

Cabinet Response: Budget Scrutiny Report 2015-16**T&F Group Chairman:** David Shakespeare**Lead Scrutiny Officer:** Reece Bowman**Date reported to Cabinet:** 9 February 2015**Lead Cabinet Member:** All**Lead Officer:** Richard Ambrose and Sarah Ashmead

Recommendation	Agreed Yes/No	Cabinet Response including proposed action	Responsible Cabinet Member	Responsible Officer	Action by date
1: The outcomes based budgeting methodology should be finalised and agreed by Cabinet in time to be used fully in the 2016/17 budget setting process.	In Part	Learning from the experience in the current year, the Cabinet will review the budget setting process and confirm its approach in good time for the 2016/17 process. As part of this the Cabinet propose a mid-term review of the Strategic Plan priorities to County Council in order to provide a strong steer about relative priorities. Cabinet will continue to look for genuine efficiencies in all service areas.	Peter Hardy	Sarah Ashmead	June 2015
2: Consideration of risks, including use of the Council's risk registers, should form an integral component of every stage of the 2016/17 budget setting process and subsequently, with budgetary allocations being considered in terms of impact on risk profile.	In Part	Risks are one of the considerations used to inform budgetary allocations. However, budgetary allocations are about balancing our priorities, as set out within the Strategic Plan, with the risks of delivering services. The level of reserves and contingencies is informed by the budget risks identified. A more formal process will be considered for the 2016/17 budget setting process.	Peter Hardy	Richard Ambrose	Sept 2015
3: All reductions to voluntary sector funding, regardless of amount, should be subjected to an assessment of impact on service delivery covering the impact of removal on the resilience of both the organisation and services it provides.	In Part	In proposing any reductions, services do consider the impact on the viability of voluntary sector bodies as part of normal business planning. The current policy of the Council is to prepare and publish full impact assessments for reductions in excess of £100k. The Cabinet supports this approach which minimises the burden on the organisation.	Martin Phillips	Sarah Ashmead	June 2015

		We will also work to improve the quality of information within the budget papers about possible reductions to voluntary sector funding so that there is greater transparency and more opportunities for the voluntary sector to raise issues at an early stage.			
4: We recommend that major capital programmes should be project managed by specialists, obtaining private sector support if in-house expertise is not available, thus minimising capital slippage to the greatest possible extent.	Yes	We do have in-house expertise and the majority of projects do go to plan. However, for complex major capital schemes then specialists will be considered in an attempt to ensure that the capital project is completed to planned timescales. A process around the lessons from the re-provision of Day Centres has started and the conclusions from this will be used to better manage future capital programmes.	Peter Hardy	Richard Ambrose	On-going
5: We recommend that a full options appraisal evaluating the value for money argument for prudential borrowing as a means to fund road improvements should be submitted to a Cabinet meeting at the earliest opportunity.	No	The Council will only consider borrowing where a good business case exists. This must show that the borrowing will either generate income or savings that at least cover the cost of the financing of the debt. With roads there is no income generated and the amount saved on maintenance is relatively small and short term. The policy proposed over the next three years is to re-profile the £45m budget so that £25m is spent in the next financial year (2015/16). This will significantly help to tackle the current maintenance backlog.	Martin Tett	Richard Ambrose	N/A
6: Measures to improve the speed and ease of the Council's recruitment and retention process for social work staff, in conjunction with efforts to reduce the reliance on agency staff in social care, should be implemented urgently.	Yes	A team of people have now been established to provide dedicated resource into the difficult area of attraction and retention of social workers. The team are focussing on a number of high priority initiatives such as sourcing staff from overseas, developing a pipeline of Social Worker Trainees, developing a more attractive package of benefits, etc. The work of the team will be overseen by the Ofsted Improvement Board and KPI's will be measured on a regular basis to monitor success.	Peter Hardy / Lin Hazell	Gill Quinton	On-going

<p>7: The reablement provider marketplace should be developed in Bucks, both to provide the County Council with a range of alternative providers, but also to subject Bucks Care to commercial pressures that would fuel innovation and provide an incentive to further drive down costs.</p>	No	<p>The reablement service is a county wide service and to split this into smaller geographic areas would be less efficient. We would need to more than double the level of activity we are commissioning to gain benefit from a more diverse provider base. The assumption that more providers would create a more competitive market place is not substantiated from past experience of contracts of this size. This can be evidenced through the last 5 years' experience of the domiciliary care market. There is no evidence to suggest that innovation is being stifled by the current service structure and significant technology driven improvements have been made within the last 6 months. We are exploring the evolution of the reablement service into a more integrated provision with health as part of our proposals for closer integration and reduced duplication in relation to the deployment of the Better Care Fund. We are working on an integrated service pathway bringing together the Adult Community Health Teams and Reablement Service into a Multi- disciplinary delivery team, through a single point of contact. The delivery date for this is July 2015.</p>	Patricia Birchley	Susie Yapp	N/A
<p>8: The support costs for Local Area Forums and accompanying rules and procedures should be reviewed to consider the case for further efficiency savings, in particular to consider the appropriate ratio of support costs in comparison to the grant funding provided by LAFs. There should be no further reductions in Local Area Forum grant in this year's MTFP. Further grant funding reductions serve to highlight the disproportionate overhead costs of supporting LAFs for the County Council.</p>	Yes	<p>The proposal to reduce the Local Priorities Budget available to the Local Area Forums from £880k this year, to £780k next year reflects the financial pressures right across the Community Engagement Portfolio. Whilst there are currently no future plans to reduce the budget further, this will have to be kept under review in the current financial climate. We are currently scoping a review of our broader Localities work, and reviewing and improving the value for money from this funding will be a key feature.</p>	Martin Phillips	Phil Dart	N/A

<p>9: An options appraisal for the use of the residual heat from the Energy From Waste plant as an income stream should be considered by the Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>We are already working with FCC to produce a Combined Heat and Power options study which will be presented back to the EfW contract team during February. Early outcomes show that there are currently no viable options to utilise the heat in the locality. The electricity generated of course will be sold to the grid.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member will provide an update to Cabinet colleagues during March 2015.</p>	<p>Lesley Clarke</p>	<p>Martin Dickman</p>	<p>March 2015</p>
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