

## Appendix 3 – Policy & Service Committee budget proposals feedback

### 3B - Policy and Service Committees Budget Workshops Feedback

#### Children’s, Young People and Education Committee

Workshops held on 4 December 2024, 16 January 2025

#### Options recommended to proceed:

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?	Budget Oversight Panel Comments/Observations
10% reduction in ‘Supporting Services’	Proceed	Unanimous. Would equate to approximately 20 posts.
Deletion of Vacant Posts	Proceed	Unanimous. Deletion of 23 permanent funded vacancies from the Children’s Services Structure.
Reduction in Commissioned “Discretionary” Services	Proceed	Unanimous. Small % reductions across a number of contracts would achieve a savings reduction which could be sustained within the larger commissioned services portfolio.
1% Reduction in “Statutory Delivery” Services	Proceed	Unanimous. Would equate to approximately 9 posts.
Use of Public Health grant to fund Family Toolkit & Positive Inclusion programme	Proceed	Unanimous. Maximising use of grant funding.
Utilisation of Household Support Fund for Children and Families	Proceed	Unanimous. Maximising use of grant funding.
Utilisation of Pathfinders Grant towards discretionary posts	Proceed	Unanimous. Maximising use of grant funding.
Reducing High-Cost Residential Care	Proceed	Unanimous. Based on more integrated support aimed at reducing demand for higher cost statutory services.
Reduction in Looked After Children (LAC) numbers	Proceed	Unanimous. Based on the age profile of the number of children currently due to leave care. Separate demographic pressure

		exists for any assumed growth.
Reduction in teacher's pension liabilities	Proceed	Unanimous. Reduction based on expected attrition rates.
Promoting Independence	Proceed	Unanimous. Will incorporate a review of the options available, level of provision provided and methods of enhancing outcomes whilst reducing costs.

### Options Discounted:

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?
2% reduction in "statutory delivery" services OPTION 2	Removed.

---

## Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee

**Workshops held on 10 December 2024, 23 December 2024, 16 January 2025**

### Options recommended to proceed:

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?	Budget Oversight Panel Comments/Observations
Reduction in discretionary services	Proceed with a reduced target and a change in funding. Use of Public Health grant to fund an element of Early Help, Intervention and Prevention Services.	Concern about removal of discretionary funding and that it would present a higher risk of not balancing the portfolio. Removing prevention incurs future and potentially higher costs elsewhere in the care system.  An alternative funding model was agreed through maximisation of public health grant funding.
Review of Adult Social Care cost-effectiveness (INCREASED TARGET)	Proceed	Increase based on current year performance and

		<p>increased number of clients.</p> <p>Increase of £3million in terms of the target efficiencies - officers recognised that it would be challenging.</p>
Day Services Modernisation	Proceed	<p>All Members agreed</p> <p>Cost avoidance from ability to reduce demand against demographic pressures.</p>
Growth of Shared Lives Service	Proceed	<p>All Members agreed</p> <p>Incremental growth would need ongoing investment to increase shared lives schemes and to enable savings in more efficient cost than spot placements.</p> <p>Potential to be scaled up to include children's transitions. Investment will be needed to grow the scheme, potentially under preparing for Adulthood transitions programme.</p>
Review of Transitional Packages/preparing for Adulthood	Proceed	<p>All Members agreed</p> <p>Early engagement and support to promote developing skills and resilience for adolescents to be more independent would lead to cost avoidance and demand reduction.</p>
Able Me Service	Proceed	<p>All Members agreed</p> <p>Reduction in demographic growth through prevention would directly help manage demand against demographics.</p>

Review of all Fees and Charges	Proceed	<p>All Members agreed</p> <p>There are several options under consideration:  Charging appointees for the management of finances, Charging for arranging funerals, Review of charges placed on Self Funders, Review of the charges for the setup of a deferred payment agreement, Review of carer pre-paid cards costs v payment into a ringfenced account. A paper will be presented to Committee on 21 January 25.</p>
Review of minimum income guarantee (MIG)	Agreed it would be reviewed as part of the 2026/27 budget process,	<p>Reviewing clients in control that have Income Buffer/Minimum income guarantee applied, under review for 2026/27.</p> <p>Officers noted that clients' finances would need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>Members requested further information about the MIG.</p>

**Options Discounted:**

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?
Not to increase Real Living Wage rates in community care market	Removed



---

**Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee**

**Workshops held on 10 December 2024, 20 January 2025 and exempt committee discussion on 27 January 2025**

**Recommended to proceed:**

Biodiversity Net Gain - self funding	Proceed	To form part of the Environmental Efficiencies savings
Reduction in Climate Emergency revenue budget	Proceed	To form part of the Environmental Efficiencies savings
Flood & Coastal Risk Management	Proceed	To form part of the Environmental Efficiencies savings
Amend Weed Control arrangements	Proceed	To form part of the Environmental Efficiencies savings
Reduce Grounds Maintenance (1 FTE GMO Supervisor)	Proceed	To form part of the Environmental Efficiencies savings

**Options Discounted:**

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?
Street Lighting	Removed
Winter Service Redesign (Contracted Service)	Removed
School crossing patrol	Removed
Reduction in Climate Emergency revenue budget (for tree planting)	Removed
Limited street cleansing	Removed
Environment and Climate Emergency Team –	Removed

Reduction of E&CE Officer	
Merge North and West Park Teams – Reduction of 2 FTE	Removed
Full cessation of the Environment and Climate Emergency Team	Removed
Pollinator Programme – Reduction of 1 x FTE	Removed
Tree Risk Management	Removed
Increase Green Waste Subscription Charge - above standard SFC increase	Removed
Increase the charge of additional Garden Waste Collection bins	Removed

---

## Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee

Workshops held on 10 December 2024, 8 January 2025

### Options recommended to proceed:

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?	Budget Oversight Panel Comments/Observations
Reduction in Business Support	Proceed	All Members agreed
Income target and service reduction for Economic Growth Service	Proceed	All Members agreed
Restructure of Economic Growth and Place, Culture and Visitor Economy team	Proceed	All Members agreed
Homelessness	Proceed	Officers noted that Homeless Prevention Grant had been increased for 2025-26 which would enable saving to be made with no effect to service.  Discussion on grant applications. Officers assured Members that any additional funding that was available would be applied for.

Resettlement Grant Programme Funding Recharges	Proceed	All Members agreed
Supported housing contracts	Proceed	Victims of domestic violence – discussion on effects this could have. Officer assured Members that service would be unaffected,
Empty Homes	Proceed	Impact of Empty Homes Team no longer existing – Not a statutory duty. Would delay investigations into empty homes. Members noted that reducing empty homes was in the Council's interest.
Reduction of Building Cleaning	Proceed (for £160k) – proposal to be re-written.	Effect of decision discussed. Officers noted that a saving of £160k could be made with no impact to service. Officers to monitor as assets were disposed of.
Charge for permit spaces in Conway Street car park	Proceed	All Members agreed
Ceasing operations at Birkenhead Town Hall	Proceed	Movement of services – Continuing work being undertaken.
Asset Management reduced workforce	Proceed - Agree reduction of 1 FTE (vacant post)	Service reductions over time could be achieved through Estate Transformation
Ceasing concierge services across Council buildings	Proceed - Agree but with keeping concierge service at Wallasey Town Hall.	Would mean no workforce in front facing building receptions – discussion on impact. Members felt that Wallasey Town Hall would still require a reception service as the building was becoming more heavily used.
Estates Transformation	Proceed	Exploring other options to release assets to achieve this saving.
Implementation of Corporate Landlord Model	Proceed	More work needed to be done on this proposal. Dependent on asset disposal.

Other Income Generation	Ongoing	Limited options for ERH Committee. All options would be considered on an ongoing basis.
-------------------------	---------	---

### Options Discounted:

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?
Closure of Public Conveniences	Removed
Closing the existing Birkenhead Market earlier than planned	Removed

---

### Policy & Resources Committee

Workshop held on 17 December 2024

### Options recommended to proceed:

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?	Budget Oversight Panel Comments/Observations
Revised Council Tax Support Scheme	Proceed	Impact of removing the support and adding to issues of non-payment of Council Tax
Use of Household Support Fund to fund staff costs	Proceed	
Minimum Revenue Provision straight line approach for 2024/25 to 28/29	Proceed	Request for further information on monetary value of MRP as a result of the change
Debt recovery & collection	Proceed	Impact of adding to issues of non-payment
Increase in Fees and Charges	Proceed	
Increase in Licensing Fees	Proceed	Income generation opportunities
Enabling Service Review	Proceed	Restructuring of back office functions would be supported through an Early Voluntary Redundancy /Voluntary Severance process.



**Options Discounted:**

None

---

**Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee****Workshops held on 19 December 2024, 9 January 2025, 29 January 2025****Recommended to proceed:**

Proposal	Recommended to proceed or not?	Budget Oversight Panel Comments/Observations
Active Wirral Strategy	Proceed	A number of proposals were to come forward to Committee to deliver the £1m savings proposed in 25/26 and the further £2m expected in 26/27.
New Library Operating Model	Proceed	<p>Considered proposals by officers and concerns around the chosen locations, co-locating libraries with other assets and opportunities for community asset transfers were raised.</p> <p>Committee considered an alternative proposal presented by officers. Members debated whether it was feasible to extend this, and instructed officers to proceed with an alternative model to meet the saving requirements and to address the concerns of Members.</p> <p>It was proposed by Councillor Redfern and seconded by Councillor Lewis, and resolved that the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee</p>

		agreed the Budget Oversight Panel feedback and outcomes, subject to the amendments discussed at the meeting (7:1:1).
--	--	--

**Options discounted:**

None