

BUDGET CONSULTATION

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out proposals on the budget consultation exercise for 2013-14.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The proposals for budget consultation set out in this report are agreed.

3 DETAIL

- 3.1 For the last few years the Council has carried out a budget consultation exercise. It is generally accepted as good practice to carry out consultation as part of the budget process. It is proposed to carry out a budget consultation exercise for the 2013-14 budget.
- 3.2 It is proposed to adopt the following key messages as part of the budget consultation process:
- We are adopting a long term approach to managing the budget.
 - It is likely that resources for the public sector will continue to be under pressure.
 - We have been successful in managing our budget.
 - Over the last few years we have managed to remove £20m of costs annually from our budget.
 - Over the next 7 years we will need to reduce our current costs by £40m.
 - We are an improving and more effective organisation.
- 3.3 The budget consultation will also set out how previous budget consultations have affected the budget. It will focus on how the Council spends its budget just now, what that delivers, what has been achieved and some of the key budget pressures.
- 3.4 The approach to budget consultation will be as follows:
- Face to face:
 - Presentations to area committees on the budget with an invite for community councils to attend.
 - Meetings with relevant communities of interest (eg business groups).
 - Media briefings.
 - Printed documents:
 - A budget consultation document to be available from various Council premises outlining the overall approach to the budget and how the Council spends its budget.

- Posters based on the budget consultation document for display in various Council premises.
- Online:
 - Online version of budget consultation document.
 - Budget simulator tool.
 - General email address for comments on the Council budget.
 - Web chat.
 - Web casts.
 - Looking local TV station.

3.5 In addition to the above the Council will also consult with community planning partners through the CPP Management Committee. There will also be ongoing dialogue with the trade unions as the budget develops. Finally the Council will consider with partners the opportunities for engaging hard to reach groups.

3.6 Information from the budget consultation will be reported back to members prior to the February Council meeting.

4 CONCLUSION

4.1 This report sets out proposals on how it is proposed to carry out the budget consultation exercise this year.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy - None.

5.2 Financial – Limited costs which can be contained within budget.

5.3 Legal – None.

5.4 HR – None.

5.5 Equalities – None.

5.6 Risk – None.

5.7 Customer Services – None.

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