

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 16 November 2018. Cabinet and the Finance and Value for Money Overview and Overview Scrutiny Commission have considered proposals put forward at two meetings, July and December 2018, with the proposals regarding General Fund budget covered on the 17 December 2018. Formal comments on the proposals were invited to be submitted to David Bell, Director of Finance and Transformation by 16 January 2019, and no additional feedback or comments were received outside of those detailed below.

Alongside the formal feedback process, consultation on individual savings proposals approved February 17 were led by Directors and City Managers who engaged with relevant stakeholders regarding proposed budget reductions and this is detailed on Appendix B (ii).

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 were positive meetings which demonstrated both a shared understanding of the difficult financial environment in which the Council is operating and a willingness of all parties 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 2019/20, 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:

- i. Jobs and the Economy
- ii. Education, skills and training
- iii. Crime and Community Safety
- iv. Health and Social Care
- v. Housing
- vi. Roads, Congestion and Traffic
- vii. Culture, Heritage and Tourism
- viii. Parks and Leisure Facilities
- ix. Civic Participation

Youth Representatives – 10 January 2019

The Leader, together with the Children and Young People's Youth and Influence Service, led a lively and positive debate with young people and their representatives covering many issues relevant to the future of the City. The issues covered during the discussion included:

Appendix A (i)

- i. access to public transport and barriers to obtaining the Hull KAT card due to proof of identity
- ii. ensuring communications with young people are accessible
- iii. tackling homelessness
- iv. waiting times for accessing mental health services
- v. provision of work experience and careers opportunities, in particular for those with disabilities
- vi. provision of new leisure facilities and access to existing ones, including the proposed Lido and the move of Ice Arena from its current location
- vii. Young People were asked about youth provision in their community
- viii. Some young people spoke about what youth groups / centres they come from.

There was representation from:

Buzzaballoo (disability session)	- Kingston Youth Centre
Duke of Edinburgh	- Kingston Youth Centre
Young Carers	- Astra
UK Youth Parliament	

Voluntary and Community Sector – 10th January 2019

Over 60 voluntary and community sector organisations were invited to the budget briefing session at the Guildhall on Thursday 10th January. 17 representatives attended where the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance & Transformation, accompanied by the Director of Finance, Assistant City Manager (Early Help & Commissioning) and Procurement Manager (Adult Services Commissioning), presented the budget proposals for 2019/20.

The Portfolio Holder announced that with regards to the Council's revenue budget there would be no further cuts due to ongoing savings being implemented as part of the 3 year transformation plan. The Government's funding settlement however is unclear at present and the previous year's model has had to be used. A longer term settlement for 4 years would be more favourable rather than an annual provision.

With regards to the capital funding budget, this has been increased by £60m for investment into the local economy with road improvements and bridge maintenance.

Council tax will be increased by 3% by the local authority however there are exemptions for army reservists, police specials and care leavers etc. The Police & Fire Service may set their own precepts.

The Leader outlined the significant financial challenges faced by the Council in the context of reduced Government funding, with over 50% reduction in Council funding over last 8 years. Difficult decisions have had to be made however services have been maintained and the city has come together to alleviate the damage. There is still much to do particularly in areas where people need the most help and the Leader acknowledged the valuable contribution of the VCS in delivering services in the community. In addition, early intervention and prevention is a priority and the Council and NHS Hull CCG have agreed to joint funding.

Appendix A (i)

The Procurement Manager highlighted the pressures and increasing demand for services for our ageing population and the Council's intention to secure longer term contracts and less frequent, onerous procurement processes to enable the delivery of these vital services locally. The Hull £ and social value in contracts is also a priority for the Cabinet and this is being expanded to include re-investment and support in local communities and volunteering groups. A consultation event with the VCS will take place in the near future.

The ACM (Early Help & Commissioning) added that there are unprecedented numbers of children in local authority care and services are being remodelled for working smarter and the introduction of an Early Help and Safeguarding Hub (EHASH) in order to keep children at home with better outcomes, wherever possible. Provision is also being made for new children's homes to avoid having to place children outside the city, using external services.

Other issues discussed included mental health provision; time taken for assessment, particularly for Autism; monitoring of social value and disadvantages for smaller providers; additional council tax exemptions and the provision of a social fund.

Business Sector (Hull Chamber of Commerce) – 9th January 2019

The Leader, Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Director of Finance and Transformation briefed representatives of the Hull business community on the financial challenges faced by the Council and the nature of its response.

The key issues being the:

- i. positive impact of the Council's capital investment programme, particularly in terms of generating growth in economic activity
- ii. need to maintain momentum through on-going programme of physical investments specifically the Maritime Museum project and the associated national profile
- iii. success of the Enterprise Zones both in terms of employment and increased NNDR income
- iv. 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, alongside increasing costs associated with caring for vulnerable adults and children
- v. significant uncertainty facing all Councils, including Hull, given the Government's planned revision of the funding system and Spending Review planned for 2019.
- vi. 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
- vii. potential benefits of closer working across boundaries with neighbouring authorities
- viii. continued support in the City for a devolution deal and the development of the Cruise Terminal
- ix. importance of ensuring the LEP continues to be successful in drawing in additional funding to the region