

# MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

## HEALTH AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 14 JANUARY 2013

### 44 BUDGET 2013/16 – INITIAL PROPOSALS

The Committee were invited to consider the following savings options agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 December, 2012 (minute 144 refers) and which fell under the remit of this Committee.

**Resolved – That the Cabinet minute 144 be noted.**

---

## ECONOMY AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 16 JANUARY 2013

### 44 BUDGET 2013/2016 - INITIAL PROPOSALS

The Acting Director of Law, HR and Asset Management submitted minute 144 (Cabinet – 20 December 2012), which advised that the Cabinet had agreed in principle, to savings options for 2013/2016 totalling £29.6 million, subject to the outcome of further consultation, where required. The Committee was requested to give consideration to those items, which fell within its remit, viz:

- Re-structure – Regeneration, Housing and Planning
- Marketing and Public Relations
- Destination Marketing
- Charge for pre-planning advice
- Invest Wirral Support
- Home Insulation Programme

**Resolved – That the initial savings proposals set out in Cabinet minute 144 be noted.**

---

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 21 JANUARY 2013

### 50 CABINET EXTRACT 20 DECEMBER 2012 BUDGET 2013/16 - INITIAL PROPOSALS

The Committee were invited to consider the following savings options agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 December, 2012 (minute 144 refers) and which fell under the remit of this Committee.

<b>Budget Option</b>	<b>2013/14 £000</b>	<b>2014/15 £000</b>	<b>2015/16 £000</b>	<b>Total £000</b>	<b>Requires formal staff consultation</b>
Connexions – reduce contract costs	700	300	0	1,000	No
Transfer of PFI affordability gap to Schools Budget	0	0	2,300	2,300	No
Transfer PPM to Schools Budget	250	200	0	450	No
Academies charges for services	60	0	0	60	No
School Improvements	100	0	0	100	No
Senior Management Re-structure					
- Directors/Heads of Service	1,000	0	0	1,000	Yes
- All managers above PO1	2,792	0	0	2,792	Yes
Closure of Acre Lane & Municipal Building	0	0	458	458	No
Deletion of vacant posts					
- Education Psychologists	80	0	0	80	No

In respect of school improvements the Acting Director referred to the recent Ofsted survey on 8 and 9 January and the exceptionally positive report. With regard to the closure of Acre Lane this saving was not in respect of the services provided but about the building, the department would be exploring how to deliver the services provided in different ways. The deletion of the currently vacant Education Psychologist post would not affect the Council in fulfilling its statutory function with this saving.

**Resolved – That Cabinet minute 144 be noted.**

---

COUNCIL EXCELLENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
22 JANUARY 2013

**54 BUDGET 2013/16 - INITIAL PROPOSALS**

The Chair indicated that at its special meeting held on 5 December 2012, the Committee asked for further information regarding some of the proposals, this had yet to be provided.

The Committee were invited to consider the following savings options agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 December, 2012 (minute 144 refers) and which fell under the remit of this Committee.

The Chair expressed a view that the Committee had not received adequate information to enable them to make appropriate comments and commented that there was had been visit to the Government by Party Leaders to make

representations regarding the funding cuts to the Authority, the outcome of which is still to be determined.

#### Move to four yearly elections

The Chair indicated that that he did not support the proposals to move to four yearly elections and raised concern that this would impinge on the public's right to hold the Council to account on a regular basis.

A Member expressed a view that this proposal be supported as it would be a significant saving to the Council, Another Member indicated that Councillors should not be immune from contributing towards the budget savings.

The Chair indicated that it wasn't the Councillors contributing the budget savings it was the public having their right to vote on regular basis restricted.

In response to Members, Mr Surjit Tour, Acting Head of Law, HR and Asset Management indicated that if Members were minded to accept this proposal a full consultation process would be undertaken with the public seeking their views.

#### Destination Marketing

The Chair indicated that he did not support the proposals as it was felt that this generated a lot of income and tourism for Wirral.

#### Pest Control

The Chair informed the Committee that this proposal entailed the reduction of staff from five posts to four.

#### Home Insulation Programme

The Chair informed the Committee that 59% of the installations had been met and that £60,000 would be retained for those in special need.

#### Restructuring of Departments

In response to Members Chris Hyams, Head of HR & Organisational Development explained the rationale and future planning in relation to restructuring, redundancies, voluntary redundancies and redeployment.

#### Review and Reduce Suppliers

In response to Members, Jim Molloy, Finance Consultant indicated that following feedback received from the LGA regarding the Council's procurement processes, the Department through the Improvement Plan were looking at improving current processes, for example, purchase order system. Mr Molloy indicated that category managers were to be appointed to have responsibility over individual areas of spend i.e. Adult Services. Advice was also being sought from other Authorities regarding best practice.

## Review of VAT

In response to Members, Mr Molloy indicated that this would be a one off exercise undertaken by an independent expert to see if any savings could be identified.

## Implementation of Category Management

In response to Members, Mr Molloy indicated that the Finance Department would be undertaking some joint working with other Local Authorities on this. He explained that to avoid being reliant on certain suppliers a balance was needed between the Authority and the supplier. To achieve the anticipated savings a number of suppliers were needed for each service, the Department would work with its partners to do this.

Each year suppliers will be asked to provide us with a reduction in cost, this would be done year on year.

In response to members questions regarding the anticipated expenditure, Mr Molloy agreed to provide information on this to Members

## Education Psychologists

The Chair indicated that he had been contacted by a lot of worried parents regarding this proposal and asked the Cabinet to look at this again.

### **Resolved –**

**That the Cabinet minute 144 be noted, subject to the noting of comments made by this Committee.**

---

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 24 JANUARY 2013

### **47 BUDGET 2013/16 - INITIAL PROPOSALS**

The Committee were invited to consider the following savings options agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 December, 2012 (minute 144 refers) and which fell under the remit of this Committee.

<b>Budget Option</b>	<b>2013/14 £000</b>	<b>2014/15 £000</b>	<b>2015/16 £000</b>	<b>Total £000</b>	<b>Requires formal staff consultation</b>
Senior Management Re-structure					
- Re-structure - Technical Services	250	0	0	250	Yes
Deletion of vacant posts					
- Pest Control	30	0	0	30	No

Mr R Beresford, Head of Regulation, informed the Committee that the item 'Restructure - Technical Services' shouldn't have appeared as a separate item in the list as the saving was part of the global savings for management restructuring. Responding to a question he advised the Committee that he understood that the table of savings in the Cabinet minute had been prepared by the Finance Department. The Cabinet Report containing the table had been referred to all five themed Overview and Scrutiny Committees as the savings covered a number of different areas.

Councillor Fraser expressed her great concern at the absence of the Interim Director of Technical Services or the Head of Service, Waste and Regulation and a Finance Department representative to explain the savings to this special meeting.

Mr Beresford explained the saving to be made in respect of the deletion of the vacant pest control post. A number of operational changes had been introduced to reduce the costs of the service. He informed the Committee of the successes of the service, including for the treatment of rats and, in line with the majority of Local Authorities, there was no intention to introduce charges for the treatment of rats because of the public health risk. After some considerable discussion on this issue Members expressed the view that the service provided for the treatment of rat infestations should remain free.

Councillor Mitchell stated that he could not completely agree with the comments of the Leader of the Council in the preamble to the minute.

**Resolved – That the Cabinet minute 144 be noted.**