

## COUNCIL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### Item under consideration: BUDGET MONITORING

#### Date Considered: 4 March 2015

- 1 In September 2014 each of the Council's Select Committees established a time-limited performance & finance sub-group to undertake scrutiny of current services and costs and make recommendations to help the Council meet its savings targets.
- 2 On 29 January 2015 the COSC Performance & Finance Sub Group considered the findings and conclusions of the Select Committee Sub-Groups and put to Cabinet a series of recommendations, as set out at Annex 1 to this report.
- 3 On 4 March 2015, the Committee received a verbal response from the Deputy Chief Finance Officer on the recommendations put to Cabinet. The Committee considered the response, and agreed to restate the following recommendations, with particular emphasis on the section in bold:

(b) That a Resource Allocation Rate of 75% be applied to the Friends, Family & Community Support programme in order to maximise the chances of exceeding the required full-year savings of 20%.

and

(h) That any reduction in the number of Children's Centres required to achieve the Early Years Service savings be not in **an area of significant deprivation or where necessary support is provided.**

**Nick Skellett**

**Chairman of the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**Recommendations from the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 3 February 2015**

- a. That consideration be given to the Decision Making Accountability Model of Organisational Redesign process, promoted by the LGA.

Adult Social Care

- b. That a Resource Allocation Rate of 75% be applied to the Friends, Family & Community Support programme in order to maximise the chances of exceeding the required full-year savings of 20%.
- c. That consideration be given to securing more Continuing Healthcare support for affected clients to reduce social care costs.

Business Services

- d. That consideration be given to further reducing the assumption regarding utilities inflation.
- e. That a further reassessment be carried out regarding the contribution to the self insurance fund to determine whether a further reduction could be made.

Children, Schools & Families

- f. That the investigation into Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transport costs be accelerated so that some of the benefit (for example through the use of personal budgets) can be achieved within the latter part of 2015/16.
- g. That the Cabinet review current policy and practice to ensure that the School Expansion Programme maximises its use of funds available through Section 106 agreements, Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL) and other related planning and development means.
- h. That any reduction in the number of Children's Centres required to achieve the Early Years Service savings be not in an area of significant deprivation or where necessary support is provided.
- i. That the Cabinet examine whether further savings can be obtained by 'effective commissioning' so that there is some scope for reconsidering the savings in Early Years and Services for Young People.
- j. That the Council should continue to hold a ring-fenced reserve in 2015/16 to meet possible further pressures in Children's Services such as increases in Child Protection referrals.

Environment & Infrastructure

- k. That any savings proposed for highway winter maintenance be reconsidered on the grounds of public safety.
- l. That any significant reduction in the Local Highway Revenue budget be reconsidered, as this will affect our ability locally to respond to ongoing residents' concerns over the state of local roads, drainage and environmental problems.

**Nick Skellett**

**Chairman of the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

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