paid' management at the council. Many feel that not enough is being done to streamline the council and that this should be done before any cuts to services.

'Managers on high wages should be cut as too many working for the council and not seen by the general public getting their hands dirty.'
FSS

'Cut back on senior management, retain frontline staff who live in the borough and spend their money here.' *Online*

'The council can save a lot of money if it can reduce the pen pushers, meaning middle management to the minimum required.' *Online*

'Start at the top.' *Online*

'All the bosses get too much.' *Darlaston*

'If you reduce management you automatically reduce bureaucracy and make the organisation leaner and more agile...by judicious pruning of expensive management you can both cut costs and protect services.' Online

'All the talk is of cuts to staff; why haven't we heard anything about getting rid of management jobs? If you reduce management you automatically reduce bureaucracy and make the organisation leaner and more agile. If you remove a manager on say 75k, you can keep two staff (who actually do the job in most cases) on 25k and still make a 25k saving. Do that 4 times and you've saved 100k and kept 8 staff. By judicious pruning of expensive management you can both cut costs and protect services. I realise this won't happen because it is managers who make the decisions and this is like asking turkeys to vote for Christmas so take this as an expression of dissatisfaction with the bloated management structure.' Online

'The big bosses don't live round here and don't know what its like to live here, spend money elsewhere they live in nice areas with nice shops.' Darlaston

On the other hand people want to see the council boosting the economy, creating jobs in areas where they are needed and ensuring that redundancies are kept to a minimum.

'Don't like the thought of local workers loosing their jobs.' FSS

Many had the perception that councillors gain too much in expenses and should have a 'pay cut'.

'Reduce councillors' allowance by 30%.' Online

'I think you should look at local councillors now. They all get said ten thousand pound plus a year. We don't need fifty plus councillors in Walsall. If we halve them we would save a big amount. Also look at full time youth worker, waste of money.' Online

'Reduce the number of ward councillors by 33%. Dudley Council have two per ward. The cost saving through the expenses allowed councillors will be valuable.' Online

'Councillors are overpaid already and should not get expenses on top and they don't really listen anyway.' Darlaston

'Too many councillors in one ward.' Press

Response from Walsall Council - Staff, managers and Councillors

A major reorganisation of senior management took place in 2009/10 which deleted 13 posts and saved just over £1million. The council also took a decision in 2011 to end performance related pay for top three tiers of management.

There are a range of reorganisations mentioned in our savings proposals which will also entail a reduction in the number of middle and senior managers. In accordance with council policy, compulsory redundancies will be avoided or minimised as far as possible.

It is the general intention to continue to reduce management overheads and it is recognised that the salaries and costs of senior and middle management are an important part of this. However, this reduction needs to be made in a structured and considered manner over time as senior and experienced capacity is required to deliver the very many changes that are being made across the organisation to improve services and reduce costs.

Councillors have been very mindful of the costs of running the democratic process and have in recent years not accepted the recommendations from the Independent Panel on Members' Allowances to increase allowances. Currently Walsall Council provides allowances below the England average.



3.12. Efficiencies

Cuts appear easier to bear if people feel confident that the council is doing everything it can to operate more efficiently. In addition to streamlining managers, not wasting money on unnecessary projects was seen as important.

'Walsall Council in my opinion has been very wasteful with finances for a number of years and are still not making decisions to reduce costs.'
Online

'Stop buying silly sculptures.' *Online*

'Get rid of consultants.' *Online*

'There is very little in this document about eliminating waste within the council.' *Online*

Maintenance by utility companies were highlighted as an area where monies are wasted. People want to see the council and utility companies working more closely together to minimise damage and disruption to roads.

'Wastes money digging up roads after they have been maintained / resurfaced. FSS

'Money is being wasted by the council repairing the roads after gas companies wreck and damage the roads - can the council not work on repairing the roads at the same time as the gas companies to avoid lengthy delays and diversions?' Online

Response from Walsall Council - Efficiencies

The Coalition continues to drive forward a very significant efficiency programme across the whole organisation. Over the last two years this has led to a total of over £17.5 million worth of savings being delivered which have been achieved through efficiency rather than having any impact on public service delivery. This had made up around half of the total savings requirement over the last two years.

For 2013-14, the substantial majority of savings proposals being consulted upon do not have any significant public service implications. This has been possible through a raft of efficiencies achieved through getting rid of unnecessary bureaucracy, integration of service delivery, improved partnership working and reorganisations. Just 5.3% of proposed reductions will directly impact residents, with the remainder being found through other means.

This is a very good track record in making better use of the money we get, but there is no complacency and there will be a continued focus on driving out any unnecessary spending. Ideas from residents and staff will continue to be welcome at any time.



3.13. Regeneration

Boosting the economy in particular job creation and improving local town centres was a common theme and tended to focus on Walsall town centre, Darlaston and Willenhall.

Many people spoke about how the local area had 'gone downhill', 'was not like it used to be' and that more needed to be done. Empty shops, struggling markets and unappealing high streets were commonly mentioned.

'Walsall town centre is rundown, dirty and full of £ shops.' FSS

'There's nothing - no Christmas lights, no market nothing - Darlaston is a ghost town.' Darlaston

'Can the council try and put more money into local businesses, Darlaston and Moxley are becoming ghost towns.' Willenhall

'Some shops closing in town, so something needs to be done to promote businesses in Willenhall.' Willenhall

'Brownhills is neglected, only spend money on Walsall town centre.' Brownhills

Residents feel strongly about the cost and lack of free parking in Walsall town centre. As seen in previous budget consultation and town centre surveys it was again frequently mentioned, many see reduced or free parking as the solution to boosting the town's economy and its market.

'As a council must look at what you are doing to the town, you are killing it. I have lived in and around Walsall all my life (57 Years) and I can honestly say it is a terrible place to live and shop. It all started a few years ago when you started the vendetta on motorists, closing car parks and stupid charges, it drove people away so shops closed then more people kept away and so on, now you have an half empty town, its about time you realised that people won't use sub standard public transport, create car parks, lower parking charges get the people back to Walsall.' Online

'Cut parking fees to attract more people.' Walsall town centre

'Encourage people to use Walsall Town Centre. By stopping parking fees and put market back where it used to be.' Reedswood

'Parking expensive and putting people off coming into Walsall.' FSS

Response from Walsall Council - Regeneration

Town and district centres: There has been approximately £370m of investment in Walsall Town Centre over the last 5 years including the new College, Tesco, Manor Hospital and investment at Waterfront. These investments have been complemented by refurbishments to national stores such as Superdrug, Marks & Spencer, Wilkinson's and New Look. Further investment of approximately £60m is anticipated in the next 3-5 years, which should see a significant increase in the quality and range of shops and family leisure opportunities in the town centre.

The town centre has just under 500 businesses with 278 of those being independent traders. We are aware of vacant units within the town centre and working in partnership with private landlords to attract new investments to them. The Innovation Fund scheme, launched in December 2012 has identified 9 retail units where the council is going to support new business start ups by funding the cost of business rates, with rent free periods offered by landlords. The scheme has already generated a lot of interest and it is hoped we will welcome nine new businesses to the town centre shortly, reducing vacant unit numbers.

The town centre operates a gold standard in terms of street cleansing. The service operates over seven days between 5am – 7pm, and it includes mechanical sweeping, manual litter clearance, emptying of litter bins and weekly hot jet washing. Additional bins are allocated when required and a litter hit squad is on hand to respond to reports of fouling and increased litter.

Improvements have taken place on Park Street adding more seating, litter bins and trees with new bedding plants planted in time for the summer months.

Walsall town centre, Bloxwich, Darlaston, Brownhills, Willenhall and Aldridge District Centres have a dedicated Town & District Centre Management Team with officers working alongside businesses to support and improve town centre activities. Each town has a budget allocated against it with expenditure approved by partnership boards against 5 key themed priorities.

The Town & District Centre Management team deliver successful events throughout the year in partnership with local businesses including a night market, the Olympic Torch Relay event, International Fire-fighters Day, Continental Markets and a series of Christmas events. In October Walsall town centre also hosted its first Walsall Music Event in Walsall Town Hall for over 20 years. All events were well received and more are planned for the future.

(Regeneration continued)

Parking charges in Walsall town centre: It should be noted that the council only operates approximately 25% of the off-street parking market share in the town centre, and therefore any decisions it makes on parking charges are limited in their impact.

However, in respect of its own provision, the council has recently agreed to make permanent the trial reduction in parking charges of £1.40 for two hours and £2.80 for four hours. It has also agreed to introduce a trial reduction in all-day parking charges on its long stay car parks by reducing the cost from £5 per day to £3 per day. Similar trial reductions will also apply in season ticket prices, for example a one month ticket will reduce from £80 to £50 per month. It is anticipated that these reductions, which will come into effect from the 14th January 2013, will attract more visitors, spending longer periods of time, to Walsall town centre.

To complement these changes, the council has agreed to remove on-street parking charges in certain parts of the town centre, including Ward Street, Warewell Street and Ablewell Street, giving short stay visitors up to 2 hours of free parking in certain locations.

Furthermore, to support town centre businesses and their employees, discounted season ticket prices will be offered on a trial basis, at a cost of £35 per month.



3.14. Road maintenance

The condition of roads and pavements was also a common concern and of continued importance to residents, but not all road improvement schemes are felt necessary and perhaps a waste of money. People dislike 'patch jobs'.

'Road condition has improved but needs more investment.' Walsall town centre.

'You have done a good job on the roads in Aldridge.' Post

'Resurface whole roads rather than patch to save money over longer term.' Willenhall

'Some of the road projects in Walsall work really well and seem to be money well spent, for example the scheme at The Bell on Birmingham Road. Other work done on the roads appear to be nothing more than a waste of our money; the scheme outside the Co-op in Sutton Road was an incredible waste of money and only succeeds in constricting the traffic when two or more cars are waiting to turn into the Co-op. This

was done at the time when Northgate in Aldridge was in such a terrible state. The current painting of lines on the Broadway is, to most people, completely unnecessary, particularly between The Crescent and Sutton Road where you are trying to force the traffic into one lane which is a move that can only create congestion at peak times, a situation that most people choose to ignore to keep moving. You say that you need to save money while keeping services, so please stop spending money on senseless and needless road projects that do nothing but annoy people and spend it where it's needed to enhance people's lives.' Online

Response from Walsall Council - Road maintenance

The Council recognises the importance of road maintenance to the economy and community alike. It endeavours to ensure adequate funding for this service through a combination of both revenue and capital resources supplemented with government allocations.

The Council has published on the internet its Highways Maintenance Strategy; www.walsall.gov.uk/highway_maintenance_strategy.htm together with a Highways Asset Management Plan; www.walsall.gov.uk/highway_asset_management.htm and these documents detail the process for assessment and delivery of its programme of works. Whilst ideally it would wish to resurface or reconstruct roads the Council has to work within financial constraints. Working with its partner Tarmac, and using 'working smarter' approaches, the Council has reviewed the efficiency of the service to improve value for money.

The design of highway schemes must address both traffic congestion and safety needs. It is often a fine balance to achieve the optimum solution.



3.15. Activities for teenagers

Residents feel there is a need to provide more things for children and young people to do, some associate the lack of things to do with anti-social behaviour.

'Need more money put in youth services, need to get youths off the streets causing anti social behaviour. My idea is creating new boxing clubs in the area, teach the kids some respect.' Walsall town centre

'Need more things for teenagers to do, keep them off the streets causing trouble.' FSS

'You say that the consultations that you have carried out say that there needs to be more for young people to do - yet one of your proposals is to reduce the services at Forest Arts.' Online

Response from Walsall Council - Activities for teenagers

We are listening to feedback from residents and will continue to work even harder in 2013/14 to communicate the range of positive activities available for young people across Walsall.

In particular 2013/14 will see more holiday provision for young people co-ordinated in partnership with the voluntary sector, Walsall Housing Group and the police. We will continue to working hard to reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour by extending our mobile provision with setting up 'pop up' youth centres in empty premises across Walsall.



3.16. Miscellaneous

Outside of the eleven draft budget proposals which were the focus of budget consultation, only a very narrow range of other council services were mentioned. Unprompted, a few people offered ideas for how additional savings could be made.

A handful of comments were made about leisure and culture services which varied in terms of whether cuts or investment was needed.

'Spend more on sport and leisure, the leisure centres are rubbish people need good centres to be fit and healthy.' Online

'Don't waste on leisure services when other things are more important.' Online

'Libraries need to keep open for those who cannot afford to buy books.' Willenhall

'Don't cut back libraries, they are vital.' Reedswood

Some made suggestions for where savings could be made in libraries.

'Libraries - need to consider reduced opening to save money.' Darlaston

'There are too many libraries.' Willenhall

'Is the MOBILE LIBRARY good value for money when staffing costs alone are around 250,000 a year? That's without adding in running

costs. Wouldn't axing an underused service save well over a million pounds over four years?' Online

Some people wished to see the council increasing income through raising council tax collection rates, issuing fixed penalty notices for littering, dog fouling and increasing charges for leisure services and libraries.

'Raise income by raising charges to levels equivalent to those of neighbouring authorities (for example, Staffordshire), particularly fines for overdue books and leisure centre charges, including the Hire fees for halls.' Online

A number of people recognised that the council was operating in very difficult economic climate and some expressed that they trusted the council would do the right thing for its residents.

Although not frequent, a number of comments praised the council for its hard work and good services. Improvements in road maintenance were mentioned and several people praised the 'excellent' waste collection service.

'The bin men are brilliant. First class service.' FSS

It is clear from talking to residents and reading comments, that the public's understanding of council finances and council services, how they function and why they exist can be very limited indeed. People often appear misinformed about council services, funding and decision making processes.

Some comments and criticisms directed at the council related to services outside of the council's responsibility including policing, public transport, water and housing. Some people did not connect cuts in local government to the national and global debt crisis.

Annex 10a - Children's Services Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Education								
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education responsibilities of the council - narrowing gaps for vulnerable children e.g. those children with special educational needs (SEN), ensuring fair access to all schools for every child; championing and promoting a strong supply of good, local, high achieving schools Serco contracted services (all transferring back to council from April 2013): Dedicated Schools Grant to maintained schools 	12,042,182	-5,034,900	Operational saving of -£1.4m: The Serco contract will terminate April 2013 and services will be transferred back to the Council, allowing the release of profit and overheads from the existing costs. £67k for contractual inflation, -£3.9m new Education Services grant, and £150k change in Early Intervention Grant. Changes to grants are solely an accounting adjustment and does not affect the spend in these areas.	Funds education of all children in maintained schools through DSG and also council education functions, schools contribute to a great extent in safeguarding children. The budget reduction will have no impact as it is derived from terminating the contract with Serco and releasing funding taken as profit and overheads.	Funds education of all children in maintained schools through DSG and also council education functions, schools contribute to a great extent in safeguarding children. The budget reduction will have no impact as it is derived from terminating the contract with Serco and releasing funding taken as profit and overheads.	Funds education of all children in maintained schools through DSG and also council education functions, schools contribute to a great extent in safeguarding children. The budget reduction will have no impact as it is derived from terminating the contract with Serco and releasing funding taken as profit and overheads.	Funds education of all children in maintained schools through DSG and also council education functions, schools contribute to a great extent in safeguarding children. The budget reduction will have no impact as it is derived from terminating the contract with Serco and releasing funding taken as profit and overheads.
Children's Services Management								
Children's Services Management	Management team for Children's	2,154,015	-180,501	Operational saving of £150k : part year effect of restructure of management (full year effect in 2014/15 of £300k), with £30k full year effect of previous years approved saving for redesign of services.	Provides management of children's services and safeguard children	Provides management of children's services to reduce numbers not in education, employment or training (NEET) and help vulnerable families and children increase prosperity through greater social inclusion	Provides management of children's services to reduce inequalities	Provides management of children's services inclusion support to schools
Disability Services								
Disability Services	Children with Disability Services	1,449,200	752,000	£752k - the net change in budget appears to show a large increase in spend - this is because Early Intervention Grant is currently shown as external income. From 2013/14, this will be rolled into Formula Grant, and will therefore be accounted for differently. This is solely an accounting adjustment and does not affect the spend in these areas	Supports families and disabled children to ensure their wellbeing and safety and protection, which is a fundamental to safeguarding. The saving, which is a different way of accounting, will have no impact on these essential services.	Supports families and disabled children to ensure their wellbeing and inclusion in work. Reducing support for carers may reduce their chances of maintaining employment	Families of children with disabilities are at higher risk of poverty and any support can mitigate this	Ensuring children with disabilities and their carers are well supported will help families living and working in Walsall
Corporate Parenting								
Corporate Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing Adoption, Fostering and Residential Care for looked after children (LAC) Contact between children and their parents and assessment of parents Commissioning external foster care and residential care Corporate Parenting Board 	243,024	-90,000	Operational saving of -£90k: These budgets are protected as key front line services. The £90k relates to current underspends and therefore can be removed from the budget with no impact on service delivery.	Provides management of adoption, foster care and residential care and also adoption allowances etc for looked after children (LAC). Budget reduction will have no impact	Supports LAC become socially included and obtain employment	Supports LAC to become socially included	Ensuring vulnerable children are safe and cared for and supported to learn and achieve will help make Walsall a better place to live and work
Family Placements	Support for LAC in Transition and Leaving Care	3,530,286	0	These budgets are protected as key front line services, especially around Adoption and Foster Care.	This budget provides the adoption, foster care and residential care for LAC	High quality care helps prepare LAC for work and local Foster carer jobs provides potential opportunities for local residents	Provides support for the most vulnerable children in Walsall	Ensuring vulnerable children are safe and cared for and supported to learn and achieve will help make Walsall a better place to live and work

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Looked after Children	As above	15,071,988	833,831	Investment £1m - this service has been prioritised as a key front line service. Additional funding of £1m has been invested for Looked After Children and a further £104k for foster care payments. There is an operational saving of -£270k relating to service design efficiencies which have been identified in the use of the family contact budget, with no impact on service delivery.	Potential risk that this saving could be used to offset increase cost of higher numbers of LAC and commensurate increase in contact required	Supports LAC become socially included and obtain employment	Supports LAC become socially included and obtain employment	Ensuring vulnerable children are safe and cared for and supported to learn and achieve will help make Walsall a better place to live and work
Transition and Learning Care	As above	1,083,626	0	These budgets are protected as key front line services, especially around Adoption and Foster Care.	Helps LAC leave care at 18+ and find accommodation, work and live safely and independently	Helps LAC leave care at 18+ and find accommodation and work	LAC are at high risk of being NEET and homeless and with support this risk can be reduced	Ensuring vulnerable children are safe and cared for and supported to learn, achieve and successfully transition to adulthood will help make Walsall a better place to live and work
Internal Residential	As above	3,981,955	-125,000	Operational saving of -£125k relating to the restructure of internal residential services	Provides local residential care for LAC.	High quality care can help prepare LAC for work. Children's Homes provide local job opportunities in care services	Provides support for the most vulnerable children in Walsall	Ensuring vulnerable children are safe and cared for and supported to learn and achieve will help make Walsall a better place to live and work
Safeguarding Children								
Safeguarding Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Reviewing Officers Safeguarding Board Child Death Overview Panel CAMHS 	2,478,827	0	These budgets are protected as key front line services, especially around Adoption and Foster Care.	Ensures children are safeguarded and scrutiny of practice through independent reviewing officers	Supports LAC become socially included and obtain employment	Safeguarding protects vulnerable children many of whom live in poverty	Ensuring vulnerable children are safe and cared for and supported to learn and achieve will help make Walsall a better place to live and work
Vulnerable Children								
Social Workers working with Vulnerable Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vulnerable Children Social Work teams x6 Social Work Initial Response Teams x3 	6,094,850	0	These budgets are protected as key front line services, especially around Adoption and Foster Care.	Social Workers provide safeguarding and support for children and vulnerable families	Social Workers work with socially excluded groups to improve their inclusion and reduce inequalities and SW posts provide local job opportunities	Social Workers work with socially excluded groups to improve their inclusion and reduce inequalities	Ensuring vulnerable children are safe and cared for and supported to learn and achieve will help make Walsall a better place to live and work
Prevention, Workforce & Partnerships								
Prevention, Workforce & Partnerships and Common Assessment Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early support for families Common Assessment Framework; (CAF) Team of practitioners supporting all universal agencies and based in the Area Family Support Teams. Area Family Support Teams; multi agency locality based teams working intensively as part of a (whole family approach) to meet the national guidance for vulnerable and troubled families Workforce Development; central team that supports the wider partnership workforce and training requirements including parenting and inclusive of social worker recruitment and retention Children's Centres and Early Years ; statutory provision delivering a core purpose and function 	11,564,963	11,089,566	Operational saving of -£340k with no impact on service delivery as it relates to efficiencies released by reducing back room support staff and focus on changes in working practices that better utilise existing skills, resource and knowledge. Improved performance management of centres. £11.4m is solely an accounting adjustment for Early Intervention grant and does not affect the spend in these areas.	Provides 18 children's centres to help support families and safeguard vulnerable children.	Provides childcare and family support to help families obtain employment. Provides local employment	Children's centres work targets support to those at risk of social exclusion and helps reduce inequalities	Good childcare and support is key to a better place to live and work

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
	of family support, child development, school readiness, child care and family learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting Support; evidenced based 0-19 programmes delivered by trained practitioners to parents from vulnerable families • Think Family Team 'edge of care prevention'; central team of skilled practitioners working intensively with vulnerable children on the edge of going into care 							
Young Peoples Support Services								
Integrated Young Peoples Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Advice and Guidance; Targeted support to young people (YP) at risk of/or not in education employment or training • Targeted Youth Support; Intensive 1-1 support to YP at risk or in need at level 2/3 • Youth Justice Service; management of court ordered arrangements for young offenders to manage risk and reduce harm to YP and the community • Positive Activities; Detached, mobile and centre based Youth work to engage targeted communities of YP to reduce youth crime and Anti social behaviour • Active Involvement; support to voice of YP (customers) including LAC, UKYP, Walsall youth council etc • Education Business Partnership; Delivering in schools, and supporting the schools/business partnership to increase skills and employability of YP • Teenage Pregnancy; Range of support to teenage mums and activities to reduce teenage pregnancy • Parent Partnership; Supports parents to ensure additional educational support to YP with SEN 	6,439,615	2,629,297	<p>Policy saving -£254k: There will be a reduction in the information, advice and guidance (IAG) contract value meaning that there will be less support for those young people at risk of becoming NEET or who are NEET. Schools now have the statutory responsibility to provide universal careers IAG but the local authority still retains statutory duties to provide more targeted support which is currently provided by Prospects. £2.9m is an accounting adjustment for Early Intervention grant and does not affect the spend in these areas.</p>	Integrated young people support service (IYPSS) provides targeted support for vulnerable and at risk young people and safeguarding is a high priority. The reduction in IAG will mean that young people are less supported and more likely to become socially excluded (e.g. increased NEET) and therefore their vulnerability will increase	IYPSS and IAG supports young people into training, education and employment, a reduction in budget is likely to increase NEET and not known numbers ('lost' to the system)	IYPSS supports young people who are, or at risk of, being socially excluded, anti-social or engaged in crime. A reduction in support of this value will increase levels of social exclusion and potentially NEET, ASB and crime	Social inclusion of young peoples contributes to a great extent to a better place to live and work.
Total Children's		66,134,531	9,874,293					

Notes:

Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 10 b - Community Engagement Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Cash limit Change	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity	Do the proposals reduce inequalities	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Communities and Partnerships								
Area Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area partnerships Community development 	853,548	-240,000	There will be no change to the funding amounts for each Area partnership of £40k. The funding will be via a replenishment each year rather than a dedicated budget.	<p>Each area partnership identifies its own priorities and local issues, and is able to focus on anything it feels it might be able to influence within the framework of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Walsall. This could, as appropriate, include safeguarding the interests of vulnerable people.</p> <p>Support provided through the community development team to Community Associations enables the continuation of services which directly impact on work with vulnerable people. An example of this is in Bentley where a group has been established to support vulnerable people, including people with disabilities, mental health issues and people living in isolation.</p>	<p>Area partnerships provide support to groups who work directly with communities, to build capacity. As these groups develop, they will support economic prosperity in the borough by requiring other services to be provided. A number of activities are funded by area partnerships, for example, support to town centre teams to ensure promotion of the centres.</p> <p>Some of the funding provided is to support the development of job clubs, through the Community Associations. There are six in operation currently and it is aimed to roll these out across the borough.</p>	<p>Area partnerships bring together a wide range of partners and voluntary and community sector organisations to identify better ways of working together to reduce inequalities. For example, support groups have been established around health issues; support has also been made available to projects promoting community cohesion and projects focussing on the cleaner and greener agenda to ensure all neighbourhoods are somewhere people wish to live.</p> <p>The grant funding provided enables a wide range of activities / support / advice to be provided that impact on reducing inequalities. For example, activities in each Community Association is tailored to meet the needs of the community and promote community cohesion.</p>	<p>The fundamental work of Area Partnerships focuses on improving the borough to provide a suitable environment where people wish to reside and work in Walsall. Area Partnerships provide not only financial support for activity, but also by bringing partners together, they can more effectively help resolve local issues (or as appropriate help minimise their impact).</p> <p>Community organisations deliver a wide range of support and provision, for all age groups, to give people of Walsall a choice. For example, fitness and health activities, support groups (including heart care, stroke support), recreational activities.</p>
Voluntary and Community Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood & community centres Providing grant aid to local voluntary groups Voluntary sector liaison 	1,032,221	0		Please note the response provided above with reference to the Community Development Team. Other examples include support provided through organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Victim Support and Relate	Economic prosperity is promoted through work with the VCS through for example, activities such as job clubs where support is provided to individuals to assist them in obtaining employment.	Work with the Voluntary and Community Sector helps bring communities together, for example, by working with a number of agencies and community groups, local events and celebrations have successfully taken place in the Borough. For example, Diamond Jubilee events (held in community organisations).	By working with the Voluntary and Community Sector in the Borough the Council and its partners are better able to meet the needs of communities in order to make Walsall a better place to live and work. To this end there are a number of community centres in Walsall, delivering a wide range of services, giving opportunities and choice.
Total Communities & Partnerships		1,885,769	-240,000					

Notes:

Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 10c - Leisure and Culture Portfolio Cash Limit

Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change	Change proposals	Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
					Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Walsall Adult & Community College								
Walsall Adult & Community College	• Walsall Adult & Community College NVQ training fees (matched to Skills Funding Agency Funds).	442,007	-30,000	Operational saving of -£5k: reduction in NVQ training for council social care employees, with -£25k for removal of one off budgets allocated in year.	NVQ training up skills the social care workforce to meet quality care standards.	NVQ qualifications enhance employability in social care.	Equal access to social care is dependent on a skilled and qualified workforce.	Care in the community is a pre-requisite for quality of life for vulnerable people.
Customer Services								
Customer Services	• First Stop Shop • Customer Service Centre	- 168,857	0					
Leisure & Community Health								
Greenspaces / Grounds maintenance	• Grounds maintenance of parks, highways & public open space • Cemetery maintenance & burials • Management of greenspaces, including parks & open spaces • Allotments • Arboricultural & greenspaces improvement	4,392,746	-790,081	Operational savings of -£763k 1. -£473k: efficiencies as a result of merging grounds maintenance and green spaces and review of operations. 2. -£290k: redesign of grounds maintenance activities - reduced maintenance of district areas including reduction of one full time post; redesign park presence on site; reduction in use of agency staff for grass cutting in summer months; review of tree operations. Full year effect of previous years savings -£21k - Rationalisation of staffing and operational budgets Investment: £3k contractual inflation, with -£9k removal of one off budgets.	No Impact	No Impact	No Impact	No impact as we will operate differently with service re-design giving more on site presence and reduction in duplication of management, supervision and operational roles
Catering	• School catering service for 64 schools • Walsall town hall restaurant • Catering in park pavilions (Willenhall and Palfrey)	400,894	-713,847	Operational saving of - £762k: Review of charges for free school meals based on usage and overall cost Investment: Contractual inflation £48.1k	The service currently provides c.6,500+ meals at 64 schools. Approximately 68% of these are meals given to Free School Meal eligible children. FSM eligible children are encouraged to take their meal as this may well be their only calorie controlled / nutritional meal they have each day. Without this meal some children may not have access to a hot, decent meal throughout the week.	In the medium to long-term, the presence of schools meals supports educational attainment which in turn helps children get qualifications and thereafter, jobs and an income. The importance of attending school and good levels of attentiveness are linked to diet and good food. Where this is not available at home, the Free School Meal is essential. The outcome of having a better chance of gaining qualifications and at good grades is crucial is having the best life chance possible. Getting a job and having economic independence decreases the reliance on welfare payments.	In the medium to long-term, the presence of schools meals supports educational attainment which in turn helps children get qualifications and thereafter, jobs and an income. Money allows people to climb out of deprivation and beat poverty and to become happier with their lives. The importance of attending school and good levels of attentiveness are linked to diet and good food. Where this is not available at home, the Free School Meal is essential. The outcome of having a better chance of gaining qualifications and at good grades is crucial is having the best life chance possible. Getting a job and having economic independence decreases the reliance on welfare payments.	Better fed children, lower fat content, lower likelihood of malnutrition and higher levels of attentiveness at school generally lead to the attainment of more qualifications, higher grades and the potential to get a job / better paid jobs.

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change	Change proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Sport and Leisure Services comprising: * Sports Management * Sports Development * Venue Hire * Management Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oak Park & Bloxwich leisure centre Gala Baths & Darlaston swimming pool Sneyd Watersports Centre Walsall (Aldridge) Airport Environmental & Outdoor Education Centre Sports & Health Development Town Hall Management (Walsall & Darlaston) Development & box office Behavioural Improvement team 	2,854,034	-10,000	Full year effect of previous years approved saving: reduction in the business support team -£10k		The total Walsall economy cost of inactivity is £33m per year, the annual Walsall cost of obesity is a further £40m.	Through interventions such as Free Swimming, Swim for a Quid and Fit for a Fiver, Train for a Tenner and the GP Exercise Referral scheme, the catchment of the Sport and Leisure Service has shifted to draw more users from disadvantaged communities where health inequalities are most acute. The guiding principle of the Working Smarter Review is Proportionate Universalism (Marmot Review 2010) - providing a universal service with additional support targeted at nine specific disadvantaged groups.	Aside from the health benefits, access to leisure and recreation opportunities is a cornerstone of quality of life, for families and individuals alike. There are very clear social, physical and mental health benefits as well encouraging people to be fair and abide by the rules ~ being a better neighbour.
Bereavement Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streetly Crematorium 8 Cemeteries (Bentley, Bloxwich, James Bridge, North Walsall, Ryecroft, Streetly, Willenhall Lawn & Wood Street) Registration service (Births, deaths and marriages) Shared Black Country Coroner service (with Sandwell, Dudley and W'ton) Post mortem service through Walsall Manor Hospital 	-548,570	-65,000	Full year effect of approved increase in bereavement fees -£65k				
Libraries, Heritage & Arts								
Library Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating through a network of 16 branch libraries Mobile library services School's library support service Housebound library service 	5,207,492	-110,000	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Operational saving of £40k: efficiencies from the introduction of new technology. Full year effect of previous years approved savings: staff efficiencies following introduction of self service facilities and revenue from chip and pin transactions -£70k 	Libraries offer an accessible place, which is recognised as being safe and impartial, for people to go to freely get reliable information on where and how to access help and support.	Libraries offer free access to computers for job searches, writing CVs, training opportunities. Basic skills courses enhance employability through improved literacy, numeracy and computer skills. The information service in libraries offers access to up to date business, training and market information and Business Starter Packs give advice and information about setting up a small business. Company and market resources give information on competitors	Libraries are freely open to every member of the community and offer services, information and media appropriate for all ages, abilities and background. These include large print and talking books, media in languages other than English, audio and visual media, computers with access to aids for partially sighted and disabled people. The mobile service will continue to visit residential and sheltered housing, day centres and adult training centre. The housebound service will continue to visit people who	There are public access computers in every library and access to digital resources including e-books.

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change	Change proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
						information on computers, market viability and background information for interviews.	are unable to use a static library through age or disability and provide books, computer skill training and other resources in their own homes. Anyone requiring a material not in stock can request it and it will be obtained and supplied through an inter- library loan system.	
Local History Centre	• Local History Centre	337,173	-6,037	Operational saving of -£6k: restructure at the centre will result in the reduction of a vacant 21 hour post to 7 hours.	The Local History Centre has worked with looked after children, young people with learning difficulties and disabled adults. The capacity to undertake this work will not be significantly affected.	The centre provides materials, photographs and information for to support regeneration projects, and grants e.g. research on polluted sites. The work will not be affected.	The Local History Centre is fully accessible and staff are trained to be sensitive to the individual needs of customers from all backgrounds. The service works with schools groups and offers talks and outreach activities to groups of all ages. This will continue to be supported.	The Local History Centre provides archive and local studies services and resources. This includes collecting, preserving, and making available to the public documentary, photographic, and audio material relating to the history of Walsall. These resources enable an understanding of how Walsall has grown and developed in the past and lays the foundation for future. It also acts as the repository for the council's archives. The reduction of staff hours in year one will have some affect on support in the research room and in answering lengthy enquiries.
Museums	• Walsall Museum • Leather Museum	478,940	-6,580	Operational saving of £6.6k: re-modelling of the museum services by a reduction in the events programme, greater use of volunteers as demonstrators, increased income from shop sales, charges for talks, events and room hire and an increase in the rental charges for the Leather Museum cafe.	Policies are in place to ensure that services are inclusive and accessible to all. Higher charges for talks and workshops may inevitably discourage some users.		Policies are in place to ensure that services are inclusive and accessible to all. Higher charges for talks and workshops may inevitably discourage some users. The use of volunteers may give disadvantaged and unemployed individuals opportunities to acquire new skills which enhance their employability. An education programme and work with schools encourages children and young people to appreciate how the leather industry impacted on the development of Walsall and engenders pride in the Borough.	Museum Services operate from two museum sites, Walsall Museum and Walsall Leather Museum. The service collects, documents, preserves and makes accessible material evidence of Walsall's past. The museums offer a programme of educational activities, demonstrations and talk and help preserve and promote Walsall's heritage to current and future generations. Proposals will increase charges and may affect the level of take up of events and workshops and may lead to a decrease in shop sales.

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change	Change proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
New Art Gallery	• New Art Gallery	783,257	-37,952	Operational saving -£18k: deletion of part of the vacant post of audience development officer and reduction of the associated programme budget. Future audience development activity will be commissioned from the creative development team. 2. Full year effect of previous years approved saving: review of gallery assistants -£20k	1. The gallery works in partnership, actively seeking to offer inclusion for all groups covered by the Single Equality Act 2010. The post of Audience Development Officer offered and developed projects and events specific to particular groups and the loss of this post will restrict the number of groups with whom the gallery can actively work. Examples of groups worked with are: Walsall Black Sisters Collective, Multi Faith Forum, Angle Sikh Heritage Trail, Islamic Village, Ethnic Advocacy, Walsall Asylum Refugee and Migrant Association.	The New Art Gallery will continue to offer an exciting and challenging programme of exhibitions and events which will attract visitors to Walsall and enhance the reputation of the Borough both regionally and nationally. E.g. the Damien Hirst exhibition running for 12 months from October 2012 will draw visitors from a wide catchment area and create interest in Walsall's offer.	The New Art Gallery is free and accessible to everyone. A robust educational programme is available to schools and students and the Discovery Gallery is aimed at very young children. Gallery Assistants are trained in audio description and guiding visually impaired visitors. Water is provided for guide dogs, BSL interpreters can be booked with advanced warning. Special needs workshops are offered at concessionary rates and courses are bespoke. Artwork is hung at slightly lower than usual level for wheelchair users.	The New Art Gallery is recognised nationally as an important cultural venue offering an exciting and challenging programme of exhibitions as well as offering a unique insight into the life of the Borough through the Garman Ryan Collection Proposals will delete the post of Audience Development Officer and reduce the associated budget. This work will continue to be undertaken by commissioning the Creative Development Team to deliver specified promotional activities. The number of activities will, however, be reduced.
Creative Development	• Creative Development Team (CDT)	247,254	-16,809	Operational saving £16.8k: moving office location to reduce accommodation costs.	- CDT develop work with looked after young people to give them a voice about the services provided to them and supports young people to apply for funding bids to support their aspirations. CDT core budget also enables work to support groups with disabilities and BME groups to apply for funding for projects.	The core budget enables members of the team to work on initiatives to promote enterprise in the creative industries. This year the team has supported the development of a crafts group of individual and fledgling businesses, who, as a group will now be able to apply for grants to increase their marketing and promote Walsall's high quality crafts. CDT support work for local groups to apply for grants provides valuable support for the voluntary sector. Reducing the core budget will reduce capacity for this work.	CDT core budget enables the team to support minority groups to develop funding bids. Capacity for this work will be reduced as there will be more reliance on commissions.	The Creative Development Team works with partners to develop and manage high quality projects and programmes using the arts and creativity as a tool for change. The team manages and develops appropriate methods of creative engagement to suit the needs of Walsall Council, partner organisations and local people. They use freelance artists with skills in engagement and group work and appropriate experience in the issues addressed by each project being delivered.
Forest Arts	• Forest Arts centre • Music service • Festive decorations	580,699	0		Forest Arts is the only performing and creative arts centre in the borough and provides participation and performance and cultural learning opportunities for young people, LAC, those with special needs, families in deprived circumstances, as well as the elderly. It has a safe, welcoming environment with specialist facilities and tutors trained to provide services to vulnerable members of society to enable full access to arts activities.	In August 2012 Forest Arts became a Music Hub and is the new focus for pathways and qualifications into music and the creative arts. It provides learning and vocational experiences which have direct and indirect enhancement value to the skills and employability of young people in Walsall. Music and related technical arts are a significant global industry and employer in the UK to which Forest Arts actively contributes.	Forest Arts provides first access to music for all young people in Walsall regardless of their background. Barriers including socio-economic factors, gender, disability, etc are overcome to engage with all on an equal basis. Minority groups have equality in the provision of services and arts opportunities. Social cohesion through the universal language of arts and music is a key goal of the service.	Forest Arts is a cultural amenity for the everyone in Walsall. Forest offers a wide range of cultural opportunities by broadening horizons, developing skills and creating opportunities to add richness, creativity and depth to people's lives through the arts. Forest is now the regional Education Hub for the Music Service which uses the resources of Forest Arts Centre to deliver against government targets for music education in schools, development opportunities outside school and career pathways beyond. It also presents theatre shows, concerts, dance and drama and a wide range of arts participation for people from all communities.
Total Leisure and Culture		15,007,069	-1,786,306					

Notes:

Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 10d - Public Protection Portfolio Cash Limit and Proposed Savings Options

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Regulatory Services								
Environmental Health and regulatory services management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Health including food sampling, infectious disease control, environmental crime, noise nuisance, and animal health and licensing. Pest Control Dog Warden 	2,058,046	-7,217	Operational saving: 1. Reduction in supplies and services within regulatory services (£7,217)	No direct impact part of service redesign.	No direct impact part of service redesign.	No direct impact part of service redesign.	No direct impact part of service redesign.
Trading Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trading Standards Licensing of premises Licensing of Hackney Carriages & Private Hire 	767,624	-47,140	Operational saving: 1. Reduction in staffing (£47,140)	The proposed budget reductions for trading standards and licensing for 2013/14 will require a slight service redesign to allow us to continue to provide current services with a minimum of detriment to performance.	The proposed budget reductions for trading standards and licensing for 2013/14 will require a slight service redesign to allow us to continue to provide current services with a minimum of detriment to performance.	The proposed budget reductions for trading standards and licensing for 2013/14 will require a slight service redesign to allow us to continue to provide current services with a minimum of detriment to performance.	The proposed budget reductions for trading standards and licensing for 2013/14 will require a slight service redesign to allow us to continue to provide current services with a minimum of detriment to performance.
CCTV (managed by Social Care)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCTV 	0	0					
Communities and Partnerships								
Community safety and Preventing Violent Extremism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Safety Anti - social behaviour Community cohesion 	725,944	-251,719	Operational saving: £100k from review of service, and £152k for fall out of Community Safety grant	No direct impact	No direct impact	No direct impact	No direct impact
Total Public Protection		3,551,614	-306,076					

Notes:

Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 10e - Transport & Environment Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste disposal Depot and support costs Fuel Social Care Transport 	12,105,642	-498,867	<p>Operational savings of -£190K:</p> <p>1. Review of management, supervisory and administration functions -£180k.</p> <p>2.W2R implementation and commissioning -£10k.</p> <p>Investment:</p> <p>Contractual inflation £800k. Realignment of leasing budgets of -£1.1m.</p>	The Street Pride services include waste collection and disposal, grounds maintenance, management of green spaces, street cleansing and vehicle management and maintenance. These services do not make a particularly significant contribution to safeguarding interests of vulnerable people (as opposed to other groups) and these savings have no impact on this group of people.	The Street Pride services include waste collection and disposal, grounds maintenance, management of green spaces, street cleansing and vehicle management and maintenance. These services make a significant contribution to the council's clean and green agenda providing clean streets, effective and efficient waste collections and pleasant aesthetically pleasing parks and open spaces which encourage economic prosperity by attracting businesses and residents to the borough. There is no negative impact from these savings and there is a positive impact by reduced disposal costs and potential revenue savings.	The Street Pride services include waste collection and disposal, grounds maintenance, management of green spaces, street cleansing and vehicle management and maintenance. These services are provided equitably for all residents and businesses within the borough and these savings have no negative impact on any group of people.	The Street Pride services include waste collection and disposal, grounds maintenance, management of green spaces, street cleansing and vehicle management & maintenance. These services contribute significantly to the councils clean and green agenda making Walsall a better place to live and work. These savings have no negative impact on the clean and green agenda.
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste collection Trade waste Recycling Street cleansing Public conveniences Fleet services (excl fuel) 	4,924,058	-1,089,672	<p>Policy savings of -£261K:</p> <p>1. Green waste collection - extend closedown of green waste (brown bin) collection from 3 months to 4 months -£141k.</p> <p>2. Closure of public conveniences with the exception of Walsall bus station which is managed under a contract with Centro, and Bloxwich -£120k.</p> <p>Operational savings of -£861k:</p> <p>1. Reduction of 1 domestic and 1 trade refuse round -£288k</p> <p>2. Removal of overtime at Christmas, with side waste collected by street cleansing -£30k</p> <p>3. 50% reduction in procurement of green recycling bins -£46k</p> <p>4. Alternative funding of vehicles -£34k</p> <p>5. Efficiency arising from changes in brown bin collections to reduce full time crews from 7 to 4 and operating with agency crews and hired vehicles for 22 weeks in peak season -£164k</p> <p>6. Reduced usage of fuel through reduced fleet - £175k and 1 fitter post -£30k</p> <p>7. Reduction of 5 vans from fleet maintenance budget -£20k</p> <p>8. Reduction of 3 environmental operative posts, operational efficiencies through zonal working arrangements - no direct impact on front line services -£73k.</p> <p>Investment:</p> <p>Contractual inflation of £37k. Realignment of leasing budgets of -£5k.</p>	The Street Pride services include waste collection and disposal, grounds maintenance, management of green spaces, street cleansing and vehicle management and maintenance. These services make a contribution to promoting economic prosperity.	The Street Pride services include waste collection and disposal, grounds maintenance, management of green spaces, street cleansing and vehicle management and maintenance. These services make a significant contribution to councils clean and green agenda providing clean streets, effective and efficient waste collections and pleasant aesthetically pleasing parks and open spaces. All Street Pride Services are provided equitably to all residents.	The Street Pride services include waste collection and disposal, grounds maintenance, management of green spaces, street cleansing and vehicle management and maintenance. These services make a significant contribution to councils clean and green agenda providing clean streets, effective and efficient waste collections and pleasant aesthetically pleasing parks and open spaces. All Street Pride Services are provided equitably to all residents.	
Nhood Services Mgt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management 	54,432	0					

Annex 10e - Transport & Environment Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Engineering & Transportation								
Highways Maintenance	• Highway maintenance and Roadworks Management	4,362,037	-29,021	<p>Operational savings of -£314k:</p> <p>1. Transfer in funding from revenue to capital, resulting in no change to service provision -£250k.</p> <p>2. Efficiencies delivered through service restructure taking into account the outcome of the Vanguard review -£60k.</p> <p>3. General supplies and services reduced by 50% -£4k.</p> <p>Investment of £285k to fund:</p> <p>1. Shortfall of section 74 utilities over run income £174k.</p> <p>2. Contractual inflation £111k</p>	The overall budget safeguards road users which includes all sections of the community including vulnerable people	The highway network maintenance and improvement is a vital element of economic prosperity.	Reduction of highway defects assist with people less mobile to move around more easily and safely.	An important element of the highway network is a safe and free flowing network. Network management considers the movement of traffic taking into consideration environmental elements such as air quality and noise to comply with the statutory Traffic Management Act duty.
Public Lighting	• Street lighting PFI	5,410,237	781	<p>Operational saving of -£10k: Efficiencies from energy savings and use of new technology. Contractual inflation of £10.8k.</p>	Public lighting reduces the perception of crime and increases the confidence of vulnerable people and assists inclusion.	Public lighting assists with the perception of increased prosperity and encourages businesses to the area.	Public lighting increases the confidence for people to access the night time economy and to visit friends and residents.	Public lighting reduces the perception of crime and helps people feel safe.
Structure & Geotechnics	• Limestone works • Coal shafts • General structure works • Bridge Maintenance	183,896	-20,000	<p>Operational saving of -£20k: General supplies and services reduced.</p>	<p>Structural checks on buildings, homes and grounds of schools</p> <p>Majority capital funded revenue savings makes little impact.</p>	<p>Structural checking of planning applications, preparing and giving advice on ground conditions in mining areas. Assist with contaminated ground reports and mineworking in council buildings.</p> <p>Structural checks on buildings, homes and grounds of schools.</p> <p>Majority capital funded revenue savings makes little impact.</p>	<p>Structural checks on buildings, homes and grounds of schools</p> <p>Majority is capital funded therefore revenue savings makes little impact.</p>	<p>Assists with economic development by ensuring ground conditions are suitable for development.</p> <p>Structural checks on buildings, homes and grounds of schools.</p> <p>Majority capital funded revenue savings makes little impact.</p>
Pollution Control	• Pollution Control	601,117	-126,000	<p>Operational saving of -£126k: Increased prioritisation and a reduction in the supplies and services budget. Delivered through service restructure taking in to account the outcome of the Vanguard Review.</p>	<p>Pollution Control aims to reduce environmental impacts to promote increased health of people especially the vulnerable who are particularly susceptible</p> <p>Reduction of this budget can be managed so that there will only be marginal impact on the delivery of this service with reduced spending ability in areas of flood risk management, contaminated land, and pollution control.</p>	<p>Assist with the development control process and support local business in complying with national legislation.</p> <p>This aspect of the service does not use significant supplies and services and the savings will not impact in this area.</p>	<p>Works to protect and improve health will have a significant impact at redressing health inequalities borough wide.</p> <p>Reduction of this budget can be managed so that there will only be marginal impact on the delivery of this service with reduced spending ability in areas of flood risk management, contaminated land, and pollution control.</p>	<p>The service improves air quality noise pollution and land contamination.</p> <p>Reduction of this budget can be managed so that there will only be marginal impact on the delivery of this service with reduced spending ability in areas of flood risk management, contaminated land, and pollution control.</p>
Transportation Fwd Planning	• Road safety, engineering and education • Highway development control and Rights of Way	746,939	0		<p>Delivery of road safety and accessibility programmes.</p> <p>Delivery of service will continue under new management structure.</p>	<p>Reduce loss of output of road accident casualties.</p> <p>Delivery of service will continue under new management structure.</p>	<p>Measures to assist accessibility and reduce health inequality.</p>	<p>Delivery of programmes targeted at those least safe or least mobile.</p> <p>Delivery of service will continue under new management structure.</p>
Major Projects & Minor Improvements	• Major Projects & Minor Improvements	11,126	0		<p>Design and supervise the construction of highway features specifically to assist vulnerable people.</p>	<p>Design and supervise the major transport improvements on the highway network such as DSDA and road safety schemes.</p>	<p>Provide schemes to assist with inclusion of vulnerable people.</p>	<p>Design and supervise improvement schemes to enhance and make safe the highway network.</p>
Engineering & transportation management	• Management.	4,634,472	-45,000	<p>Operational saving of -£45k: General supplies and services reduced.</p>	<p>Management of service includes safeguarding the interests of vulnerable people.</p>	<p>Management of the service ensures the economic prosperity for residents.</p>	<p>Management of the service aims to reduce inequalities.</p>	

Annex 10e - Transport & Environment Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Traffic Mgt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking Traffic Control 	933,323	25,000	<p>Operational savings of -£225k:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New collection arrangement of cash from pay and display car parks -£20k. 2. Review of efficiencies for Walsall Town Centre and pay and display arrangements -£40k 3. Implementation of VRT / flex retirement -£12k. 4. Reduce in house enumerator service -£30k . 5. Review of civil parking enforcement back offices, working with black country colleagues -£25k. 6. Review of service in conjunction with group and team responsibilities and hierarchy. Black Country civil enforcement contract. Undertake training to allow in house delivery of construction development and management and safety audits £98k. <p>Investment for: Shortfall in car park income £250k.</p>	<p>Overall budget is used to deliver the Council's Statutory Network Management duty. The service provides manages and maintains pedestrian crossing facilities used by the blind and partially sighted residents of the Borough assisting with their safe access to goods and services</p> <p>4.This saving will result in the cessation of revenue funded traffic surveys. This will reduce the amount of objective data available to support traffic management/road safety decisions.</p> <p>6.Delivered savings will be through management review and restructure. The existing parking enforcement arrangements will be re-procured and revised in early 2013. This will result in new parking enforcement arrangements and will mean that we must prioritise enforcement activity.</p>	<p>Overall budget is used to deliver the council's Statutory Network Management duty. The service manages the assessment and implementation of permanent and temporary traffic management measures necessary for the efficient operation of the public highway. That is essential for businesses to develop, grow and create jobs for residents</p> <p>1.This saving changes the way in which cash is collected at car parks. 2. This increased income will ensure the ongoing ability to provide parking facilities, supporting local economies. 4.This saving will result in the cessation of revenue funded traffic surveys. This will reduce the amount of objective data available to support traffic management/road safety decisions. 5. This proposal involves the development of a shared service across the black country which will realise revenue savings but may reduce the amount of local control. 6. Delivered savings will be through management review and restructure. The existing parking enforcement arrangements will be re-procured and revised in early 2013. This will result in new parking enforcement arrangements and will mean that we must prioritise</p>	<p>Overall budget is used to deliver the council's Statutory Network Management duty. The service provides and manages the use of parking facilities for disabled residents thereby ensuring equal access to goods and services.</p>	<p>Overall budget is used to deliver the Council's Statutory Network Management duty. The service manages the efficient and safe operation of the public highway reducing unnecessary air and noise pollution making Walsall a better place to live.</p>
Emergency Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Planning 	0	0		<p>Planning for emergencies or significant events is essential to assist all services during such an event with particular emphasis for social care, education and children.</p>	<p>Planning for emergencies or significant events together with implementation of necessary business continuity plans is essential to assist all local and national businesses who may be affected, together with continuity for schools.</p>	<p>Planning for emergencies or significant events together with implementation of necessary actions and assisting schools regardless of status.</p>	<p>Planning for emergencies or significant events is essential to ensure all of the community is safeguarded and risks are minimised so reassuring all during significant events - leading to safer communities.</p>
Total Transport and Environment		33,967,279	-1,782,779					

Notes:

Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 10f - Regeneration Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Property Services								
Property Services	• Council wide property services	0	-573,161	Operational saving of £573k: Further reduce the number of buildings in use and therefore related spend; modify supply chain to maximise efficiencies and eliminate waste; modify service levels to match actual demand; redesign service structure to reflect core activity alongside scaleable transactional services.	No direct impact	No direct impact	No direct impact	No direct impact
Building Services	• Property management of all council operational buildings - revenue & capital • Energy management and conservation • Redundant buildings • Building logbook process management • Statues, memorials & clocks	2,118,204	-493,902	Operational savings of £504k: Reduce expenditure on: repairs and maintenance -£370k, materials -£69k and security -£65k. Investment: Contractual inflation of 10k.	No direct impact	The services seek to maximise supply and contracting opportunities for Walsall businesses. A reduction in spend could impact on the volume of trade undertaken with local businesses, with the risk this reduces employment levels.	No direct impact	Ensuring council buildings are securely and appropriately maintained makes a positive contribution to communities and reduces the risk of anti-social behaviour and ensures council services can be provided from fit for purpose accommodation.
Facilities Management	• Management of central office accommodation and town halls • Curatorial service • Cleaning & caretaking • School crossing patrols • Plant maintenance	829,969	-148,222	Operational saving of £155k through reduced expenditure on utilities owing to investment in energy efficiency and rationalisation of buildings. Investment: Contractual inflation of £6k.	Ensuring safe routes to schools are maintained.	Cleaning and caretaking provides large numbers of entry level jobs for pre-dominantly Walsall residents, reduction in the service would impact on this.	No direct impact	No direct impact
Asset Management	• Strategic asset management (including disposals/acquisitions) • Estates service & land terrier • Management of the non-operational estate- unclassified land & premises, shops & commercial premises & farms • Asset management database	616,859	0		No direct impact	Ensuring the council's assets are well managed with surplus assets being disposed of to support capital investment in council priorities. Securing land that can contribute to the creation of higher quality employment sites.	No direct impact	Ensuring council assets are positively used for the benefit of local communities
Design and Project Mgt	• Building design • Project management & procurement • Contract & procurement • Framework management	142,039	-20,000	Operational saving of £20k through reduced spend with external design consultants.	No direct impact	The services seek to maximise supply and contracting opportunities for Walsall businesses.	No direct impact	Ensuring council funded building activity (e.g. school improvements etc) makes a positive contribution to local communities
Smarter Workplaces		46,543	0					

Annex 10f - Regeneration Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Strategic Regeneration								
Strategic Transportation and Major Scheme Development and Contract Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation strategy, policy & scheme development Transportation capital programme management Sub / regional joint working and partnership development Darlaston strategic development area (DSDA) major project development & implementation 	422,306	0	None - funding for this work area is totally through the capital programme allocations received through the DfT.	Improving the ability for people to move around the borough thereby opening up more employment and training opportunities.	Development & delivery of the DSDA access programme, activity to ensure the borough has the transport infrastructure to enable people to move around the borough for work/training; to ensure businesses can operate efficiently and to support future economic growth.	Improving the ability for people to move around the borough thereby opening up more employment and training opportunities.	Improving access around the borough and region improves Walsall as a location to live and establish/maintain a business. DSDA Scheme opening up the Enterprise Zones (EZ) and assisting in the creation of 1000's of new jobs.
Economic Growth Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think Walsall / business support Social enterprise development Promoting inward investment Employment & skills programme Local enterprise partnership / Black Country working Growth sector development Economic intelligence Service management Town & district centre management 	327,254	0		Increasing, through the delivery of targeted activity, the range of employment and training opportunities for vulnerable people e.g. one stop shops for local unemployed people. Supporting through the town and district centres teams, access to facilities and shops etc.	Activity to directly support people to gain the skills and training required to access employment; programmes to help people overcome barriers to working e.g. transport costs; activity through Think Walsall to help businesses generate more local trade and promoting Walsall as a competitive business and investment location. The delivery of an Inward Investment programme, linked to accessing external resources (European Social Fund etc.) and raising our profile.	Increasing the range of employment and training opportunities for local people in worklessness; helping remove barriers to work thereby helping to address economic inequality. Getting people into work will also tangibly impact on health inequalities.	More employment opportunities will increase the attractiveness of Walsall as a place to live and work and will also mean more local people can fulfil their employment potential without having to necessarily leave Walsall.
Walsall Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walsall Works apprenticeship programme 	337	-1,090,291	This is an accounting adjustment reflecting the removal of approved one year 2012/13 funding for Walsall Works programme	Increasing, through Walsall Works and other activity, the range of employment and training opportunities for vulnerable people e.g. apprenticeships for care leavers.	The creation of 550 apprentice places, up to 250 pre apprentice places, all aimed at supporting young people into sustainable employment.	Access to employment opportunities within local employers that would have been missed by members from vulnerable / disadvantaged communities.	More employment opportunities will increase the attractiveness of Walsall as a place to live and work and will also mean more local people can fulfil their employment potential without having to necessarily leave Walsall.
Planning Services								
Development Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning advice to applicants, agents and developers Processing planning applications Defending planning appeals Planning enforcement activity 	295,962	0		No direct impact	Effective advice to developers/businesses and an efficient process to determine planning applications is a key requirement in achieving development and creating/sustaining jobs.	An effective planning system makes a contribution to enabling job creating development which in turn can help address economic inequalities.	Effective planning can help improve/protect the boroughs physical environment bringing benefit Walsall resident's and proactive enforcement can address sites/buildings which have an adverse impact on local areas.
Land Charges and Central Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining local land charges register Undertake land & property searches Maintain a local land & property gazetteer (LLPG) IT development & support 	201,140	-79,096	Operational saving of £79k through removal of 3 vacant posts	No direct impact	An efficient land searches services assists local people looking to move home and in turn helps sustain the local housing market. The changes can be achieved through efficiencies.	No direct impact	No direct impact
Building Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating & enforcing / prosecuting against breaches in planning control Building regulation applications Planning applications Advising & dealing with dangerous 	222,865	0		No direct impact	Building control is an important element of the overall development process and is key to enabling employment related development.	No direct impact	Building control ensures buildings are safe and action is taken against owners of unsafe buildings to ensure that local communities are not adversely impacted.

Annex 10f - Regeneration Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Planning Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producing, reviewing & monitoring planning policy 	381,345	0		No direct impact	A robust, evidenced planning policy base is essential to support employment generating development and to resist inappropriate development proposals.	No direct impact	A community informed planning polices help to protect the physical environment and ensure appropriate development.
Development & Delivery								
Development and Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting and facilitating Development in the borough Major employment project delivery (including key Town Centre sites) Employment land assembly and preparation (including enterprise zones) Town and district centre management Strategic business engagement Securing external funding Landscape design Natural and built environment 	949,067	0		Activity supports the creation of future employment opportunities for Walsall people. Engagement with Walsall employers provides opportunity to enhance the employability of vulnerable people looking to access the job market.	Direct activity to support new and existing businesses to locate/expand thereby safeguarding and stimulating job creation. Reductions in capacity will reduce the extent to which the council can assist businesses and also take pro-active action to bring forward quality employment land which is a key priority.	Activity supports the creation of future sustainable employment opportunities for Walsall people - thereby contributing to addressing economic inequality across the borough.	Addressing and improving key sites and centres will positively impact on the environment of the borough, improving Walsall as a place to live and work.
Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Walsall markets service 	-157,159	-121,451	<p>Policy saving of -£100k: 1. Increase in charges for Walsall market. Operational saving of-£30k</p> <p>2. Service redesign.</p> <p>Investment; Contractual inflation of £9k.</p>	No direct impact	The markets are a key part of the town & district centres' offer' and a source of employment. Changes can be achieved without directly affecting the markets.	Markets provide access to cost effective goods for local people and are a source of accessible employment.	Markets are a valued part of the communities in which they operate.
Housing Services								
Housing Strategy Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with housing providers, developers & funders to maximise investment, increase the supply of new homes Develop strategies & policies to improve housing choice & to ensure access to accommodation in the social & private sector 	251,898	-128,229	Operational saving of £53k through optimising delivery of housing strategy & partnerships service. -£75k fall out of housing grant.	Working with housing providers and developers to address specific housing needs of vulnerable groups.	Pro-actively working with housing developers helps to increase the number of new homes in the borough as well as providing employment and trading opportunities for local people/businesses within the housing sector.	There are a range of defined housing needs in Walsall, which compound social and economic inequalities. Working with developers and registered social landlords helps to increase the range and supply of affordable housing to address these.	Improving the range and quality of housing across the borough for Walsall people.
Housing Standards & Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with landlords, tenants & home owners to ensure housing is safe & healthy to live in Advice & assistance to private residents and residents Manage the council's gypsy and traveller site Work with home owners to bring back empty homes into use 	509,392	-42,593	Operational saving of £43k through increase income generated from capital fees and operational efficiencies.	The key objective for the service is to help people stay safe and well in their home and to support to lead independent lives in their homes for as long as is possible.			

Annex 10f - Regeneration Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Supported Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with housing providers, CAB & others to prevent and tackle homelessness • Advice, assistance & services to residents in housing difficulty on their housing options • Manage a range of temporary and supported housing schemes • Provide access to a range of accommodation & support services for vulnerable households including rough sleepers, homeless households, gypsies, travellers & refugees 	373,982	-109,830	<p>Operational saving of £91k through review and reduction of overall spend on accommodation services (inc repairs and maintenance, security provision, bed and breakfast and general supplies). -£19k fall out of housing grant.</p>	The key objectives for the service are to get a home, keep a home and ultimately tackle and prevent homelessness. The 'money, home, job operating model means that we take full account of individual residents and businesses circumstances before determining the appropriate action to take on their case. The work of the accommodation team will continue to provide much needed support, advice and accommodation to some of the most vulnerable people and households in the borough.	Helping to provide a stable home is crucial to an individual or family's prospects of securing or retaining employment.	Improving access and choice in respect of housing for all residents is central to the purpose of the service and the focus is on helping and supporting those currently disadvantaged and/or excluded in the housing market.	
Housing management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the service 	279,031	-13,965	<p>Operational saving of £14k through deletion of training / general supplies budget.</p>	The 'money, home, job operating model means that we will be exploiting the potential benefits of integrating our management approaches across the delivery of all key services that support our overall objectives.			
Regeneration Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the service • Directorate training programme • Black Country Consortium 	858,863	-28,079	<p>Operational savings of £28k:</p> <p>1. Reduction in contribution to Black Country Consortium -£20k</p> <p>2. Reduced training budget £8k.</p>	No direct impact	Ensuring the Black Country sub-region is cohesive and strong helps attract major public and private investment to support employment generating activity and development in Walsall (e.g. EZ; government grants).	More employment opportunities for local people can potentially help address economic inequalities across the borough.	No direct impact
Total Regeneration		8,669,897	-2,848,819					

Notes:

Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 10g - Business Support Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Non-core services								
Programme Delivery and Governance								
Programme Delivery and Governance (Inc Business Solutions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Information and Intelligence, Business Analysis, service re-design • Systems Thinking training • Programme and Project Management • Governance Reviews - (of strategic programmes or projects) • Freedom of Information Act/Data Protection Act - (co-ordination and management of all enquiries) • Customer Complaints - statutory - (Social Care and Children's) and non-statutory • Ombudsman - (co-ordination and management of issues and relationship with Ombudsman) • Policy co-ordination - (maintenance of strategies and policy database, production and distribution of monthly policy round-up and legislation tracker, ad hoc support to policy development) • Strategic Planning (production of Corporate Plan and contribution to other strategic documents) 	1,961,567	-149,000	Operational saving: 1. Review of structure 2013/14 -£50k Full year effect of 2012/13 budget - £99k business improvement service structure	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Shared Services and Procurement								
ICT	ICT Services and Support	5,107,639	-149,014	Operational savings: Re-organisation -£150k Contractual inflation of £986	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Post Room	Post room	476,051	-20,713	Movement relates to in year adjustment for removal of one off budgets.				
Print & Design	Printing & Design Services	250,625	-13,904	Movement relates to in year adjustment for removal of one off budgets.				
Procurement	Procurement	- 982,047	-1,500,000	Operational savings: council wide review of contracts				

Annex 10g - Business Support Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PR and media management • Reputation management • Communications strategy, planning and campaign delivery • Media monitoring and evaluation and Reporting • Internal communications • Social media • Digital and websites (including: council websites and internet) • Marketing (including income generation and the promotion of venues e.g. New Art Gallery, through to the promotion of services e.g. fostering and adoption) • Marketing (publications and promotional materials, sponsorship and advertising) 	813,490	-133,000	Operational savings: Re-organisation -£133k	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Total Business Support		7,627,325	-1,965,631					

Notes:
Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 10h - Finance and Personnel Portfolio Cash Limit

Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
					Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Core services								
Money, Home, Job:								
Revenues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council tax - billing, collection, recovery and enforcement Non domestic rates (business rates) - billing, collection, recovery and enforcement Banking hall – corporate income collection service, including cheque processing, car parking money, external payment facilitator (WHG, south staffs water), social care payments, petty cash, internal payment facilitator (most council service transacted). Welfare rights unit – income maximisation, debt advice, benefits based charging scheme (previously the fairer charging scheme) 	3,185,329	-214,908	<p>Operational savings - £180k:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue recovery of unpaid council tax through the courts - £83k Removal of vacant posts - £65k Reduce costs through better procurement and working practices - £32k <p>Investment: £100k to support the changes in exemptions for council tax. Further movement of £-£135k for accounting entries for one off budgets in year.</p>	The protection of all existing claimant groups from the reduction in funding for the new localised council tax support scheme means that the interests of vulnerable people are safeguarded for this year. The 'money, home, job operating model means that we take full account of individual residents and businesses circumstances before determining the appropriate action to take on their case, especially where they are in debt. The work of the welfare rights team, alongside work by the voluntary and community sector advice agencies, such as the CAB, continues to support those most in need in getting what they are entitled to and managing debt wherever this occurs.	The money, home, job operating model treats businesses as customers and, in doing so, establishes very different practice in relation to NNDR for local businesses. This means that we treat each case individually so that our objective is to support local businesses whilst maximising income.	Treating each resident or business as individuals, understanding their particular circumstances and varying how the service is provided means that the new operating model allows us to treat people differently and, thereby, promote equality.	
Revenues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council tax - collection fund 	0	0	<p>Policy savings: The following items are accounted for within the Collection Fund and will show as an increase in income rather than a reduction to the Revenues budget</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Class C exemption on council tax: the first six months that a property is unoccupied and unfurnished - currently there is a full exemption of 6 months. This option would reduce this to 3 months for 3,222 residents - £134k in 2013/14. Class A exemption on council tax: the first twelve months that a property requires or is undergoing structural alteration or repair to render the property habitable - currently there is a full exemption for 12 months. This option would reduce the relief % to 50% for 12 months for 465 residents - £95k Second homes discount: where the property is noone's sole or main residence but is furnished - currently a 10% discount applies. This option would remove the discount - £29k 	The protection of all existing claimant groups from the reduction in funding for the new localised council tax support scheme means that the interests of vulnerable people are safeguarded for this year. The 'money, home, job operating model means that we take full account of individual residents and businesses circumstances before determining the appropriate action to take on their case, especially where they are in debt. The work of the welfare rights team, alongside work by the voluntary and community sector advice agencies, such as the CAB, continues to support those most in need in getting what they are entitled to and managing debt wherever this occurs.	The money, home, job operating model treats businesses as customers and, in doing so, establishes very different practice in relation to NNDR for local businesses. This means that we treat each case individually so that our objective is to support local businesses whilst maximising income.	Treating each resident or business as individuals, understanding their particular circumstances and varying how the service is provided means that the new operating model allows us to treat people differently and, thereby, promote equality.	
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice, customer application support, assessment, revision, payment, recovery of overpayments, customer queries, complaints and appeals of the following benefits:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing benefit Council tax benefit Discretionary housing payments Free school meals The prevention, detection and investigation of benefit fraud and error, including the application of sanctions. Training and advisory sessions delivered to partner organisations. The administration of the housing benefit subsidy and grant claims and returns. 	2,476,026	-89,657	<p>Operational saving of -£40k:</p> <p>Implement the Money, Home, Job operating model that will overall significantly increase our performance for our residents and businesses, empower our staff and free up capacity which can be taken as financial savings.</p> <p>Full year effect of previous years approved savings -£63k: reduction in paid overtime. Further budget adjustment of £13k for removal of one off budgets in year.</p>	The protection of all existing claimant groups from the reduction in funding for the new localised council tax support scheme means that the interests of vulnerable people are safeguarded for this year. The 'money, home, job operating model means that we take full account of individual residents and businesses circumstances before determining the appropriate action to take on their case, especially where they are in debt. The work of the welfare rights team, alongside work by the voluntary and community sector advice agencies, such as the CAB, continues to support those most in need in getting what they are entitled to and managing debt wherever this occurs.	The money, home, job operating model treats businesses as customers and, in doing so, establishes very different practice in relation to NNDR for local businesses. This means that we treat each case individually so that our objective is to support local businesses whilst maximising income.	Treating each resident or business as individuals, understanding their particular circumstances and varying how the service is provided means that the new operating model allows us to treat people differently and, thereby, promote equality.	
Electoral Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elections and electoral administration 	625,945	-3,000	Full year effect of previous years approved investments for collection of personal identifiers.				

Annex 10h - Finance and Personnel Portfolio Cash Limit

Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
					Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Non-core								
Finance - Accountancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountancy, financial reporting, financial management, financial systems, financial strategy and planning, budget setting, financial support and advice to directorates Treasury Management including cash management and banking 	3,622,893	-68,414	Operational saving : Restructure of finance and operational efficiencies in 2013/14 - £68k	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Finance - Council Wide/Corporate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External audit fees CMT Council wide - added sums, corporate expenses All of the above are required to be accounted for centrally and the majority are non-controllable.	6,415,378	-150,915	Operational savings: 1. Swifter completion of final accounts and grant claims, more senior officer review to reduce time required for audit - £90k 2. Reduction in professional fees - £61k	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Resources Directorate	Rationalisation of support services (Finance and Personnel and Business Support portfolios) to directorates	0	-184,998	Operational saving: 1. Reorganisation of support to services - £185k	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Financial Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial administration – Accounts payable and receivable, debt management and recovery 	2,029,848	-177,000	Operational saving - £177k: 1. Part year effect of (£236k) restructure of financial administration and operational efficiencies 2013/14	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Risk and Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk and Insurance - claims handling, insurance fund management, risk management 	133,106	0		Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Services providing legal advice and dealing with litigation 	1,775,249	-52,542	Operational saving -£53k: 1. Restructure of legal services	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Democratic and Mayoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members allowances Group expenses Members allowances / expenses Mayoral services / transport / secretary Constitutional advice Administration of the council's formal decision-making processes 	2,068,244	0		Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			

Annex 10h - Finance and Personnel Portfolio Cash Limit

Activity	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
					Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Direct, Intranet/HR portal Payroll and pensions/transactional services HR Specialist Services. The teams within this service are business partner (director support), wellbeing and equality and learning and development 	4,221,318	-604,964	Operational savings: 1. Deletion of vacant post -£77k 2. Streamlining of external training contracts and development activities -£208k. Full year effect - £272k of 2012/13 approved savings: restructure Investment: Contractual inflation of £2k and removal of one off set up costs for the sickness absence centre -£50k	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Internal Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An assurance service that provides an independent and objective opinion to the organisation on the control environment Advisory and related client services which are carried out to improve services and to add value, including the impact of proposed policy initiatives, programmes and projects as well as emerging risks Prevention, detection and investigation of fraud and corruption; and other irregularities 	659,632	-10,000	Operational saving of -£10k: Removal of vacant computer audit post and tender for work at lower cost.	Support services are being redesigned in order to improve their value to those providing public services through better integration, capability and staff empowerment. This will enable spending to be reduced over time to the minimum in order to enable the council to invest as much as possible in maintaining and improving, or at least protecting critical public services.			
Total Finance and Personnel		27,212,968	-1,556,398					

Notes:
 Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 10i - Social Care and Health Portfolio Cash Limit

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Service Area	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Access, Assessment & Care Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment and review 	6,794,775	-251,280	Operational savings of -£251k Deletion of vacant posts / redundancies and introduction of 1.5% vacancy management	The access, assessment and care management service safeguards the interests of vulnerable people within the borough by interacting with residents to identify social care needs and put in place support services to meet them.	The service promotes economic prosperity by retaining expenditure locally on services wherever possible	The service reduces inequalities by supporting vulnerable people to live independently.	The service makes Walsall a better place to live by ensuring that older people and people with a disability and their carers are supported to live full lives in the community
Strategic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response, information, advice and signposting Resource allocation and support planning Whole sector workforce planning and development Preventative services, community alarms, tele-care, tele-healthcare 	-92,044	-1,080,866	Operational savings of £286k 1. -£186k Deletion of vacant posts / redundancies and introduction of 1.5% vacancy management 2. £100k Review of general running expenses. The remaining adjustment relates solely to an accounting adjustment for changes to grant allocations.	The service safeguards the interests of vulnerable people by protecting them from abuse and ensuring that their needs are met in a safe and effective way	The service promotes economic prosperity by enabling people to remain economically active in their community	The service reduces inequality by supporting vulnerable people to live independent lives	The service makes Walsall a better place to live by ensuring that vulnerable people can receive services without the fear that they will lose their independence
Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enablement and re-ablement Direct service provision, reablement, response, day and respite care, adult placements 	8,185,854	-675,301	Operational savings of £675k: Deletion of vacant posts / redundancies and introduction of 1.5% vacancy management	The service safeguards the interests of vulnerable people by enabling them to access rehabilitation services in order to regain their full physical functioning as far as is possible. The savings proposals are management and structural changes reflecting the simplification of systems and processes within the Directorate thereby avoiding reductions in direct service.	The service promotes economic prosperity by enabling people to remain economically active in their community and avoid the need for institutional care These proposals support the repatriation of available expenditure back to Walsall as per the joint commissioning unit (JCU) business plan.	The service reduces inequality by supporting people to live independent lives. These proposals support vulnerable and disabled people to live full lives within their communities	The service makes Walsall a better place to live by ensuring that effective services are in place. These proposals support vulnerable and disabled people to live full lives within their communities
Management Support & Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic management of the directorate and the quality assurance team. 	-388,117	-44,909	Operational savings of £45k: Deletion of vacant posts / redundancies and introduction of 1.5% vacancy management	The service safeguards the interests of vulnerable people by ensuring that a fully functioning, modern and efficient system of adult social care is in place and maintained	The service promotes economic prosperity by ensuring that as much expenditure as possible remains local and through the delivery of cost effective public services.	The service reduces inequality by putting in place services to ensure that vulnerable people can live full lives in their community	The service makes Walsall a better place to live by planning and putting in place cost effective and modern services
Safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding of vulnerable adults 	498,778	-88,973	Operational savings of -£89k: Deletion of vacant posts / redundancies and introduction of 1.5% vacancy management	The service safeguards the interests of vulnerable people through maintaining an effective system of adult protection	The service promotes economic prosperity by ensuring that vulnerable people are protected from financial abuse	The service reduces inequality by protecting the vulnerable from abuse	The service makes Walsall a better place to live by helping to protect the vulnerable from abuse

					Principles against which the Budget has been tested			
					Safeguarding interests of vulnerable people - children and adults	Promoting economic prosperity for residents	Reducing Inequalities	Aim to make Walsall a better place to live and work
Service Area	Activity covered by this Area (per portfolio plan)	Cash Limit 2013/14	Change £	Change Proposals	Do the proposals (the overall budget) safeguard the interests of vulnerable people. How?	Do the proposals (the overall budget) promote economic prosperity. How?	Do the proposals reduce inequalities. How?	Do the proposals help to make Walsall a better place to live and work. How?
Commissioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioning of services including residential, nursing, day care, home care, extra care (incl. Housing 21), supporting people and the learning disability and integrated community equipment pooled budgets Housing related support for vulnerable groups Shaping and development of adult social care market 	49,042,433	6,472,491	<p>Operational saving of 1. -£329k through the continuation of the resettlement programme started in 2012/13 to reduce packages of care, 2. -£28k: Deletion of vacant posts / redundancies and introduction of 1.5% vacancy management</p> <p>Full year effect of previous years approved savings - £1m for resettlement programme.</p> <p>Investment: Contractual inflation of £1.349m, with -£152k fall out of Community Safety Fund grant.</p> <p>Full year effect of previous years approved investment for older people demographic growth £323k. A further adjustment has been made which is an accounting change only for £6.3m for public health grant.</p>	The service safeguards the interests of vulnerable people by having in place a fair system of contribution for services received. In relation to the resettlement proposal these are management and structural changes reflecting the simplification of systems and processes within the Directorate thereby avoiding reductions in direct service.	The service promotes economic prosperity by ensuring that needs can be equally met without relation to the income a person receives in an equitable way. In relation to the resettlement programme this proposal supports the repatriation of available expenditure back to Walsall as per the JCU Business Plan.	The service reduces inequality by ensuring that people are not disadvantaged in receipt of services based upon income inequality. In relation to the resettlement programme this proposal supports vulnerable and disabled people to live full lives within their communities.	The service makes Walsall a better place to live by ensuring that vulnerable people can receive services without the fear that cost will exclude them. In relation to the resettlement programme the proposals support the drive to make Walsall a better place to live and work for older and disabled people.
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dudley and Walsall mental health trust Broadway North Mental health assessments and placements Drugs and alcohol teams 	6,493,736	-634,303	<p>Operational savings of 1. -£134k: Deletion of vacant posts / redundancies and introduction of 1.5% vacancy management</p> <p>Full year effect of previous years approved savings - £500k for resettlement programme.</p>	The service safeguards the interests of vulnerable people by supporting them to live in their own community. In relation to the resettlement proposal these are management and structural changes reflecting the simplification of systems and processes within the Directorate thereby avoiding reductions in direct service.	The service promotes economic prosperity by ensuring that expenditure is kept local as far as possible. In relation to the resettlement programme this proposal supports the repatriation of available expenditure back to Walsall as per the JCU Business Plan	The service reduces inequality by supporting vulnerable people to live full lives in their community and not remain needlessly in institutional care. In relation to the resettlement programme this proposal supports vulnerable and disabled people to live full lives within their communities.	The service makes Walsall a better place to live by supporting people to return to Walsall from institutional care, often in distant locations. In relation to the resettlement programme the proposals support the drive to make Walsall a better place to live and work for older and disabled people.
Total Social Care and Health		70,535,415	3,696,859					

Notes:

Budget 2013/14 now includes all approved budget virements processed in 2012/13 up until December 2012. Further updates will be required in relation to pay and grading outcomes and notification of final grant allocations.

Annex 11a - 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	Verge Parking	Construction 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
11	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 continual 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				1,800,000	2,050,000	2,250,000	2,450,000	250,000	8,800,000
12	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 targeted at help for vulnerable households. The funds have previously helped secure significant investment (circa £25m+) from private energy companies and this is expected to be repeated in the future as part of the national Green Deal programme and the Energy Company Obligations. The capital investment will help at least 335 households with works and help reduce excess seasonal deaths, reduce fuel poverty, minimise illnesses made worse by cold and damp homes and enables people to stay living safer and longer in their own homes. A further £330k is included on the reserve list for 2013/14 which may need to be brought into the programme in year if required and additional funding is available.	470,000	600,000	500,000	400,000	0	1,970,000

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	DETAILS OF PROJECT & CUSTOMER BENEFIT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £
13	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
14	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
15	Regeneration	Civic Centre essential maintenance	Areas of the Civic Centre need essential maintenance – windows (original glazing units have reached / are starting to reach the end of their useful life, water ingress from the roof garden is causing damage need to replace planters with paving.	566,306	0	0	0	0	566,306
16	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
17	Regeneration	Shop maintenance	Ongoing maintenance requirement and council obligation to tenants in the councils commercial shops estate. Works 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
18	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
19	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
20	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
21	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 £
22	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
23	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
24	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	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									
25	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. This ensures 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
26	Regeneration	Asbestos removal	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. This ensures customers are not put at risk by asbestos.	155,000	155,000	155,000	155,000	0	620,000
27	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 are inspected every 3 years for hot and cold water systems and air conditioning - all non schools buildings. This ensures that customers are not put at risk by legionella.	275,000	275,000	275,000	275,000	0	1,100,000
28	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, annual emergency lighting testing, annual fire alarm testing, annual gas appliance/boiler servicing, annual lighting conductor testing, annual portable appliance testing as required by the council's safety management standards and inspections and any remedial works resulting from undertaking the testing 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
29	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 risk assessment carried out by SHAW/fire service in all council owned premises, 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 £
30	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 value for money 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
31	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
32	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				9,908,126	6,855,000	6,895,000	6,995,000	450,000	31,103,126

Annex 11b - 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	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		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	Following a 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 18	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).	500,000	0	0	0	0	500,000
	Regeneration	Health through warmth and related Retro Fit schemes - link to item 12	To provide energy and fuel saving advice and energy efficient heating and insulation works to private homes targeted at help for vulnerable households. The funds have previously helped secure significant investment (circa £25m+) from private energy companies and this is expected to be repeated in the future as part of the national Green Deal programme and the Energy Company Obligations. The capital investment will help at least 335 households with works and help reduce excess seasonal deaths, reduce fuel poverty, minimise illnesses made worse by cold and damp homes and enables people to stay living safer and longer in their own homes.	330,000	0	0	0	0	330,000
	Social Care and Health	Preventative adaptations - part of the transformation of social care - link to item 19	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				2,155,000	100,000	0	0	0	2,255,000

Annex 11 c - 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	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
6	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.
7	Transport and Environment	Local Highways Maintenance Funding	352,000	188,000	0	0	0	540,000	Department for Transport
Total Transport and Environment			3,512,000	3,960,000	3,772,000	3,772,000	3,772,000	18,788,000	
8	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
9	Regeneration	Gypsy & Travellers	20,000	921,050	0	0	0	941,050	HCA Grant
10	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
11	Regeneration	Local Sustainable Transport Fund	260,000	0	0	0	0	260,000	Department for Transport
Total Regeneration			12,511,000	7,803,050	3,372,000	1,660,000	1,351,000	26,697,050	
12	Social Care	Personal Social Services Grant	769,958	785,511	0	0	0	1,555,469	Department for Health
Total Social Care			769,958	785,511	0	0	0	1,555,469	
BIDS FOR THIRD PARTY / EXTERNAL FUNDING									
13	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
14	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 i.e. 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
15	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
16	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

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £	FUNDING BODY/DETAILS OF THE PROJECT
17	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
18	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
19	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
20	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
21	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
22	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
23	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 period. £90,000
24	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

No.	PORTFOLIO	PROJECT	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	Total £	FUNDING BODY/DETAILS OF THE PROJECT
25	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
26	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
27	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
28	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.
29	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	
30	Regeneration	Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative – Heritage Lottery Fund	150,000	0	0	0	0	150,000	Heritage Lottery Fund
31	Regeneration	Willenhall Townscape Heritage Initiative - VIEW	100,000	0	0	0	0	100,000	Visionary Investment Enhancing Walsall
32	Regeneration	Black Country Enterprise Zone - Darlaston Site Investigation Programme	847,250	0	0	0	0	847,250	Growing Places Fund
33	Regeneration	Noirit Site Infrastructure	987,189	0	0	0	0	987,189	Growing Places Fund
34	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			30,276,509	22,686,759	14,880,062	11,829,662	11,009,866	90,682,858	