

**COMMUNITY ORGANISATION, LEISURE AND CULTURE
SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

**Agenda
Item No.**

DATE: 2 February 2006

6a

Budget Information 2006/7

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Cllr Zahid – Community Engagement & Organisational Development
Cllr Perry – Culture & Leisure

Summary of report:

This reports provides further detail requested by the panel to assist in scrutinising the draft revenue and capital budgets for 2006/7 – 2010/2011 and to make recommendations to Cabinet as appropriate, in relation to the following;

- Green spaces (parks) budget;
- Library services budget;
- Proposed Investment bids re: Community Associations;
- Proposed Budget reduction re: LNP Consultancy Costs.

Background papers

Various financial working papers
Draft Corporate Revenue report 2006/7 to 2010/2011

Reason for scrutiny

This report provides further detail requested at the panel's budget scrutiny meetings on 23 November and 8 December 2005 for consideration, to inform recommendations the panel may wish to make to Cabinet for them to consider in formulating and approving their final budget proposals to Council. The report should be considered in conjunction with the draft corporate revenue budget and draft capital programme reports referred from cabinet.



Signed:

Executive Director: Carole Evans

Date: 25 January, 2005

Resource and legal considerations

Consideration of the draft budget by scrutiny is an integral part of the council's budget setting process. The panel made recommendations to cabinet for inclusion in their draft budget proposals. A verbal update will be provided at the panel's meeting on 2 February as to whether these recommendations have been included within cabinet's corporate draft

revenue budget proposals.

Citizen impact

Decisions taken on the budget have implications for citizens.

Environmental impact

None directly related to this report. Decisions on the final budget and choice of investment may have environmental implications.

Performance management

None directly related to this report.

Equality Implications

None directly related to this report.

Consultation

This is the second opportunity for the panel to comment and make recommendations on the budget.

Contact Officers

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1. GREEN SPACES (PARKS) BUDGET

- 1.1 Further detail on the green spaces (parks) budget is attached at **Appendix 1**. The Panel also asked for details of how much it would cost to bring the parks within the borough up to green flag status.
- 1.2 For illustration purposes, Palfrey Park could be brought up to Green Flag standard by some improvements to grounds maintenance within existing budgets. If we wished to replace existing buildings this would cost around £300,000 but would be eligible for a Heritage Lottery grant and the Council would need to commit £75,000 of capital investment. Green Flag status could nevertheless, be achieved without this investment.

2. LIBRARIES

- 2.1 **Appendix 2** is an analysis of the 2005/6 budget for each library, shown in each LNP area, as requested by the panel.
- 2.2 The proportion of library expenditure spent within each LNP area is broadly in line with the proportion of the total population of Walsall in each LNP area, apart from St Matthew's and Birchills Leamore. This area receives the highest proportion of library expenditure, because it contains the Central Library in the town centre. Central serves as a local library for residents of the LNP area but also as the main

borough library for residents across Walsall and the hub of the library network. In fact nearly 4 out of every 10 library visits in Walsall happen at Central.

- 2.3 The LNP area which receives the smallest proportion of library expenditure is Paddock Pheasey (7% of expenditure, compared with 8.7% of population). This is due largely to the fact that there is only one static library in this area; at Pheasey. However, that library is at the heart of a thriving community and Walsall Libraries & Heritage is currently looking at how its opening hours could be increased. The service offered from Pheasey Library is supplemented by a number of Mobile Library visits each week in the Paddock ward.
- 2.4 The amount spent on staffing in each LNP area is based on the major factors of size and opening hours. Each of the former towns of Bloxwich, Willenhall, Darlaston, Aldridge and Brownhills has a district library open at least 5 days per week and Walsall Libraries and Heritage is currently considering how a comparable service could be offered in the other LNP areas.
- 2.5 Variations in the amount spent on book stock are due to the fact that libraries vary in their capacity to store and display books and also to a rolling programme of targeted stock improvement. It should be noted as well that the policy of stock rotation means that many books, while initially bought for one library, will be circulated to other libraries in Walsall during their 'lifetime'. A number of circulating collections are also used to supplement and refresh stock in smaller libraries.
- 2.6 The panel also requested further information on services and facilities at each library. This is attached at **Appendix 3**.

3. COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

- 3.1 The panel made recommendations to cabinet in respect of £200k of funding for CAs, including that more money be made available for under 13s and over 19s, and that CAs should be directly accountable for this funding, and alternative funds made available for LNPs. The draft revenue budget reported to cabinet on 18 January does not include this funding to CAs and no new investment is included for LNPs.

4. CONSULTANCY SAVINGS

- 4.1 The panel requested further information on budgeted consultancy costs within the council and proposals for making efficiencies in these areas. **Appendix 4** provides current budgets for consultancy costs and efficiencies include within the draft budget proposals.

LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIPS

APPENDIX 1

LNP	Population	% Population	Employee Costs £	Arboretum - (Boroughwide usage)	Grounds Maint. Costs £	Other Running Costs £	Budget 2005/2006 £	% Population
Aldridge South & Streetly	25,518	10	145,932	28,705	186,663	58,661	419,961	11
Blakenall & Bloxwich	39,084	15	151,395	43,965	285,898	60,857	542,115	15
Brownhills & Aldridge North	25,471	10	96,269	28,652	186,319	38,698	349,938	10
Darlaston	25,941	10	93,968	29,180	189,757	37,773	350,679	10
Palfrey & Pleck	28,493	11	196,321	32,051	208,425	78,917	515,714	14
Pelsall & Rushall-Shelfield	23,235	9	79,777	26,136	169,963	32,069	307,945	8
Pheasey & Paddock	22,008	9	98,704	24,756	160,987	39,677	324,125	9
St Matthews & Birchills Leamore	25,984	10	88,996	29,229	190,072	35,774	344,071	9
Willenhall	37,766	15	128,336	42,482	276,256	51,588	498,663	14
TOTAL	253,500		1,079,698.00	285,156.00	1,854,340.00	434,015.00	3,653,209	

NOTES

Budgets are currently allocated by area -

Willenhall parks and green spaces
 Darlaston parks and green spaces
 Bloxwich parks and green spaces
 Walsall parks and green spaces
 Aldridge parks and green spaces
 Brownhills parks and green spaces

After consulting with Parks Managers we have agreed to split future budgets by LNP areas.

The employee budget has been apportioned per % of hours worked in each park.

Arboretum and grounds maintenance have boroughwide usage and are apportioned by population

Running costs apportioned by employee costs

Palfrey & Pleck have an increased employee budget to support the requirements of the HLF (Heritage Lottery Fund) bid

WALSALL COUNCIL LIBRARY SERVICE

Local Neighbourhood Partnership Analysis of 2005-2006 Budget

LNP/ Library	Population	Staffing FTE	Direct Employee Costs	Premises Costs	Estimated Expenditure on Stock 2005-06	Total Direct Library Costs	Other Apportioned Costs	Total Expenditure	% Spent on LNP	Total Visits Per Library (Per Month)	% of Visits per LNP
Aldridge South & Streetly:-	25,518										
Aldridge		6.8	£132,577	£6,538	£39,661	£178,776	£238,644	£417,420		9,280	
Streetly		3.7	£69,162	£5,647	£25,171	£99,980	£129,850	£229,830		4,621	
Total Aldridge South & Streetly		10.5	£201,739	£12,185	£64,832	£278,756	£368,494	£647,250	11%	13,901	9%
Blakenall & Bloxwich:-	39,084										
Bloxwich		5.7	£113,469	£10,426	£45,395	£169,290	£315,397	484,687		13,349	
Blakenall		2.1	£41,636	£7,224	£11,972	£60,832	£116,199	177,031		6,000	
Sneyd		2.4	£33,374	£620	£10,714	£44,708	£132,799	177,507		5,243	
Total Blakenall & Bloxwich		10.2	£188,479	£18,270	£68,081	£274,830	£564,395	839,225	14%	24,592	16%
Brownhills & Aldridge North:-	25,471										
Brownhills		3.7	£76,606	£5,073	£22,361	£104,040	£230,664	334,704		4,808	
Walsall Wood		2.2	£44,164	£3,503	£15,364	£63,031	£137,152	200,183		1,586	
Total Brownhills & Aldridge North		5.9	£120,770	£8,576	£37,725	£167,071	£367,816	534,887	9%	6,394	4%
Darlaston:-	25,941										
Darlaston		7.9	£151,928	£20,221	£49,588	£221,737	£281,844	503,581		14,359	
Bentley		2.6	£50,830	£6,912	£15,307	£73,049	£92,759	165,808		3,114	
Total Darlaston		10.5	£202,758	£27,133	£64,895	£294,786	£374,603	669,389	11%	17,473	11%
Palfrey & Pleck:-	28,493										
Pleck		2.4	£47,153	£3,865	£18,444	£69,462	£205,728	275,190		4,555	
South Walsall		2.4	£47,153	£5,535	£19,163	£71,851	£205,728	277,579		3,092	
Total Palfrey & Pleck		4.8	£94,306	£9,400	£37,607	£141,313	£411,455	552,768	9%	7,647	5%
Pelsall & Rushall - Shelfield:-	23,235										
Pelsall		3.1	£60,025	£1,449	£20,633	£82,107	£182,480	264,587		5,347	
Rushall		2.6	£50,830	£3,578	£12,972	£67,380	£153,047	220,427		2,826	
Total Pelsall & Rushall - Shelfield		5.7	£110,855	£5,027	£33,605	£149,487	£335,527	485,014	8%	8,173	5%
Pheasey & Paddock:-	22,008										
Pheasey		2.6	£50,830	£5,523	£21,135	£77,488	£317,808	395,296		3,509	
Total Pheasey & Paddock		2.6	£50,830	£5,523	£21,135	£77,488	£317,808	395,296	7%	3,509	2%
St. Matthews & Birchalls Leamore:-	25,984										
Beechdale		2.6	£50,830	£22,680	£15,091	£88,601	£40,481	129,082		2,724	
Central		21.5	£429,898	£56,179	£144,627	£630,704	£334,743	965,447		57,783	
Total St. Matthews & Birchalls Leamore		24.1	£480,728	£78,859	£159,718	£719,305	£375,224	£1,094,529	18%	60,507	39%
Willenhall:-	37,766										
Forest Gate		2.1	£42,326	£2,323	£16,332	£60,981	£123,146	184,127		2,515	
Furzebank		2.4	£33,374	-£122	£10,094	£43,346	£140,739	184,085		5,006	
Willenhall		4.8	£96,661	£9,474	£36,933	£143,068	£281,477	424,545		6,467	
Total Willenhall		9.3	£172,361	£11,675	£63,359	£247,395	£545,362	£792,757	13%	13,988	9%
Total	253,500	83.6	£1,622,826	£176,648	£550,957	£2,350,431	£3,660,684	6,011,115	100%	156,184	100%

APPENDIX 3

PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES/FACILITIES (January 2006)

LIBRARY	Reading groups	Public access computers	Disabled access	Music CDs, video, DVDs, Talking books	Cradle Clubs or Books and Babies sessions, Under 5s sessions	Homework Clubs	Property Marking Kits
Aldridge	Reading Group	13 Including Walk in Web facilities	Yes	CDs Talking Books	Cradle Club		Available for loan
Beechdale		12	Yes Automatic doors	CDs DVDs, Video Talking Books	Bookstart Babies		Available for loan
Blakenall	Family Reading Groups	9 Including Walk in Web facilities	Yes Automatic doors	DVDs Talking Books	Bookstart Babies		Available for loan
Bentley		8	Yes	Talking Books	Cradle Club	Homework Zone	Available for loan
Bloxwich	Reading Group	12 Including Walk in Web facilities	Yes	CDs Talking Books	Under 5s sessions	Homework Zone	Available for loan
Brownhills		6	Yes	Talking Books	Cradle Club		Available for loan
Darlaston		15 Including Walk in Web facilities	Yes	CDs DVDs, Video Talking Books	Under 5s sessions		Available for loan
Forest Gate		4	Yes	Talking Books	Bookstart Babies		Available for loan
Furzebank	Teenage Reading Group	6	Yes	Talking Books	Bookstart Babies		Available for loan
Pelsall	Reading	6	Yes	Talking Books	Cradle Club		Available for

	Group						loan
Pheasey		10	Yes Automatic doors	Talking Books	Cradle Club	Homework Zone	Available for loan
Pleck	Chatterbooks, Gujerati Reading Group	8	Yes	CDs Talking Books	Cradle Club	Homework Zone	Available for loan
Rushall	Chatterbooks	6	Yes	Talking Books	Bookstart Babies		Available for loan
Sneyd	Chatterbooks	8	Yes	Talking Books	Bookstart Babies		Available for loan
South Walsall		6	Yes	Talking Books	Under 5s sessions		Available for loan
Streetly	Chatterbooks, Poetry Reading Group	10	Yes	Talking Books	Under 5s sessions		Available for loan
Walsall Central Library	Black Writers, Chatterbooks, Poetry Reading Group, 3 general reading groups, Urdu Reading Group, Talking Book Reading Group	29 Including Walk in Web facilities	Yes Automatic doors	CDs, Video, DVDs, Talking Books	Cradle Club	Homework Zone	Available for loan
Walsall Wood		5	Yes	Talking Books	Bookstart Babies		Available for loan
Willenhall	Chatterbooks	13 Including Walk in Web facilities	Yes	DVDs, Video Talking Books	Cradle Club		Available for loan

CONSULTANCY BUDGETS AND PROPOSED REDUCTIONS

APPENDIX 4

DIRECTORATE	SERVICE	2005/6 BUDGET £'000	2006/7 EFFICIENCY SAVING £'000	% OF BUDGET	NOTES
Neighbourhood Services and Regeneration	Planning & Transport	258	0	0.00	Street Lighting PFI £25k – As part of PFI approval we are required to have on going external validation of the process through the 25 years of the PFI. £25k for review of highways procurement route. £208k for external advisors for the ITP PFI one-off
	Urban Regeneration	47	0	0.00	Specialist works - reviews and stakeholder analysis and consultation
	Leisure, Culture & Lifelong Learning	12	0	0.00	Consultants for greenspaces strategy
	WBSP	36	0	0.00	Specialist works and consultation with public
	Neighbourhood Management	30	10	33.33	Specialist works and consultation with public
Corporate Services	Finance	0	5	n/a	n/a
	HR	75	0	0.00	£25k for member development. £50k for management development
TOTAL		458	15		