

Appendix A (i)

Summary of Consultation

Introduction

The Council regularly seeks the views of residents and partners on the priorities for investment, service provision and improvement through a variety of means to enable participation in the development of the budget. This includes using the Peoples Panel, which has now run for nearly ten years, the Budget Challenge, and individual service consultations.

The timelines for this year's Council's Budget report were first published in the Forward Plan on the 25 October 2019. Cabinet and the Finance and Value for Money Overview and Overview Scrutiny Commission have considered proposals put forward at a number of meetings during the Autumn, with full summary of the proposals being confirming General Fund budget proposals on the 25 November 2019. Formal comments on the proposals were invited to be submitted to David Bell, Director of Finance and Transformation by 17 February 2020. .

In addition, the following consultation meetings have also taken place with representatives of the City's business community, voluntary sector and young people. In summary the engagements a shared understanding of the difficult financial environment in which the Council is operating and outlined the willingness to work together for the overall benefit and prosperity of the City. The key points raised at each meeting are detailed below.

Finally, in addition to inviting comment on the specific budget proposals relating to 2020/21, the Council continues to engage with residents through the People's Panel on the provision of Council services and their relative priorities. This provides insight into the importance that residents place on different services and an understanding of the priorities of our customers.

During the most recent People's Panel survey, residents identified their overall city priorities as:

1. Improving infrastructure, roads and transport
2. Encouraging new businesses to invest and support established businesses to be successful
3. Increasing the availability of secure, well-paid jobs
4. Reducing crime and improving community safety
5. Increasing affordable, quality housing and reducing homelessness

Youth Representatives - Meeting held 13th January 2020 at the Guildhall

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Transformation and the Leader, with the support of Children Young People and Families and the Director of Finance & Transformation are due to meet with young people and their representatives to consider the issues affecting young people relevant to the future of the City

- benefits of enhanced leisure facilities, with good access in the City centre such as the Hull Venue and the potential replacement of the Ice Arena

Appendix A (i)

- the wide benefits of providing cheaper bus passes for young people up to the age of 18
- the continuing popularity of Hull Fair
- concern over access to mental health services among young people and stigma associated with mental health issues arising from a lack of understanding education
- need for support to be provided to young carers who can be “hidden” and not in receipt of the help they require
- the untapped potential of young people in adding to the City of Culture volunteers
- need for the Council to develop a more sophisticated approach to the use of social media in order to better engage with young people, provide information and promote events e.g. utilising high profile “names” to access followers

Voluntary and Community Sector – Meeting held 9 January 2020 at the Guildhall

Over 60 voluntary and community sector organisations were invited to the budget briefing session at the Guildhall on Thursday 9th January 2020. 35 representatives attended where the Portfolio Holder for Finance, accompanied by the Director of Finance, Assistant Director (Community Safety and Early Intervention) and Procurement Manager (Adult Services Commissioning), presented the budget proposals for 2020/21.

The Director of Finance outlined that no financial details have been made available by the new Government apart from a one year settlement for 2020/21 which was received by the Council on 20th December 2019. Ideally, a 4-5 year settlement would have been more welcome however the government has indicated its commitment to a spending and fair funding review for 2020 and this should give a clearer direction.

As a result of the above the Council has no significant proposals and 2020/21 will be a holding year. Subsequently, increases in social care costs due to an ageing population has meant HCC are in deficit which will have to be handled with one-off monies and a transformation programme of efficiencies. In addition, the Social Care White paper is yet to appear and the government’s focus at present is on the spending and fair funding review.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Transformation explained that a fairer funding mechanism is needed as the authority’s Council Tax precept for social care is lower than other authorities due to our low value housing. The two council service areas under pressure financially are Adult Social Care and Children & Young People’s services.

The Procurement Manager outlined the complexity of increasing demand for services and the requirement to invest more in prevention and early intervention operating models and that residential care is not always the right offer and there is a need to recognise the value of investment in community organisations.

The Council are looking to commission longer term contracts (8-10 years) to provide sustainability and security for staff as well as the ability for organisations to plan and

Appendix A (i)

invest. Some current services will be changing to community enablement and there will be opportunities for building on the benefits of existing organisations working in communities to provide better outcomes for people and cost benefits for the Council.

In addition, there will be more engagement with the VCS organisations and more joined up working with the Council and Hull's Clinical Commissioning Group to fund community based services as well as the Council looking to streamline the procurement process for lower value contracts, whilst maintaining transparency and fairness and meeting legislative requirements. Issues raised by the VCS representatives included the need for more communication and engagement by the Council with the sector, providing staff to support community development at grass root levels and a mechanism to allow two-way feedback on outcomes for the people of Hull. The Procurement Manager agreed for his contact details to be circulated and commissioning engagement events to be held on a quarterly basis.

Business Sector – Meeting held on 29 January 2020 at the Guildhall

The Leader, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Transformation, and the Director of Finance and Transformation met with representatives of the Hull business community to consider the issues relevant to the future of the City faced by the Council and the nature of its response.

The key issues being the:

- positive impact of inward investment into the City and the on-going programme of physical investments in the Hull Venue, Public Realm, Indoor Market, Bond Street site and the bridge over the A63
- potential impact of climate change and the carbon neutral agenda
- the need to link health, housing and education into regeneration
- importance of complementary private sector investment, including development of supply chains, in maximising the benefits in Hull
- challenges faced by the Council regarding the continued cuts in Government funding and the disproportionate impact on Hull given the relatively low property values and Council Tax base
- benefits of closer working locally with the NHS to address the care needs of Hull's residents and the need for a national solution to the long term funding crisis
- continued support in the City for a devolution deal and the development of the Cruise Terminal
- work of the LEP in drawing in additional funding to the region and the role of all parties including the Council and MP's in promoting the economic case for further investment in improving rail transport links