

Cabinet – 14 September 2011

Financial Plan 2012/13 to 2014/15: Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for Consultation

Portfolio: Councillor Towe – Finance and Personnel

Service: Finance – council wide

Wards: All

Key decision: No

Forward plan: No

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the portfolio plans for future service delivery, along with the approach being taken to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency over the next three years (2012/13 to 2014/15).
- 1.2 A provisional revenue and capital cash limit is shown, along with revenue savings for consultation. These follow a value for money review that has been undertaken on all council services.
- 1.3 These draft budget proposals will be distributed to scrutiny panels and stakeholders for consultation as part of the budget setting process. The final budget, including any changes arising from consultation arrangements, and final allocation of formula grant, will be presented to Cabinet on 8 February 2012 for recommendation to Council, and will be considered by full Council on 23 February 2012.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve as the basis for consultation:
 - a) Provisional revenue cash limits by portfolio as set out in section 3.8, which include draft savings options referred to in the relevant portfolio plans.
 - b) Provisional capital cash limits by portfolio as set out in section 3.9
- 2.2 That Cabinet note and approve the consultation arrangements and reporting framework back to Cabinet set out in section 3.
- 2.3 That Cabinet refer this report to all scrutiny and performance panels for consultation, to enable their comments to be considered by Cabinet on 9 November 2011.

- 2.4 That Cabinet note that the 2012/13 provisional revenue cash limit is based on the draft formula grant settlement announced in December 2010 and initial savings proposals. Should the final allocation be less than current estimates, further proposals for ensuring a balanced budget will be brought back for Cabinet consideration as the budget develops and information is published.
- 2.5 That Cabinet note that the 2012/13 provisional capital cash limit includes provision for ongoing commitments to the approved capital programme from 2011/12, and are subject to confirmation of available capital resources for future years.

3. Report detail

- 3.1 The resource allocation and budget setting timetable was outlined in the report to Cabinet on 27 July 2011, which summarised the activity undertaken to date, and key dates for the budget process.
- 3.2 Further activity includes:-
- Scrutiny of the first draft budget proposals by scrutiny and performance panels from 20 September to 27 October, and feedback to Cabinet on 9 November.
 - Cabinet consider recommendations of scrutiny panels on first draft budget and make any amendments.
 - Scrutiny of the second draft budget proposals by scrutiny and performance panels from 25 November to 9 December.
 - Cabinet consider recommendations of scrutiny panels on second draft budget.
 - Cabinet approve the council tax base by January 2012.
 - Budget briefings for political groups
 - Budget consultation with stakeholders between August and November 2011.
 - Receipt of the final settlement late January / early February.
 - Approval of the final budget, in light of consultation and the final settlement, by Cabinet on 8 February 2012 and by Council on 23 February 2012.
- 3.3 The draft settlement for 2012/13 is known, with Formula Grant set at £126.440m, a reduction of £10.667m on 2011/12 grant funding. The council's medium term financial plan has been updated to reflect this reduction and other known cost pressures (contractual inflation, pay and grading costs, pensions revaluation etc) resulting in a funding gap of £12.938m against our current net budget requirement.
- 3.4 There is therefore no headroom for new investment, unless financial capacity is liberated from existing financial resources. This is due to cost pressures being higher than the additional resources that will be received in income to the council via the Government settlement and external fees and charges. The Government has already helped to freeze council tax for one year from April 2011 which Cabinet have endorsed, but have not announced the practicalities of how this will be governed from 2012/13 onwards.
- 3.5 Resource allocation is focussed on delivering the council's value for money strategy, approved by Cabinet last year. An approach to delivering best in class cost performance within the next 4 years across all council services has been developed. All service managers were required to identify cost efficiency

comparators. Provisional draft cash limits have thus been developed based on the council's approved vfm strategy.

- 3.6 In considering resource allocation and savings, funding for the development of services will need to be met from the redirection of existing resources through the implementation and rollout of the working smarter programme and systems thinking approach; and the identification of new 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). Cabinet has formally adopted a VFM strategy as set out above.
 - 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.
- 3.7 Formula Grant is not yet known for 2013/14 and 2014/15, therefore assumptions have had to be made. The total savings required to be delivered over the next 4 years amount to c£60m. However this may change following completion of the Governments consultation on Business Rate retention and it's Resource Review. The medium term financial plan currently reflects the following resources and costs – as shown in table 1 below:-

Table 1 : MTFP 2011/12 – 2015/16					
	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m	2013/14 £m	2014/15 £m	2015/16 £m
Net Budget Requirement	246.089	249.200	248.164	252.102	253.643
Funded by:					
Collection Fund Deficit	000.000	000.250	000.000	000.000	000.000
Formula Grant	(137.107)	(126.440)	(123.911)	(115.237)	(107.170)
Council Tax	(108.982)	(110.072)	(111.173)	(112.285)	(113.408)
Total Funding	246.089	236.262	235.084	227.522	220.578
Shortfall / (Surplus) in Funds	0	12.938	13.080	24.580	33.065
Provisional Savings Identified / Future Savings to achieve vfm strategy	0	(12.938)	(6.572)	(8.762)	0.000
Additional Savings required to be delivered via Working Smarter Programme)	0	0.000	6.508	15.818	33.065

- 3.8 Portfolio plans for service delivery are shown in Appendices 1a-h. The provisional revenue cash limits are detailed in section 6 of each portfolio plan, and include proposed savings options for consultation. The revenue cash limits by portfolio are summarised in **Table 2** below, along with the anticipated shortfall in funding:-

Table 2 : Provisional Revenue Cash Limits by Portfolio				
Portfolio	<u>2011/12</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2012/13</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2013/14</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2014/15</u> <u>£m</u>
Regeneration	10.697	11.152	11.728	12.640
Communities and Partnerships	7.267	7.183	6.793	6.403
Leisure and Culture	17.855	17.116	16.682	16.185
Transport and Environment	33.629	33.235	32.520	30.114
Children's Services	55.125	53.631	52.297	49.213
Business Support Services	10.800	10.941	10.841	10.744
Finance and Personnel	22.109	20.313	18.979	18.682
Social Care and Health	72.851	66.570	64.868	63.239
Central *	15.756	16.121	26.884	36.120
Total Revenue Cash Limit	246.089	236.262	241.592	243.340
Financial Savings to be identified	0.000	0.000	(6.508)	(15.818)
Total anticipated resources	246.089	236.262	235.084	227.522

* Central budgets include precept payments and provision for corporate cost pressures such as contractual inflation and pay and grading implications, so some budget realignments will be completed when the full impact of these changes are known. The following summarises new key cost pressures for 2012/13 :-

Table 3 : New Corporate Cost Pressures	
<u>Pressure</u>	<u>2012/13</u> <u>£m</u>
Contractual Inflation	2.876
Pay and grading	2.675
Pensions valuation	0.375
Revenue implications of capital programme	0.500
NNDR increase in costs	0.130
Correction to estimated saving following the new management structure from 7 September 2009	0.185
Total New Corporate Cost Pressures	6.741

- 3.9 Provisional capital cash limits are detailed in section 7 of each portfolio plan. These include the ongoing commitment to schemes approved in the 2011/12 capital programme. **Table 4** below summarises these by portfolio, along with anticipated sources of capital funding.

Table 4 : Provisional Capital Cash Limits by Portfolio				
	<u>2011/12</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2012/13</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2013/14</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>2014/15</u> <u>£m</u>
<u>Anticipated Capital Resources</u>				
Capital Receipts	1.500	1.500	1.500	1.500
General Unsupported Borrowing	8.971	7.160	6.731	6.731
Specific Unsupported Borrowing	0.000	0.647	0.733	0.733
Previous years underspend	0.950	0.000	0.000	0.000
External Funding	44.027	26.055	14.670	14.670
Total Capital Resources	55.448	35.362	23.634	23.634
<u>Portfolio</u>				
Regeneration	5.805	5.950	5.690	5.690
Communities and Partnerships	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Leisure and Culture	3.349	2.266	0.050	0.050
Transport and Environment	6.300	6.750	6.550	6.550
Children's Services	34.181	16.350	8.230	8.230
Business Support Services	2.129	1.599	1.331	1.081
Finance and Personnel	0.968	0.300	0.300	0.300
Social Care and Health	2.716	2.147	1.483	1.483
Total Capital Cash Limit	55.448	35.362	23.634	23.384
Financial Gap - to be allocated	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.250
Total anticipated resources	55.448	35.362	23.634	23.634

4. Council priorities

- 4.1 As identified in 3.5 and 3.6 above, the budget process follows council priorities, including the agreement to use a VFM strategy to drive through savings proposals linked to working smarter and service redesign.

5. Risk management

- 5.1 Managers are required to deliver service and improvement targets on time, to standard and within budget.
- 5.2 The budget process is governed by the overarching medium term financial strategy and will be delivered within the Working Smarter Programme approved by Cabinet. Risk management is an integral part of this activity and is embedded in budget preparation, monitoring and forecasting to enable potential budget variances and risks to be identified early and addressed.

6. Financial implications

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

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 Under the Local Government Act, an authority must set a council tax and balanced budget, giving 14 days notice of the council tax level prior to the date of billing. Walsall bills from the 1st April of each year, therefore must set its council tax by 15 March in order to meet this statutory deadline.

8. Property implications

- 8.1 There are no direct implications from this report, although property implications will arise as the smarter workplaces strand of the working smarter programme is developed.

9. Staffing implications

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

10. Equality implications

- 10.1 None directly associated with this report. An equality impact assessment is undertaken on all policy items and on the overall budget.

11. Consultation

- 11.1 The report is prepared in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, relevant managers and directors.
- 11.2 Consultation is an integral part of the budget process and arrangements are in hand to consult with a wide range of stakeholders (i.e.: councillors, residents, service users, business sector, voluntary and community organisations, etc.).

Background papers: Various financial working papers.

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06 September 2011



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06 September 2011

Appendices: -	1A	Regeneration
	1B	Communities & Partnerships
	1C	Leisure & Culture
	1D	Transport & Environment
	1E	Children's Services
	1F	Business Support Services
	1G	Finance & Personnel
	1H	Social Care & Inclusion

PORTFOLIO: REGENERATION

1. Summary of Services provided by the portfolio

Services to regeneration include:

- Housing - supported housing, housing standards & improvements, and housing strategy & partnerships
- Planning and Building Control - development management (control), planning policy and building control
- Property Services - asset management, design & procurement of capital projects, and facilities management
- Strategic Regeneration, including economic well being, Walsall town and district centre support and transport planning & policy service
- Development and Delivery - natural environmental/built conservation team, landscape design team and Walsall markets

2. Purpose and future service delivery

Our overall purpose is to create conditions for sustained economic recovery and growth, by supporting the growth of companies and jobs in Walsall, ensuring that people have the skills and the environment to make the most of these opportunities.

Planning

To deal with your planning applications quickly and efficiently, in a way that suits me.

To improve the physical environment of the place I live.

To adopt a 'business friendly' approach to managing future development in the Borough

Housing

To deliver new and improved homes to increase my housing choice

To help me live independently and affordably in my own home

To help me if I encounter difficulties with my housing or my landlord.

Property

To create and improve our buildings to enable council staff to deliver better services for me.

To ensure that the Council's land and properties are used to help stimulate investment in my borough

Strategic Regeneration

To assist me in developing the right skills and experiences to obtain employment.

To help my business to thrive and grow and to assist in establishing new businesses.

To develop scheme to help me move around the Borough and tackle congestion.

Development & Delivery

To provide the right sites and premises to enable my business to thrive and grow and to help attract new businesses.

To improve my town, district and neighbourhood centres.

To meet these challenges, the directorate has changed the way it manages and delivers its business through the implementation of a new operating model, and the formation of

a management hub to better co-ordinate our work. This is complemented by on-going reviews of service delivery, capacity, budget and structures, utilising the Working Smarter principles. We recognise that the private sector are best placed to create the jobs our economy needs, so we are focussing on working to support them in this aim.

3. Approach to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency

In our efforts to deliver service improvement and cost efficiency the directorate is:

- 1) Redesigning services and systems in keeping with Working Smarter principles around the 'customer experience'
- 2) Optimising systems and streamlined key processes to improve productivity, take out waste and free up staff time to add value at the front line
- 3) Improving procurement methods: e.g. disabled facility grants and home energy improvements.
- 4) Investing to save in earlier interventions - e.g. preventative adaptations and adaptations that support independence/reduce cost of 'high cost' social care cases.
- 5) Improving our approach to partnership working - align our resources to support only those partnerships judged to add value, ceasing our involvement in those that do not. Nurturing and developing effective partnerships including the development of the new Walsall Enterprise Partnership and links to the Black Country LEP. Building effective business driven partnerships to improve the economic and trading environment of the 5 district centres of Brownhills, Aldridge, Darlaston, Bloxwich and Willenhall.
- 6) Embedding VFM cultural change - early adopter of the council's "Working Smarter" programme, evidenced by our successful service redesign work in homeless accommodation services and Disabled Facilities Grants, and we continue to promote a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging our staff, through regular focussed briefings, to "spend it like your own".
- 7) Considering opportunities that may exist for both sharing of services and outsourcing of activities.
- 8) Following recognised property management best practice and that is firstly to review the asset base to minimise property holding which currently has an annual revenue cost of £11m, and secondly to design the property support service to this residual holding.
- 9) Reviewing the councils assets - the council was successful in being one of 7 pilot authorities to be selected for a RIEP programme looking at 'Transforming Local Government Property Asset Management'. One outcome is the 'Smarter Workplaces' programme which will help enable delivery of the councils new operating model. This new model has been applied to the Smarter Workplaces proposals – 'right, fast and simple.' Over a 5 year period this will reduce office floor space by 57%, reduce buildings down from 26 to 2, and achieve a steady state annual saving of approx £1m pa from the current £3.7m pa property costs. This represents a circa 27% saving of office accommodation costs and a 9% saving from the overall non-schools estate.
- 10) Redesigning the property support service – 'Total Facilities Management' - the redesign of the FM service will include hard and soft FM and also proposes extending this to include services not currently within property services such as corporate catering.
- 11) Modernising construction procurement - property services have established a range of frameworks and utilises national frameworks to deliver construction work.

- 12) Restructuring to improve customer service - changed skills to respond to customer needs. Multi-skilling of workforce, enabling generation of more income and development of service level agreements for customers.
- 13) Developing external funding opportunities - primarily focussed on the Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) programme which delivers a pot of £12m of ERDF funding that is now available for the north of the Black Country, at least £6m available for Walsall. This also interfaces with the marketing Birmingham led investing in the City Region programme which will facilitate a new, enhanced and integrated inward investment service for Walsall and the Black Country.
- 14) LEA development and information unit (economic development) - focussing on developing a deep economic understanding of the Borough to inform future programmes. Specifically this focuses on producing /maintaining a number of key / statutory documents; child poverty, worklessness assessment and local economic assessment / framework.
- 15) Continually developing a transport strategy to underpin enhanced economic performance. Securing from the Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) a capital allocation which is capable of supporting the design work / staff teams required to create and submit major scheme applications for funding consideration and approval (both locally and nationally) by the DfT; supporting the on-going maintenance / improvement of our road networks and supporting the delivery of agreed schemes.
- 16) Driving down costs / taking out waste – only 1% of current funding for strategic regeneration is council mainstream, the balance comes from external sources, all of which have application processes and criteria, in which we need to meet in demonstrating value for money, prior to its approval, we meet these requirements.
- 17) Identifying and bringing forward housing sites for redevelopment, supporting the housing targets set out in the Joint Core Strategy. In turn these developments will now bring a direct financial benefit to the council as the Government has confirmed that, as “reward” for new homes built and added to the council tax base over the 12 months to October 2010, the council will receive a payment of £911,506 for the first year from April 2011 and a total payment over the next 6 years of £5.469m.

4. Our performance in areas of value for money customer satisfaction – how we compare in the regional and national picture

Housing strategy and partnerships - the quality of the services, including provided by Walsall's housing strategy and partnership service compares favourably with neighbouring authorities and similar sized LSVT authorities.

Housing standards and improvements - the quality of Walsall's DFG service and the delivery of its energy efficiency service compares favourably with regional neighbours.

Supported housing - the quality of our housing options service compares favourably regionally and nationally as do the unit cost (the provision of general advice is £35 per head which is top quartile performance across the West Midlands).

APSE – The cleaning service continuously achieves upper quartile in the local authority benchmarking family group. Bidding and winning against the private sector for cleaning contracts thus retaining employment and income for the borough of Walsall. Short listed as most improved/best performer in 2009/2010 for cleaning services.

There are no qualitative measures as such for national comparison in planning and building control, or development and delivery, but we continue to monitor:

- appeal success as a local indicator together with advising members on progress of enforcement proceedings. The service out performs the nationally set targets and locally set targets which are based on the national average performance in the previous year. The latest available national published performance for year ending December 2010 is Major applications 71%, minor applications 79% and other applications 89%. At this time Walsall was operating at 72.9%, 81.27% and 88% respectively. This places the service above national average in terms of this measure although 'others' were actually 1% below at that time. A more rounded measure is the value for money review as referred to above which places the service ranked second when compared over a range of measures with our statistical neighbours.
- For land charges, complaints. There has not been a single complaint on this basis since 2005.
- Building control - is largely managed by way of a trading account as it operates in competition with other approved inspector private sector companies for work in checking compliance with the building regulations. Any surpluses or losses are ring fenced with an expectation that the service operates on a cost recovery basis over a three year period. The best measure of how well it delivers this service is therefore seen by how much business it undertakes by way of retention of market share. The service is well aligned to the planning service and is well regarded by customers which have seen it retain 78% of market share which compares well with other West Midlands authorities.
- Local land and property gazetteer – award for the winner for category 'Best in the West Midlands' for 2009 by the NLPG.
- For the development team and delivery team within the service, that make up the core elements of the service, we have therefore not drawn on an assessment of quality with our statistical neighbours but we have worked closely with our sub regional authority partners through the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) it has been independently recognised that Walsall is the most capable and advanced development team to deliver the LEP priorities and namely the emerging Enterprise Zone (EZ).

5. What will our services look like in the next 3 years?

The Regeneration service is pre-dominantly funded through Working Neighbourhoods Funding (NRF), which is time limited and ceases on a gradual basis from 2012/13. In addition we hold the lead role in terms of having a role in the financial and performance management of a £2.283m WNF funded external contractor supply chain (consisting of 19 contracts). A key focus is understanding those WNF intervention that have had the most impact and to develop the business case to support activity being mainstreamed by the Council and its partners.

Housing

Walsall's housing service currently costs less than the median costs. We have already agreed and implemented arrangements for "phase 2" of our Working Smarter service redesign, arrangements that we believe will move the housing service to the corporate target of best in class by March 2015.

Planning and Building Control

Development management - the service is already performing highly and is currently engaged with other Black Country authorities in the LEP Business Friendly Planning review. Following this it will undertake a re-run of the value for money exercise it undertook last year with statistical neighbours. It is also to participate in the national planning benchmarking exercise to be managed by the planning advisory service in June. Information gained will inform an action plan to achieve a nil cost to the council service by 2015.

Planning policy – the service already out performs the median authority and a review is to be undertaken of the service following a recent vacancy of a post in order to challenge best in class by 2015.

Land charges - already operating at best in class and costs will be reviewed in order to maintain a trading profit but to meet its legal requirement to charge on a cost recovery basis.

Building control - already operating at best in class regarding revenue costs (based on information to date) and these costs will be maintained as 26% was removed this financial year. Shared service opportunities with other Birmingham or Black Country authorities may achieve further savings but this needs to be evaluated.

Property Services

The best in class position is unknown until the CIPFA work is completed, but in any event the efficiency work the service has been undertaking will continue apace and includes:

- The total FM review (hard & soft)
- Further review of asset base including Libraries; Leisure centres; Young peoples and the non- operational estate
- Consideration that all council property building construction services to be joined up generating operational and cash efficiencies;
- Consideration that children's service schools asset management service should be consolidated within property services generating operational and cash efficiencies;
- Bringing together all energy functions in the council;
- Pursuing an opportunity for a shared property service and/or FM across the Black Country, either in or outsourced or via a 'wholly owned company'. The starting point for any merger is to identify costs savings within LA's prior to identifying other delivery vehicles;

Development and Delivery

The focus, supported through the Work Force Planning tool and Working Smarter initiative, has been to remove a reliance on grant income, develop a more focussed service based on actual customer demand and to align services more coherently across the regeneration directorate. This approach has seen certain services reduced and others ceased as part of service redesign. Within the directorate we are remodelling and re-engineering services against customer demand to ensure that we are as effective and efficient as possible in delivering against the corporate economic priority.

Key to the service redesign and realignment of priorities will be continued and more structured customer engagement and wider understanding of what constitutes best practice in the regeneration field. Through the Business Friendly Planning work,

undertaken through the LEP and through the development of a Walsall developer forum we will continue to test and prod our service provision against customer experience elsewhere.

In addition through the Business Friendly Planning process we are investigating the potential to share services for those that can be delivered Black Country wide but do not necessarily require individual services in each authority.

6. Reshaping the revenue budget – 3 year financial plan

To follow

7. Future capital requirements

To follow

PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

1. Summary of Services provided by the portfolio

Community Safety comprises Community Safety, Anti-social Behaviour Unit, Reassurance Team (including Fair Trading Officers), Business Support and Community Cohesion.

Environmental Health administers statutory functions in respect of food safety, health and safety at work, statutory nuisances, (noise, smoke and odour) public health (Infectious diseases, drainage, waste accumulations, filthy premises and pest control), and licensing and registration (pet shops, food businesses, tattooists etc), environmental crime (litter, fly tipping and insecure premises), animal welfare and diseases, dog control, and highways enforcement (obstructions etc.).

First Stop shop – the customer contact centre.

Licensing - Processing applications for and issue licences for hackney carriage and private hire drivers, vehicles and operators; for the sale and supply of alcohol, late night refreshments and public entertainment; gambling premises; sex establishments; scrap metal dealers and sundry other licences as well as collecting annual fees, where appropriate. In addition the service is responsible for managing and evicting unauthorised encampments by gypsies and travellers.

Trading Standards – to enforce and provide advice and guidance to business on the requirements of the legislation as well as investigating complaints and other breaches of the legislation. Officers also undertake an inspection and sampling programme to ensure compliance.

Walsall Partnerships

- Managing the overall working neighbourhoods funds and managing the external funding network
- Development of shared intelligence / data sharing protocols, shared communications and engagement strategy

Area Partnerships

- Delivering six Area Plans (operational / public)
- Bringing all key partners together at a local level to deliver what our customers have identified they want

Voluntary and Community Sector

- Coordination of support to the sector across the council
- Supporting asset management in relation to community buildings across the borough
- Managing the administration for the council in its role as a corporate trustee for a number of trusts and charities
- Managing the current Link contract
- Leading on the Healthwatch

2. Purpose and future service delivery

The purpose of the services within the communities and partnerships portfolio is to help improve the areas where people live in Walsall. We do this by:

- 1) Getting things done at a local level – our area partnerships work with local residents to identify local problems, get them fixed quickly and take action to prevent them happening again
- 2) Making sure people are safe – we work with the police and other agencies to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and in particular deal with anti social behaviour and other nuisances
- 3) Protecting people from harm – we take fair regulatory action to protect consumers, ensure a safe and healthy environment and promote the well being of all Walsall residents.
- 4) Making it easy to contact the council – our first stop shop, contact centre and first stop express provide a quick, reliable way to report problems and get things done
- 5) Involving local people – we support voluntary and community groups to involve local people and provide good services.

3. Approach to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency

In our efforts to deliver service improvement and cost efficiency the directorate is:

- 1) Redesigning services and systems in keeping with Working Smarter principles around the 'customer experience'
- 2) Optimising systems and streamlined key processes to improve productivity, take out waste and free up staff time to add value at the front line
- 3) Restructuring and co-locating teams e.g. community safety teams, to deliver efficiencies and bring teams together in order to enhance coordination and efficiency.
- 4) Working through the installation of a new anti social behaviour IT system. This was identified as a major obstacle in the need to record and maintain the integrity of evidence and the necessity to produce clear, analytical data to inform service delivery and target resources. Additionally, the new system will bring us in line with the broader Public Safety Team and afford us the ability to spatially map incidents, allowing us to clearly identify trends and hot spot areas on an on-going basis.
- 5) Increasingly taking a risk based approach, e.g. in environmental health, allowing resources to be directed at the worst premises (food and health and safety). This coupled with the recent introduction of the national food hygiene rating system has introduced an element of enforced self regulation which will facilitate improved standards and allow resources to be directed elsewhere.
- 6) Developing alternative approaches to expedite enforcement processes including increased joined up and partnership working (joint enforcement/legal actions with partners for common problems) and more robust enforcement including seizure of disturbing noise equipment.
- 7) Within enforcement, identifying opportunities for joint working with other services to maximise efficiency, reduce duplication of effort and provide a consistent approach to the trade. This is reflected also in the development of a joint protocol with the police on managing unauthorised encampments which is now being reviewed after a period of operation to identify any areas for improvement.
- 8) Improving services, by holding ourselves open to external scrutiny. This has included the Trading standards underwent a process of Peer Review as a result of

- which service improvements were identified, but also officers were trained to review other authorities and bring learning back to the service.
- 9) Alternative approaches to solving problems are frequently identified. For example the establishment of the Walsall TraderRegister to provide a way for the elderly and vulnerable to find bona fide traders to undertake work on their property. Not only does this help with our aim of tackling rogue traders, but it helps other services meet their objectives in relation to independent living for the elderly and vulnerable, reducing cost of health care etc. Currently we are working on a strategic multi agency approach to tackling under age sale and consumption of alcohol.
 - 10) Bringing partners together at a strategic level to identify joint ways of working to reduce waste and cost. Area Partnerships bring partners together at a local level to jointly agree how to tackle issues affecting our customers, some of these issues have been long-standing and are complex to deal with. By working together, we are identifying improved ways of delivering services, as well as identifying blockages in systems, which trigger service re-designs and reduce cost for the council, and its partners.

4. Our performance in areas of value for money customer satisfaction – how we compare in the regional and national picture

Community safety services already delivers a comprehensive service below the median level. Other services have few qualitative performance measures in place regionally or nationally in which to form a picture. Benchmarking continues to be developed.

5. What will our services look like in the next 3 years?

Community Safety - The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners in May 2012 will present community safety partnerships with challenges and opportunities. Although ministers continue to advocate and positively promote the benefit of a multi-agency approach to tackling crime and disorder, there is currently significant uncertainty within the sector around what form community safety partnerships will adopt. At this time, there is little direction from the centre and local authorities are responding to this uncertainty in different ways. In Walsall, our community safety partnership is still a strong, cohesive unit, with close and effective working links. Within the next 12 months or so, CSPs will lose their direct funding from the Home Office with the grant being held by the police and crime commissioner.

Environmental Health - Benchmarking exercises currently being undertaken by the service with other authorities in the Council's CIPFA family group aim to identify how the service can be improved and its costs reduced. Best practice will be adopted by the service in the light of this benchmarking. Elements of the service have also been subject to scrutiny, and others will be scrutinized, under the Working Smarter initiative.

Licensing - The licensing function is one which is required to be carried out by statute and many of the targets for processing applications are also laid down in legislation, particularly in relation to the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005. Under the Licensing Act 2003 the fees are set by government but the Gambling Act 2005 fees are set locally but subject to government scrutiny.

The licensing of HC and PH drivers, vehicles and operators is also a statutory function. Currently, the fees charges are set locally but the service must operate on a cost neutral

budget. There are early signs that there may be a review of the taxi licensing regime in the next few years although the impact of this is not known.

Trading Standards - The service is one of the areas chosen by the authority to investigate shared services. This has not reached an outcome yet and this will affect the shape of the service. Additionally, the Government is currently undertaking a review of the consumer landscape. First line consumer advice is provided currently by Consumer Direct under the auspices of the Office of Fair Trading. However, Consumer Direct will cease to exist in March 2012 as will the OFT. Many of the OFT's functions are likely to be put within the remit of trading standards. The review is ongoing and so the impact on this service is not known at this moment in time.

Walsall Partnerships - There is no median / best in class to compare to. To address this, we have researched other local authorities in order for a comparison to be made. Walsall Partnership – the cost, across partners, works out at 70p per head of population. The council's element of this cost works out at 28p per head of population. Area Partnerships – according to national external evaluations of neighbourhood management arrangements, we are already well below the average operating costs.

6. Reshaping the revenue budget – 3 year financial plan

To follow

7. Future capital requirements

To follow

PORTFOLIO : LEISURE and CULTURE***1. Summary of Services provided by the portfolio*****Leisure and Community Health**

- Sport & leisure
- Catering
- Greenspaces
- Technical admin & safety

Libraries, Heritage and Arts

- 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 – through
 1. The New Art Gallery
 2. Forest Arts Centre and Music Service
 3. The Creative Development Team

Walsall Adult and Community College (WACC) - Learning and training services**Bereavement and registration services**

- Cemeteries and crematorium
- Coroners service
- Registration services

Grounds Maintenance - maintenance of green spaces within the borough.***2. Purpose and future service delivery***

The purpose of the services within the Leisure and Culture Portfolio is to help all residents improve themselves and the areas where people live in Walsall. We do this by:

1. Maintaining and enhancing the quality of green spaces – we work to improve our parks and open spaces in consultation with friends groups to make them relaxing and enjoyable places for residents and visitors alike
2. Encouraging active and healthier communities - we work to meet demand on our sport and leisure services, to improve our residents' overall health & well-being, focussing on the contribution they make to health improvement by encouraging more active lifestyles.
3. Provide a wide range of information and learning opportunities through the library service - we will continue to develop our local library service with greater community involvement to provide opportunities for people of all ages to engage in self-directed and often family orientated learning.
4. Promote lifelong learning - we will raise adults' skills for work for life, and for citizenship, by understanding and responding to the learning needs of the local community.

3. Our approach to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency

Our approach to delivering improvements includes:

- 1) Generating additional income, service redesign and restructures, with flexible working practices introduced.
- 2) Considering opportunities that may exist for both sharing of services and outsourcing of activities.
- 3) Redesigning services and systems in keeping with Working Smarter principles around the 'customer experience'
- 4) Optimising systems and streamlined key processes to improve productivity, take out waste and free up staff time to add value at the front line
- 5) Service modernisation such as the Library Modernisation Programme 2006-2009, which provided for the replacement or refurbishment of most of the library network.
- 6) Staff from leisure and green spaces have undertaken the three day Vanguard training and this underpins our approach to taking out waste. Sport & leisure and green spaces are already actively involved with the working smarter programme.
- 7) 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.
- 8) Improved procurement to drive down costs e.g. libraries are part of a Black Country Consortium for purchasing stock.
- 9) Use of LEAN Systems Thinking in libraries to evaluate new models of delivery and new and emerging technologies to create efficiencies and free the service from its reliance on single-use library buildings, whilst maintaining local access to services.
- 10) Use of volunteers in archives to help maintain and index collections and help provide one to one sessions for customers. Benchmarking (WACC) through West Midlands Peer Review Group and annual benchmark visit programmes.

4. Our performance in areas of value for money customer satisfaction – how we compare in the regional and national picture

Leisure and Community Health

- Catering service - based on service take-up by primary schools in Walsall, catering services caters for 81 (72%) of schools. A management fee was introduced several years ago and numbers have remained static; an indication that head teachers value the service provided.
- Green spaces - has achieved 3 green flags awards for its parks and open spaces which is nationally recognised benchmark of excellence. The Green Spaces Urban Forestry Unit achieved national government recognition and came second in the prestigious national 'Excellence in Forestry Award' in 2010. CABE Space recognised the service as a national exemplar for its strategic planning and delivery process. Walsall's green space service is also the only local authority in the West Midlands county to achieve the national government target of one hectare of local nature reserve status per 100 head of population.
- Sport & leisure - the 2010 Quest assessment score for sports development was 88% (excellent). In sports management the assessment of quality question is: *"the percentage of adults who are very or fairly satisfied with sports provision in their local area"*. Walsall scored 64.2% in Active People 3 (2008/09) and came within the 3^d quartile of metropolitan boroughs (27th out of 36); albeit ahead of our nearest neighbours. Due to the age and condition of Walsall's facilities this position is not entirely unexpected. Investment and improvement is clearly obviously needed.

Libraries, Heritage and Arts

- Libraries - comparative data from CIPFA shows that Library Services continue to provide a range of services comparable to the best in the country. However, reductions in opening hours mean that Walsall no longer performs well against comparators in that area. In a Black Country mystery shopping exercise in 2010, Walsall libraries received the highest marks for customer care, staff knowledge and service compared with other Black Country libraries.
- Museum Services - the service is fully accredited by the MLA as a professionally-run museum service. Walsall Leather Museum is one of only two attractions locally to hold the Heritage Education Trust's Sandford Award and also achieves the VAQAS standard as a high quality visitor attraction by the English Tourism Council. This standard has been reassessed and confirmed for the past 10 years.
- The local history centre is of a high quality compared with services regionally and nationally - specialising in more areas than a number of other archive services e.g. conservation, oral history, and photographs. Results in the National Archive self-assessment have been higher than average for the region and comparable to the national average.
- New Art Gallery (NAG) – has the national Museums Libraries and Archives Council accreditation.
- Forest Arts Centre and Music Service – The service has been rated as outstanding by Federation of Music Services Government Inspection in 2009 and 2010 and 2011 and the service is regularly quoted in individual schools' OFSTED Inspections as providing the highest levels of educational support. It has the highest key stage 2 achievement in the country.

Walsall Adult and Community College (WACC)

WACC is the second largest and amongst the highest performing in terms of success-rates in its regional peer group which is represented by 5 other councils:

- Outcomes for learners: upper decile (data-set comparator: SFA National Data Service).
- Responsiveness to Learners: upper decile (data-set comparator: SFA Framework for Excellence Data Service).
- Financial control (upper quartile: data-set comparator: SFA Framework for Excellence).
- Ofsted and Framework for Excellence Quality Assurance and Control Grade 2 (good)
- Framework for Excellence Learner and Community Responsiveness Grade 2 (good)
- Framework for Excellence Financial Health and Control Grade 1 (outstanding).
- Customer Satisfaction 99.7%.
- West Midlands award winner for Sustainability 2011.

Bereavement and registration services

The service is one of the most sensitive that the council is responsible for. Questionnaires are provided to service users and on average 90% of bereavement services users are satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided, with 75% satisfied or very satisfied for the register office. Nationally the register office has recently achieved "self governance" from the General Register Office (GRO). In order to achieve this it has to satisfy continuous rigorous external scrutiny from central government that it is fit for purpose and capable of delivering their required quality of service. The Black

Country coroner service continues to provide an example of successful shared service across neighbouring local authorities.

5. What will our services look like in the next 3 years?

Leisure and Community Health

We have spent the last four years undertaking a significant programme of budget savings, income generation and reorganisations. As a result, Green Spaces, Sport and Leisure (in the main) are already below the median cost. For catering services, Cabinet have decided to pursue a zero cost management option by September 2012. Following implementation of the savings for future years, it is expected that best in class cost-wise will be delivered by March 2015.

A review of services is being undertaken with consideration to alternate management arrangements. Other services could be added and efficiencies made from back office savings and procurement from the high street and / or private sector providers.

Libraries, Heritage and Arts

Libraries - The Library Service will change the way the service is delivered to reduce its reliance on single-use buildings and seek partnerships to maintain local access. New technologies offer ways of increasing efficiency and reducing staff. The current review has identified some possible models e.g. partnership working, co-location of facilities, and the introduction of self-service.

Museum Services and Archives - Walsall Museums are already significantly below the median cost as reflected by CIPFA operating with 23% of the average funding for metropolitan districts. Further savings and efficiencies could be achieved by bringing Museums and Archives together in a Heritage Centre for Walsall at a single location.

Forest Arts Centre and Music Service – The Henley Review into Music Services has announced the intention to introduce a competitive bidding to become a sub-regional Hub and criteria associated with the bid will include cost efficiency, but the detail will not be known until the winter 2011.

Walsall Adult and Community College (WACC):

- median performance will be exceeded in all areas and will fall in the upper decile in most areas. This will be achieved through: greater efficiency through investment in our learning environments to secure better energy management; improved access to and use of new technologies; class-size efficiencies; increased learner to staff ratios and reduced unit costs (-2.5% per unit).
- Increased contribution to community cohesion through reduced worklessness within the 16-30 age group by the roll out of the WACC and WACC/Council Apprenticeship Scheme and development of learning for enterprise provision (150 employed status apprenticeships trained each year).
- Increased investment for and profile in sustainability practices, leading to further energy and carbon reduction outcomes (-10%) and increased income from establishing a national and international profile in education for sustainability (£100k)
- Reduction in the cost (20%) and impact of staff sickness absence through healthy college status programmes and investor in wellbeing programme.
- Improvements in sub-contractor performance through our sub-contractor quality assurance toolkit.

- Contribution to Walsall Council workforce development services to improve vfm for training and reduce directorate workforce training costs by £200k.
- Opportunities for university and international partnerships to secure new income streams, particularly in overseas teacher training programmes.

Grounds Maintenance

We are currently reviewing:

- the programme for flower bedding.
- re-provision of some bowling greens and cricket pitch maintenance
- the integration of grounds maintenance and green spaces activities.

6. Reshaping the revenue budget – 3 year financial plan

To follow

7. Future capital requirements

To follow

PORTFOLIO : TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT**1. *Summary of Services provided by the portfolio***

Street Pride - waste collection and disposal, street cleansing, associated services of fleet

Engineering Services

Engineering and transportation provides a range of statutory and a small number of non-statutory services and is made up of several teams consisting of:

- Pollution control
- Road safety and development control
- Roadworks management, structures and geotechnics
- Highways maintenance – planned and reactive, winter service
- Public lighting
- Traffic management UTC
- Car parks
- Major projects and minor improvements.

These services operate under a range of national and regional guidance including the local transport Plan and work in conjunction with other services of the council particularly regeneration, adjacent authorities, the Integrated Transport Authority and within the wider region for the West Midlands Regional Transport Strategy. We are working closely with the newly formed Local Enterprise Partnerships, the new Integrated Transport Authority, and nearby councils to promote regeneration and economic success.

2. *Purpose and future service delivery*

The purpose of the services within the Transport and Environment Portfolio is to help improve the areas where people live in Walsall and we do this by:

1. Making sure our streets are well maintained and clean - we will review how we manage and maintain the "public realm", designing new ways of working around key street scene services including fly-tipping, street cleaning, and highway maintenance so that streets are well maintained and clean.
2. Extending our successful track record of recycling – through a review of our waste strategy, we will work with residents to increase the amount of recycling and so reduce costs.
3. Helping people to get around - we will work to provide a well maintained and efficient highway network so that people who live, work or pass through the borough can do so as easily as possible and are able to access the goods and services they require.

3. *Our approach to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency*Street Pride

Within street pride we are:-

- Carrying out a review of public realm activities under the Safer, Greener, Cleaner scope via the Working Smarter Programme, covering waste collections, street cleansing, grounds maintenance and fleet related activities
- Carrying out waste service review in association with Eunomia consultants in line with the governments revised waste policy document.
- Further reducing the level of absenteeism, reducing costs for backfilling front line posts in accordance with the council's absence procedure
- Reviewing the provision of trade waste collections to maximise trade recycling, reducing waste to landfill, reducing disposal costs and maximising profits
- Continuing our review of fleet services, maximising in-house productivity, minimising third party costs and maximising income from MOT
- Reviewing and rationalising the use of grey and front line fleet
- Transferring responsibility for public conveniences to building cleaning where more improvements and cost efficiencies can be delivered

Engineering Services

Within engineering services, we are:-

- Generating additional income, service redesign and restructures, with flexible working practices introduced.
- Considering opportunities that may exist for both sharing of services and outsourcing of activities.
- Redesigning services and systems in keeping with Working Smarter principles e.g. undertaking a structural highway maintenance/highways management LEAN process
- Optimising systems and streamlined key processes to improve productivity, take out waste and free up staff time to add value at the front line
- Improving procurement e.g. to outsourced highway maintenance and minor works delivery, procurement exercise for civil parking enforcement (CPE).

4. Our performance in areas of value for money customer satisfaction – how we compare in the regional and national picture

Street Pride

The waste service is acknowledged as being the highest recycling metropolitan borough council in the country, achieving 47.3% in 2009/10.

Walsall's combined waste collection and disposal cost in 2010/11 was £55.04 / capita below the comparable average of £56.37 / capita a cost of £1.33 / capita.

Walsall's street cleansing cost in 2010/11 was £9.29 / capita below the comparable average of £15.23 / capita a cost of £9.29 / capita.

The street cleansing - audit commission's comprehensive area assessment 'One Place' results 2008/09 which compare % of unacceptable levels of cleanliness in Walsall for the different land uses against other metropolitan councils. (NI 195 & 196) showed:

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| • NI 195a | levels of litter | 7% | Ranked Average |
| • NI195b | levels of detritus | 17% | Ranked Average |
| • NI 195c | levels of graffiti | 7% | Ranked in the worst 25% |
| • NI 195d | levels of fly posting | 0 | Ranked in the best 5% |
| • NI 196 | fly tipping | "very effective" | |

The following year's data for 2009/10 have shown a marked improvement in the levels of litter, detritus and graffiti found unacceptable.

- NI19 levels of litter 3%
- NI195b levels of detritus 7%
- NI195c levels of graffiti 4%
- NI195d levels of fly posting 0%
- NI 196 fly tipping "not effective"

5. What will our services look like in the next 3 years?

Street Pride

Waste Management - We have identified and are working on the following actions:

1. Alternative procurement / write off of vehicles
2. Implement revised waste collection arrangements following consultation and to meet council objectives to being best in class for recycling and waste management
3. Improvements in Trade waste collection service
4. Savings in disposal arrangements through W2R contract
5. Improvement in the utilisation of vehicles
6. Improvements in operational efficiencies

Street Cleansing - The following actions have been identified and work is currently being undertaken:

1. Improvements in the utilisation of vehicles
2. Improvements in operational efficiencies

Engineering Services

Structural and Routine Maintenance:

- LEAN – continuous improvement review to achieve savings. Lean review as part of the public realm will generate savings of circa £100k.
- Tarmac is undertaking a system thinking exercise to reduce costs and waste. This may lead to a situation where we can achieve the same for less in terms of works.
- Contract review to reduce rates.

Traffic Management and Road Safety:

- Developing shared service delivery for West Midlands UTC.
- Developing shared traffic signal maintenance contract arrangements for Black Country / West Midlands.
- 14% planned reduction of traffic management staffing levels in 2012/13.
- Proposed lean review of the traffic management function.
- Review of working practices and staffing structure to delivery engineering schemes.
- Contract review exercise.

Parking Services:

- Reduced cost base for enforcement contract, monthly reduction of approximately £15k already achieved.
- Reduction in back office staff 2012/13 and 2013/14.

- Developing the joint procurement / shared service with Black Country to continue service delivery when the existing shared contract arrangements terminate in January 2013.
- Scrutiny working party review of town centre parking.

Street Lighting - Blanket planning approval to put advertising on street lighting as appropriate where it is commercially viable to maximise income to reduce capita cost of street lighting service.

Pollution Control - Pollution went through a large scale savings exercise in 2010/11 losing 4 posts from 14 (29%). This saving will take the spend per capita to £2.37, which is below the met authority median (even considering the likes of Solihull) and well below the median for the similar Black Country Authorities.

6. Reshaping the revenue budget – 3 year financial plan

To follow

7. Future capital requirements

To follow

PORTFOLIO : CHILDREN'S SERVICES***1. Summary of Services provided by the portfolio***

The children and young people's directorate is primarily responsible for :-

- The safeguarding of all children and young people in the borough including the management of the Local Safeguarding Board.
- The education and attainment of all children and young people in the borough from child minding and nursery provision to further education (much of this service is provided on behalf of the authority by Serco)
- With the target that all young people are in education, employment or education at the ages of 16 and 19 years
- The protection of particular vulnerable groups such as children with a disability, children with special educational needs, children with disabilities , teenage parents, children at risk of sexual exploitation, young carers, young offenders, traveller children , unaccompanied asylum seekers etc
- Safer recruitment and workforce planning for the whole children's sector
- Quality assurance of services

2. Purpose and future service delivery

- To keep children and young people safe.
- To provide high quality education with opportunities for all children and young people to improve their attainment and gain employment.
- To develop a new Children's Services operating model which provides an Early Support Offer to children, young people and their families.
- To prevent children entering the care system, getting those that do enter home early and securing parental support sooner.
- To enhance existing partnerships and relationships to deliver the best services for the children, young people and families of Walsall.

3. Our approach to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency

The approach Children's are taking is to reduce costs through early intervention and prevention. Evidence from Westminster and other projects suggest that it costs 10 times less to support children, young people and their families at an early stage than having to take high cost action later such as taking a child into care.

We are therefore building on our range of preventative activities and redirecting the children's centres to work with more challenging families either to prevent them needing specialist services or to ease them back having received preventative services

We want all our children and young people regardless of their background, geography or additional challenges (such as disability) to achieve the best they can and to become independent adults who make a positive contribution to society.

Where ever possible we will support children and young people to stay within their families and communities and where it is not possible or safe for them to do so we will seek alternative permanency arrangements via adoption, special guardianship or residence orders.

We will reduce our dependence on independent fostering agencies and grow our own. We will maintain the smallest possible number of children in residential settings moving them back to families at the earliest opportunity.

We will work offer positive activities and work with local area partnerships to identify children at risk of anti social behaviour and criminal activity and will work with the community to develop a range of positive activities and raise aspirations towards becoming a positive citizen.

Where young people become involved in criminal behaviour we will work with them to address any contributory factors such as substance misuse and use evidenced based tools to help them back into society.

The directorate is using a working smarter approach to aid our whole system working, understanding that are services are interlinked and only by whole system working can we get into a virtuous cycle whereby we can front end our services to keep the levels of looked after and children with a protection plan and children requiring youth justice services on a permanent basis.

4. Our performance in areas of value for money customer satisfaction – how we compare in the regional and national picture

Our Ofsted Judgement is 'adequate', this is mainly due to education performance. Based on our performance indicators and Ofsted categorisation for social care it is likely the judgement would be 'good'. There is evidence to support the judgement that the youth justice service is good and a key element that has been inspected was judged as good in its capacity and capability to improve (Youth Justice Board)

Our latest Ofsted profile shows performance is in line with our comparator group and our staying safe performance is strong.

Every Child Matters, Outcome	Total NIs	% indicators in line with appropriate comparator group
Be healthy	11	73%
Staying safe	8	100%
Enjoy and achieve	13	85%
Positive contribution	10	90%
Economic well being	8	87.5%

5. What will our services look like in the next 3 years ?

The Met median cost has already been achieved – despite biggest increase in demand for social care in last 20 years due to the recession and Baby Peter.

The critical thing we need to achieve in order to reach best of class performance by 2015 is to reduce the number of children in care. This has to be done with care as our threshold criteria have been deemed appropriate by Ofsted and panels haven't been able to identify children who should not have come into the care system.

But we do know from research and careful consideration of Bradford and Hackney that the key to keeping looked after children (LAC) numbers down is to strengthen work upstream so that if children need care :-

1. they are identified at a young enough age that adoption is an option;
2. a more robust approach to alternative permanence via special guardianship and residence orders;
3. earlier interventions including parenting support, support around substance misuse and domestic violence and wrap around services preventing entry to care;
4. robust work in care to return home earlier (within 12 months);
5. stronger step down arrangements to support children to remain at home once they have left care;

There is no totally scientific way of determining what the LAC figure should be but we do know it is linked to levels of deprivation and is sensitive to unemployment. Having considered the predicted rates looking at statistical neighbours and the West Midlands figures and our actual population and knowing the economic outlook for the area we believe the number of LAC should be around 500 based on population need.

6. Reshaping the revenue budget – 3 year financial plan

To follow

7. Future capital requirements

To follow

PORTFOLIO: BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES***Summary of Services provided by the portfolio*****Business Change*****Communications, Marketing and Consultation***

PR and media management, PR strategy, planning and campaign delivery; media monitoring, evaluation and Reporting. Internal communications; events and briefings; digital and social media (council website and internet – development, delivery and management, Microsites, e-communications selling consultation advice (social media e.g. Home Office, SOCITM, Scottish LGComms); open data (e.g. publication of transparency on spend, plus the development of wider open data opportunities). Marketing (publications and promotional materials, sponsorship and advertising).

Shared Services & Procurement

- ICT Services and Support
- Procurement
- Print & 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)

2. Purpose and future service delivery**Communications**

To let me know what the council does and how I can access the services I need in a way that suits me.

To tell me honestly what the Council is doing.

Shared Services & 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.

3. Our approach to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency

Business Change

Communications, Marketing and Consultation

Our strategy is to ensure all related spend and activity is co-ordinated through a single team and approach to ensure best use of resource and savings, which has led to:

- centralised communications, marketing and consultation team and approach
- alignment of activity and priorities to agreed new council priorities
- Reviewing and evaluating all paid-for marketing activity and stopping activity/spend wherever possible and where no proven effectiveness can be demonstrated (reducing all traditional paid for media activity)
- Taking advantage of 'free' social media channels for delivering campaigns and activity, both internally and externally
- Collaborative procurement and shared services exercise to assess opportunities for savings and efficiencies. This activity has moved forward and is delivering some final activity on planned outcomes to:
 - Procure joint licences for media management software (currently used by many of the West Midlands LA's)
 - Develop a regional, joint Fostering & Adoption marketing campaign (which will utilise shared materials, artwork and deliver more effective activity whilst reducing spend)

Shared Services & Procurement

- Every activity has a customer at the heart of it
- Before money is spent externally alternative options are always considered
- Do nothing is always an option
- Customer feedback is always sought and listened to
- When someone leaves pause before refilling their post
- Focus on activity not number of people
- Gather information before acting

Business Improvement

A proposal is currently being developed for the design of a new business improvement service which will integrate the three services into one. Savings of £338k have already been found for 2011/12 through voluntary redundancy and deletion of vacant posts. The new service aims to closely align itself to the changing needs of the council, in particular the delivery of Working Smarter and the implementation of the new Council Operating Model Delivering Right, Fast and Simple. The new service will be central to the council's ambitions to drive out waste, improve customer satisfaction and deliver value for money. It will achieve this through providing the right intelligence in the context of the wider environment the council finds itself in, on customer demand and service performance to support effective decision making and resource allocation; identifying areas for improvement and providing the technical expertise to drive through change.

4. Our performance in areas of value for money customer satisfaction – how we compare in the regional and national picture

Business Change Communications

- Walsall are national exemplars in areas such as social media, open data and media and PR and we are regularly asked to talk at conferences and events to highlight our work and success
- We have been approached by over a dozen other local authorities to provide advice on our practices and approaches (these include Birmingham, Sandwell, Wolverhampton and Telford)
- We have been approached by other non-local authority organisations for guidance and advice – these include Home Office, SOCITM, Scottish LGComms and WaterAid. We are now charging a day rate of £250.00 plus expenses when advising these organisations and have secured two fees already this financial year.
- Award short listing – our Walsall 24 Twitter experiment has been shortlisted for a national communications award (LGCommunications)
- We were in the top 10 first councils to publish all spend over £500 and the first in the West Midlands, 5 months ahead of deadline

Shared Services & Procurement

- The council has not been subject to any breaches in the procurement process
- Print and Design have won awards
- Our last ICT NeSDS (National e-Service Delivery Standard) results showed ICT to be good

Business Improvement

There is no one clear picture of regional or national service quality in these areas due to every council developing this function in different ways.

5. What will our services look like in the next 3 years?

Business Change

We anticipate that working smarter, and the benefits that will realise for us as a unit, will be the approach that will deliver best in class performance by 2015.

Shared Services and Procurement

- We are comparing our services through SOCITM benchmarking to get a baseline
- Print and design is continually comparing against external costs
- The procurement measures will be determined by number of contracts and amount of spend against fte's

Business Improvement

- Design and development of the business improvement service
- Development of business improvement processes and knowledge hub
- Discussions with Black Country authorities as part of shared services work looking at efficiencies savings via shared systems and resources
- Working with Walsall Partnership on delivery of shared intelligence in a collaborative way to maximise opportunities to share systems and resources and minimise expenditure whilst ensuring provision of intelligence exceeds needs of partners and the Partnership.

6. Reshaping the revenue budget – 3 year financial plan

To follow

7. Future capital requirements

To follow

PORTFOLIO: FINANCE AND PERSONNEL***1. 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

- Advice, customer application support, assessment, revision, payment, recovery of overpayments, customer queries, complaints and appeals of the following benefits:-
 - 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.

Revenues Service

- Council tax - billing, collection, recovery and enforcement
- Non domestic rates (business rates) - billing, collection, recovery and enforcement
- Housing Benefit overpayments - billing, collection, recovery and enforcement of invoiced debts
- 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)
- Home care charges – billing, collection, recovery and enforcement. This service is a joint venture with social care

Human Resources

- HR Direct, Intranet/HR portal
- Payroll and pensions/transactional services
- HR Specialist Services. The teams within this service are business partner (directorate 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

2. *Purpose and future service delivery*

These purpose statements are written from the customer perspective. The council's customers are Walsall residents, businesses and visitors.

Finance

Purpose:

Help make best use of the money the council is given to provide me with services.

How we will achieve this is through:

- 1) Financial Governance and Leadership
 - Our top management will be financially literate and able to understand fully the financial environment in which the council operates.
- 2) Financial Planning
 - Our financial planning will be inextricably linked to the council's strategic and corporate planning process. Our financial plans will reflect the council's key strategic priorities.
- 3) Finance for Decision Making
 - We will understand the financial implications of current and potential alternative policies and, programmes, and activities.
 - We will analyse our cost profiles and cost drivers and how they will behave under different circumstances
- 4). Financial Forecasting and Monitoring
 - Top management will assure itself that financial performance to date and forecast financial outturn are in line with the plan, including cash-flow and balance sheet projections.
 - The underlying costs of the organisation's key activities and how these are profiled over time will be monitored and reviewed.
 - 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). Financial Reporting
 - To run the organisation effectively, top management will have up-to-date financial and non-financial performance information on a timely basis.
 - 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.

Benefits

Purpose: Can I have a benefit and can you pay it to me when I need it?

The Benefits Service will aim to deliver the right benefit to the right person at the right time. The customers will be offered a number of contact channels and will be given support in the claiming process. The Benefits service will work collaboratively with other agencies and services to ensure that the customer receives the help and support they need to prevent evictions and homelessness. Benefit fraud and error will be robustly tackled through improved data matching facilities; ensuring that the customer receives the correct amount of benefit.

The Welfare Reform bill will impact on the benefits delivery design from 2013-2018. New claims for benefit will be dealt with by a JCP/HMRC and during the period 2013-2017 current claims will transition to the new central delivery model; and the local control over claims will decline. The team will work with national and local organisations to explore the localisation of the face to face delivery model for the proposed universal credit post 2017.

Revenues Service

Purpose: How much council tax or business rates do I owe, when do I have to pay it and how can I pay it.

The Revenues 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. We will collect the taxes during the year and ensure enforcement of historical debts are driven to maximise the income to the Council. A single approach to debt enforcement for all council debts will be driven through the enforcement team within revenues. Welfare rights officers will ensure residents are able to gain access to benefits that they are entitled and receive support with financial matters and debt management.

Human Resources

Purpose: Help me get what I need from the council's staff right, fast and simple.

Legal and Democratic Services

Purpose:

Help me get the legal service I should get from my council right, fast and simple.

Help me trust the integrity of my council and what it does.

Support my councillors to do the best they can for me.

We will continuously check that the way that legal and democratic services are provided meets the needs of customers and secures value for money. We will be open minded about the full range of options for future service delivery, including shared and collaborative working with Black Country councils and the private sector.

3. Our approach to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency

Finance

The service, being responsible for overseeing and supporting good financial practice, value for money, and ensuring the council remains in good financial health, has a

commitment to cutting cost and driving efficiency. Driving down cost, either by reducing expenditure or increasing income, or a combination of both has been demonstrated year on year.

This is done by:

- Continually reviewing current practices and systems. In advance of the Working Smarter programme drive, Finance Direct was put forward as a means of driving efficiency, whilst improving information for budget holders and aiming to position Finance to add more value to the council.
- Reviewing our customer priorities and driving out non priorities
- Making the structure as lean as possible, at management and operational level. We have implemented a revised structure ahead of schedule.
- Improving access to systems and improving functionality for users/budget holders.

Internal Audit

Our approach to service improvement and cost efficiency is as follows:

- 1) Review and adapt current working practices. Examples include:
 - Critically review audit plan – the plan is designed to flex with the changing organisation. Continue to engage with clients to ensure plan is strategic in focus and raises the profile of audit generally within the organisation.
 - Continue to develop IA risk assessment processes to include quarterly review of risk registers to ensure emerging and changing risks are addressed and the audit plan is updated as appropriate.
 - Undertake a skills assessment and review the section's structure – comparison against the skills required going forward - restructure of the audit team as appropriate.
 - Continue to critically review the whole audit process – streamline and reduce any inefficient / duplicitous processes. Use systems thinking.
 - Revision of current report formats – removing duplication, provide commentary on direction of travel, summarise the total number and importance of findings – including 'root cause analysis'.
 - Review overall content and appearance of audit committee work plan and reports.
- 2) Introduction and reporting against business critical performance indicators.
- 3) Further development of partnership working with PWC and Black Country Authorities
- 4) Revisit effectiveness of changes and adapt as appropriate.

Benefits

Benefits approach includes:

- Recently the DWP performance development team have conducted a health check on the processes of new claims and changes. Immediate changes were made to processes as feedback was received were possible (quick wins) and more formal workshops have commenced to review some processes in-depth.
- A review of the use Voice Risk Analysis software within service delivery is due to be finalised at the end of April 2011 with the aim of ensuring VFM.
- Maximising the use of partner resources.
- Home working – a pilot project linked to the smarter workplaces project will commence during 2011/12

- Reducing the dependency on agency staff
- Reducing the number of visits e.g. DHP's claims can now be made over the telephone rather than via a visit.
- Enabling decision making at the lowest level – e.g. backdating – now decision made by assessor not team leader/senior officer.

Revenues Service

The Revenues service has been single minded in driving up the in year collection levels for business rates and council tax in the last 4 years, previously collection levels remained below national averages, with the introduction of processing systems, re structure, document imaging, workflow processes and lean methodology these levels have improved to competitive levels when compared to other councils. The collection levels are a strong indicator of performance, Walsall has consolidated it's position nationally in the upper quartile and that continues to improve incrementally.

Going forward the service is driving it's collection of historical debt and consolidating corporate debt enforcement, the first stage of this is the introduction of social care benefit based charging into the revenues service. Over the next 12 months the option of introducing all remaining council debts into revenues is to be rolled out.

Human Resources

The approaches that are being used include:

- Use of Working Smarter and Delivering Right, Fast, Simple model in the HRD restructure
- Application of systems thinking principles in HRD, e.g. Transactional recruitment
- Development of preventative, early intervention services, e.g. mediation service
- Use of ACAS standards for personnel procedures to achieve corporate priorities
- Introduction of the Investigations team to reduce timescales and deliver improved service
- Maximisation of income
- Use of internal council services, e.g. WACC, to deliver services
- Partnership working within the Borough and regional working e.g. via West Midlands Councils
- Shared services developments – Black Country collaboration on learning and development, payroll administration and systems
- Use of contractors, e.g. for recruitment, to identify innovative and cost effective solutions.

Legal and Democratic Services

The approaches that are being used include:

- Income generation
- Land registry portal: a change in management of the Land Registry accounts from 6 accounts across the council with paper billing to one account managed by legal services for the whole council with a variable direct debit rather than a paper bill. Portal access to Land Registry to a number of users across the council. More efficient working as most information instantaneous and a reduction in processing of invoices (around 72 invoices per year) saving around £2160.
- Use of technology – e.g. Lexis Nexis on line services, a 6 month trial is underway for the use of on line law books etc; and dragon voice recognition software. Both

will result in a more efficient use of officer and administrative time, real time access to documents

- Benchmarking with external law firms - during 2009/2010 our hourly rate was £71.97. This compares very favourably with the hourly charge rate of solicitors in the approved list of external legal suppliers.
- Training – the way in which training is undertaken has been reviewed and use is now made of free courses and webinars in addition to CLT membership - that has saved us £250 plus around 40% of the cost of each course booked.
- In addition, managers attend regular meetings with clients to discuss any general issues etc as well as forward planning of work.
- Customer satisfaction questionnaires sent out when matters are completed. During 2010/2011, 12% of questionnaires were returned, all with positive feedback. This process will be reviewed during 2011/2012 to improve the return rate.

Elections

In recent years we have sold surplus equipment, reviewed polling districts, reduced the number of polling stations and stopped sending business reply envelopes with postal vote applications.

4. Our performance in areas of value for money customer satisfaction – how we compare in the regional and national picture

Finance

- We are below median cost and will achieve best in class by 2015
- Use of Resources score for Walsall overall was 3, and 3 for financial reporting and financial management. We received the highest score for financial standing, a 4, which measures the financial health of the authority.
- Statistics show we meet Prudential Indicator requirements and perform extremely well in cost comparisons. We are best in class in the Midlands for debt on interest rates.
- Nationally, our investments are above average and our borrowing is average. We take a prudent approach to investments, to minimise risk, which is part of our strategy. Nationally we perform above the mean and median.
- We are amongst the best in class in most areas and are best in class in many. We are above average and the median in terms of performance and below in terms of cost.
- For financial administration, (*Statistical neighbours 2009/10 is the latest data*) Creditors (AP) – cost of - we are above the median and the mean. We were 13th highest cost out of 14, prior to 2011/12 savings being taken into account. We are awaiting current years data to assess our level of improvement. Debtors (AR) – performance is generally good for collection and not so good for costs. We have taken out £449k of costs over 2010/11 and 2011/12 for AP/AR, however further work is needed to reduce costs. Our approach is improving use of technology to reduce need for manual processing, and to streamline processes and cut out duplication and waste.

Benefits

The DWP had performance standards indicators including a quality indicator – which was national. During 2008/9 the service achieved a “3” out of “4” for the quality indicator with a score of 98.2% - this indicator has since been deleted.

The subsidy grant claim has improved year on year with 2007/8 and 2008/09 being unqualified -- 2009/10 was initially qualified on evidence of claims – but this was successfully challenged and overturned.

Revenues Service

- Internal and external audits annually serve to establish significant assurance as to the quality of service.
- National recognition for welfare rights methods.
- A good measure of quality is the levels of complaints and ombudsman enquiries, we do have a number of these but most are more about avoidance of payment rather than how we have conducted our selves during the pursuance of the debt. These are continually monitored.
- Internal council awards have been common place for the service in recent years and we have previously entered the IRRV awards events (short listed as finalists)
- We are compliant with all service standards and those relating to data protection and data security.

Human Resources

The CIPFA benchmarking group shows that the cost of Walsall's HRD Service per head of the population is £25.90. Comparative data for 2010/11 is currently only available for 5 of the other 15 'statistical neighbours'. Of these, the 'best in class' with a cost of £17.10 per head of the population.

Core Service: The best in class HR service, however, does not include many of the services that are part of Walsall's HRD service. When the cost of these services is extracted from Walsall's HRD budget, the gross expenditure figure for comparison purposes is £3,844,441 and the cost per head of population is £15.11, which shows Walsall as 'best in class'.

Learning and Development (L&D): Comparative budget information for the learning and development service is also available from the nest in class.. It shows that their total gross expenditure on learning and development (excluding Education) is £1,481,900, which is £8.08 per head of population.

At approximately £1.3m, our current L&D service is lower at only £5.11 per head of population but, as it has not been possible to obtain details of the cost of learning and development functions for enough other local authorities, this does not necessarily represent 'best in class'. The L&D service is being significantly rationalised as part of the HRD restructure. Reductions in the L&D budget have already been agreed as part of the MTFP and will be fully achieved by 2013/14.

Other evidence of high performance includes the achievement of Equality Framework accreditation, which indicates that Walsall is one of the top 20% of councils on equality and diversity, and the recent Scrutiny report which provides the following comparative data for the payroll:

- Cost per payslip is £3.01– ranked 15th of 67
- Cost per employee: £29.87 – ranked 9th of 67
- Overall ranked in top quartile for payroll performance

We have also achieved an error free payroll rate of 99.91%.

Legal and Democratic Services

Benchmarking with external law firms has shown that during 2009/2010 the internal hourly rate at £71.97, compared very favourably with the hourly charge rate of external solicitors.

We will be working with CIPFA authorities to obtain relevant benchmarking data to assure ourselves that we are best in class. In addition we will benchmark ourselves against our neighbouring authorities as part of examining shared services.

Elections

The electoral commission has established 7 performance standards for elections and 10 for registration. For the 2010 election standards we met 4 and exceeded on 3. For the 2010 registration standards we met 5 and exceeded on 5.

Regional comparisons are not yet available.

5. What will our services look like in the next 3 years ?

Finance

We strive to be best in class, realising this depends partly on the councils culture and budget holders taking control of their own budgets and being accountable for them. We continue to work with managers on this. We are working on improving our systems and processes to allow us to reduce cost further.

We will be a modern, responsive, flexible, outcome focussed service, supporting managers and councillors to make decisions by provision of effective finance support and advice and robust data.

Insurance and treasury functions are already below median and are best in class in a number of areas. Finance is below median. AP/AR are above median and this will be a focus, developing a plan to get to best in class by the target date. We will use systems thinking in our approach.

For Creditors/Debtors, initiatives that we are looking to implement during the year which will assist us in moving to best in class:

- Expanding use of p-cards for low value/high volume activities
- The introduction of AP workflow to reduce the need for invoices to be “moved around” the organisation
- The full implementation of scanning to allow budget holders to see invoices on line to support the roll out of Qlikview
- Offering p-cards as a solution to schools with the opportunity to charge for this service to increase income from this source
- Maximise opportunities for payments in advance
- Implementation of emailed remittance advice slips
- Scope moving to BACS as our preferred payment options
- Scope opportunity for a supplier portal

Internal Audit

Internal audit has already attained median cost class ahead of the March 2013 deadline and is best in cost class for assurance work. Some actions required to move advice and irregularity towards best in class, including pro-active anti fraud and corruption work; and achieve a reduction in advisory resources.

Benefits

Actions to move towards best in class by March 2015.

- Correct allocation of costs against measured services.
- Investigate how the current best in class is recording their costs
- Compare the performance on the service delivery with the best in class.
- Complete the review of the service work flows, develop the new work flow, collect the baseline data and test the new work flow before rollout. Check and measure success.

Revenues Service

- Establishing better benchmarking data to help us better understand the achievement levels needed to attain median and best in class.
- Already past Median based on the 2 measurements available to us at this time.
- Within upper quartile already and with the planned changes would see a stepped moved towards becoming best in class for cost and quality, but we need to ensure we are also able to balance these against our ability to maximise income collection for the council.

Human Resources & Development

The HRD service will be best in class as demonstrated by:

- Top quartile performance in terms of cost and satisfaction with service delivery.
- A modern, responsive, outcome focussed HR service which ensures that the council's biggest expense (its staff) are appropriately managed and where necessary dismissed, in a way which raises productivity and limits risk of unfair dismissal.
- Benchmarking with other councils that shows that Walsall is ahead of the game in terms of processes, procedures, practice and VFM.

Legal and Democratic Services

Legal Services will be carrying out reviews adopting a systems thinking approach putting the customer at the heart of everything we do. This will include upgrading our web-portal to reduce failure demand by enabling us to increase our ability to answer a number of low grade requests for service, and concentrate on more substantive matters.

We will be seeing if we can work more collaboratively with the neighbouring Black Country Authorities, with a view to seeing if we can establish a shared service. Legal Services will also be considering whether or not we change our fundamental service delivery model, and attempt to increase our traded services work to offset budgetary pressures.

We will need to assess our own circumstances, and ability to get to best in class as soon as possible whilst maintaining a service that meets customer demand and ensuring legality and good governance across the authority. We will strive to be best in

class. We are working on improving our systems and processes to allow us to reduce cost further.

Elections

There are lots of potential new pressures in the pipeline for electoral services, such as;

- Review of polling districts
- Election of Police Commissioners
- Electoral Registration Reform bill
- Constituency boundary reviews
- Renewal of postal voters and signatures and dates of birth
- Individual registration
- European Parliamentary election
- Ward boundary reviews
- Election to the House of Lords
- General election
- Local referenda

6. Reshaping the revenue budget – 3 year financial plan

To follow

7. Future capital requirements

To follow

PORTFOLIO : SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION***1. Summary of Services provided by the portfolio*****Adult social care:**

- Information, advice and signposting
- Enablement and re-ablement
- Assessment and review
- Resource allocation
- Support planning
- Safeguarding of vulnerable adults
- Whole sector workforce planning and development
- Commissioning of services
- Shaping and development of adult social care market
- Quality assurance of services
- Direct service provision

Housing related support for:

- Frail elderly
- Homeless families with support needs
- Offenders or people at risk of offending
- People with drug issues
- People with HIV/AIDS
- Refugees
- Teenage parents
- Travellers
- Women at risk of domestic violence
- Young people at risk
- People with learning disabilities
- Single homeless with support needs
- People with mental health issues
- Older people with support needs
- People with physical/sensory disability
- Generic – not commissioned
- People with alcohol issues
- Young people leaving care
- Mentally disordered offenders (funded as a secondary client group)
- Older people with mental health issues/dementia (funded as a secondary client group)
- Rough sleepers

2. Purpose and future service delivery

Walsall council's Adult Social Care and Inclusion directorate has a statutory responsibility and accountability, defined in the Local Authorities Social Services Act 1970, for the planning, commissioning and delivery of social services for all adult client groups and with a leading role in delivering the wider vision for social care and combating social exclusion.

The customer demand for this service is complicated by the fact that some activities within the directorate such as protection of vulnerable adults, have a directive and policing function which is absent from some other council services. For instance, it may be necessary to act against the will or wishes of a customer with a serious mental illness in order to safeguard their welfare or the welfare of the public. Nevertheless, the directorate has incorporated these functions into an approach to services which emphasises what customers have consistently told us they want. This can be summed up in the phrase **“Getting a Life”**. This phrase captures the expressed wishes of our customers to receive (the often very complex) services which they require, in as person centred, timely and well coordinated way as possible.

These services are moving beyond the traditional pattern of producer defined support, and, instead, are becoming increasingly customer led and managed. The future pattern of service delivery can be summed up as follows:

Individual Choice and Control	Prevention
Social Capital	Technology

3. Our approach to delivering service improvements and cost efficiency

Our operating model outlines our approach, which is 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 are increasingly focussing upon providing services in a way that actively ‘re-ables’ people to regain a higher level of independence and well being, and so for example leaves to an explicit expectation that the amount of support will decrease over time. The broad aims are:

1. By helping citizens to access universal services;
2. By assisting citizens to access mainstream services, e.g. by provision of a disabled shower in a leisure centre;
3. By providing access to a range of community based health and social care services;
4. By preventing citizens from 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. By reducing dependence on services and supporting independence and self directed support;
6. By commissioning good quality services that provide a diversity of choices for citizens to achieve their outcomes;

The Social Care and inclusion (SC&I) directorate aims to improve the quality of services, maximise independence and good health, and reduce levels of spend over the next 3 years to achieve best in class against statistical neighbours.

We will achieve this by:

1. Obtaining value for money from the core services that do meet needs effectively;
2. Making savings from keeping citizens in high cost services only as long as they need to be (i.e. emphasis on rehabilitation, reablement, recovery, intermediate care);
3. Making savings because citizens will be signposted/diverted to alternative services, rather than to the core, costly services;

4. Making savings because there will be a range of interventions to help citizens stay independent longer;
5. Re-investing some of these savings into further commissioned prevention services;
6. Redesigning business support and processes using systems thinking;
7. Using individual budgets to drive best value while implementing the personalisation agenda;

4. Our performance in areas of value for money customer satisfaction – how we compare in the regional and national picture

The ending of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) annual performance exercise and the phased introduction of the new national outcomes assessment regime mean that there is as yet little hard evidence on the current national regional and national picture of the delivery of personalisation and self directed support.

The CQC judgment rating for the financial year 2009/10 was the last independent and benchmarked assessment of adult social care. It was largely based on the 'old ways' of arranging and delivering services but concluded that Walsall adult social care was 'performing well' with 6 out of the 7 domains rated as 'well' and one rated as 'adequate'. CQC found that Walsall had a number of "key strengths" that included:

- Active engagement of stakeholders in providing services
- Appropriate momentum to implement change which considers others views.
- Development of the joint commissioning unit
- Establishment of the access and response centre
- Good established partnership relationships
- Improvements made to the services for carers
- Increased information and engagement with people who use services and carers
- Increased services to enable people to live in their own homes
- Involvement of people who use services in the roll out of the personalisation agenda
- Involvement of people who use services, carers and the general public.
- Multi agency working in order to raise awareness and safeguard the people of Walsall
- Review of services for vulnerable groups which meets cultural and ethnic sensitivities
- Robust partnership working
- Roll out of brokerage service
- Strong, clear focus on the needs of the people of Walsall
- Work undertaken to understand the needs of the people of Walsall and identification of service designs to meet these needs

CQC also noted the following areas for improvement:

- Achieving the milestones in government agendas without compromises to the person centred approach
- Continued implementation of the frail elderly care pathway in order to improve outcomes
- Continued implementation of the resource allocation system across all sectors.
- Continued progress with the personalisation agenda
- Continued work on the commissioning and utilisation of intermediate care provision

- Developing the role of dignity champion all settings
- Development of a risk management model to review vulnerable people in the personalisation agenda
- Embedding of robust data collection systems
- Embedding processes to facilitate self directed support.
- Further development of the electronic self assessment process
- Further development of training across all sectors which includes lessons learnt
- Further development of web based information systems
- Further work to reduce waiting times for major adaptations in line with those of similar councils.
- Implementation of the neighbourhood management approach
- Reviewing block contracts to gain efficiencies and provide services that provide choice for the people of Walsall.

Since the CQC assessment of performance role has been curtailed there is no detailed inspections framework and therefore assessing the directorate's progress will take on a more local feel until bench marking data becomes available arising from the new outcomes regime put in place. Recently agreed national outcome measures will be collected during 2011-12 for the new Department of Health for adult social care "transparency" regime.

5. What will our services look like in the next 3 years ?

Strategically, our main vehicle is the efficient and effective operation of the new target operating model, diverting, preventing, re-abling, and eliminating/reducing/delaying dependence, and resulting in proportionately less people being 'fairer access to care services' (FACS) eligible. This is despite current and foreseeable demographic trends, key among which are:

- The rising number of younger adults with physical disability and/or learning difficulty
 - More being born
 - More surviving to adulthood
 - More living with higher levels of dependency
 - More living longer
 - Transition from high quality children's services
 - Rising expectations of living a normal life
- Rapidly rising numbers of very elderly people
 - High birth rate in 1920s (between end of WW1 and 1930s depression)
 - More living longer
 - Lifespan rising faster than years of healthy life
 - Increasing incidence and prevalence of dementia
 - Rising expectations of retaining elements of a normal life

Across the target operating model, the main components that will drive the cost and efficiency savings to deliver best in class include:

- Savings from keeping citizens in high cost services only as long as they need to be (i.e. emphasis on rehabilitation, reablement, recovery, intermediate care)
- Savings because citizens will be signposted/diverted to alternative services, rather than to the core, costly services

- Savings because there will be a range of interventions to help citizens stay independent longer
- Re-investing some of these savings into further commissioned prevention services
- Savings from assertive reviews and the maximising independence group
- Savings from repatriation of out of borough placements – lower costs, better outcomes, Walsall money spent in Walsall helping local economy
- Savings and efficiencies from the review of social workers and neighbourhood community officers mix – numbers, grades and costs tailored to tasks and levels of responsibilities – vocationally and professionally qualified people doing the things that are appropriate to their 'status'
- Savings and efficiencies from in-house provider remodelling - not competing in the maintenance market
- Savings from joined up approach with other agencies (notably the NHS) – things done once and seamlessly – extending the working smarter principles of 'delivering. right, fast and simple' into joint working.
- Savings from clarity on FACS eligibility and its consistent application
- Savings from the industrialization of reablement
- Savings and efficiencies from system redesign to streamline business support processes and drive out cost reductions (smarter working – laptops, mobile, hot desking, less paper, home working, less hand offs, single collection of user information, maximising availability and use of Paris functionality, redesign and elimination of homespun parallel and stand alone information systems, databases etc.)
- Savings and efficiencies from the streamlined customer journey
- Savings and efficiencies from reduced failure demand
- Savings from resource allocation system based on best performing authorities' unit costs
- Savings derived from learning from other authorities and agencies on implementation of personalization and self directed support (national pilots / pathfinders / early implementers / deliverers – what works, what drives down costs, avoiding pitfalls and blind alleys)
- Savings from industrialisation of personal / individual budgets means people having opportunity to design innovative ways of meeting their needs, which often costs less than 'traditional' service arrangement and delivery

6. Reshaping the revenue budget – 3 year financial plan

To follow

7. Future capital requirements

To follow