

## 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 22 June 2017. Cabinet and the Finance and Value for Money Overview and Overview Scrutiny Commission have considered proposals put forward at a number of meetings from July through to December 2017, with full summary of the proposals being confirming General Fund budget proposals on the 18 December 2017. Formal comments on the proposals were invited to be submitted to David Bell, Director of Finance and Transformation by 8 January 2018. No comments have been received up until the 7 December 2017.

Alongside the formal feedback process, consultation on individual savings proposals 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 2018/19, 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 22 November 2017 at the Guildhall

The Deputy Leader, with the support of Children Young People and Families and the Director of Finance & Transformation led a lively and positive debate with young people and their representatives covering many issues relevant to the future of the City, with the main focus of the discussions:

- support for a Youth Mayor in to represent and promote the young people of the City

## Appendix A (i)

- success of the 2017 City of Culture and the importance of securing a legacy for the City's youth
- 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
- 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
- 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

### **Voluntary and Community Sector – Meeting held 30 November 2017 at the Guildhall**

Over 70 voluntary and community sector organisations were invited to the budget briefing session at the Guildhall on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> November. 29 representatives attended where the Leader and Deputy, accompanied by the Director of Finance and City Manager for Health & Wellbeing, presented the budget proposals for 2018/19.

The Leader outlined the significant financial challenges faced by the Council in the context of reduced Government funding, along with increased costs and acknowledged the valuable contribution of the VCS in delivering services in the community.

The Deputy Leader explained that the Council Budget report of February 2017 set out a 3 year plan designed to bring the Council's expenditure and income into line over a 3 year period, therefore decisions regarding long term savings were made last year. However, budget savings would include an increase in Council Tax of 4.99% and the second stage of the Adult Social Care savings programme is ongoing. Financial pressures remain in Children and Young People's services with a high number of looked after children in the city.

Tim Fielding, City Manager for Health and Wellbeing highlighted the reduction in the Public Health grant from the Government, how it is to be spent and the impact the proposed savings will have on the delivery of health and wellbeing services by the Council.

David Bell, Director of Finance explained that the 3 year plan approach is to keep the Council's finances stable and to support the pressures around the care system.

The Leader and Deputy Leader stated that the proposals are subject to consultation and they would therefore take on board the issues raised by the VCS sector.

The Voluntary and Community Sector representatives raised the following issues:

- Concern regarding the reduction in the adult care budget as well as additional financial pressures for organisations having to make back-payments sleep-in payments
- Confirmation that capital receipts for buildings can only be used for revenue during a 3 year window

## Appendix A (i)

- Concern regarding young people living in households with no adults working are becoming accountable for Council Tax payments when they start work
- Use of social impact bonds for interventions
- Use of Council resources rather than budgets to assist VCS in delivering services

The Leader and Deputy Leader stated that they would take on board the issues raised by the sector and in particular the need for the Council to engage and forward plan with the sector.

**Business Sector** – Meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018 with members of Hull Chamber of Commerce.

The Leader 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:

- positive impact of the City of Culture 2017, particularly in terms of the City's profile and growth in economic activity
- need to maintain momentum and maximise the legacy benefits through both the actions of the Legacy "Co" and future productions 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
- benefits of linking health and education into the cultural legacy initiatives
- importance of complementary private sector investment, including development of supply chains, in maximising the benefits in Hull
- positive role played by the BID
- 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
- role of all parties including the Council, the Chamber and MP's in promoting the economic case for further investment in improving rail transport links and minimising the Humber bridge tolls.