



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA PAPERS FOR
EXECUTIVE MEETING**

Date: Monday, 21 January 2013

Time: 6.30 pm

**Place: Rooms 7 and 8, Quay West, Trafford Wharf Road, Trafford Park,
Manchester M17 1HH**

A G E N D A	PART I	Pages
6.	BUDGET SCRUTINY REPORT AND EXECUTIVE'S RESPONSE	1 - 12
	To receive the Budget Scrutiny Report on the Executive's Draft Budget Proposals for 2013-14, and agree the Executive's Response.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposed Executive Response	
8.	COUNCIL TAX - INTRODUCTION OF EMPTY PROPERTY PREMIUM	13 - 16
	To consider a report of the Executive Member for Economic Growth & Prosperity and of the Director of Finance.	

THERESA GRANT
Chief Executive

COUNCILLOR MATTHEW COLLEDGE
Leader of the Council

Membership of the Committee

Councillors M. Colledge (Chairman), A. Williams (Vice-Chairman), S. Anstee, Dr. K.M. Barclay, Miss L. Blackburn, M. Cornes, J. Coupe, M. Hyman, A. Mitchell and M. Young

Executive - Monday, 21 January 2013

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact:

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This supplementary agenda was issued on 17th January by the Legal and Democratic Services Section, Trafford Council, Quay West, Trafford Wharf Road, Trafford Park, Manchester, M17 1HH.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS

Date: 6 February 2013

Committee: Scrutiny Committee/Health Scrutiny Committee

Report Title: Budget Scrutiny 2013/14

Lead Overview and Scrutiny Member: Cllrs Brian Shaw and Judith Lloyd



Executive Member Responsible: All

Ref	Recommendation	Agreed (Y/N)	Planned Action in Response to Recommendations	Timescale for Completion	Responsible Executive Member
1	That the Executive provide Scrutiny Committee with details of any long-term monitoring and evaluation work undertaken in respect of significant budget changes and policy choices in relation to services for children and young people.	Y	<p>CYPS routinely monitors service developments and policy choices through its performance management framework which includes the quarterly reporting to Council Executive of progress against the Annual Delivery Plan.</p> <p>In addition it is proposed to provide an update directly to Scrutiny Committee on a 6 monthly basis covering outcomes for children and young people in Trafford in the context of health, social care, and education. This will allow scrutiny to develop an informed view of the impact any budget changes and policy choices are having on the lives of Trafford children and young people.</p>	Ongoing	<p>Cllr Blackburn Cllr Cornes</p>

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Agenda Item 6

<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 2</p>	<p>That the Executive closely monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposed increase in the use of volunteers to deliver services such as those in Children’s Centres and Youth Services.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Y</p>	<p>Using volunteers has proved successful in both Hale (27) and Old Trafford (12) libraries. There has been no impact on service delivery as sufficient staff have been retained to support volunteers and deliver other Council services. Should the budget proposals be approved this approach will be extended to all libraries over the next 2 years</p> <p>A strategic approach to volunteering in CYPS is a key objective within the Directorate Improvement Plan and monitored on quarterly basis. The main areas of activity relate to Children’s Centres and Youth Services and an update will be provided to Scrutiny Committee on a 6 monthly basis as referenced above.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Complete and ongoing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cllr Williams</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cllr Blackburn</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<p>That the financial effect of the proposed transition to a more outreach-based approach be rigorously monitored, given its potential to bring to light previously unforeseen need.</p>		<p>CYPS is in the process of implementing its Early Intervention Strategy with outreach based approaches as a key aspect of that strategy. We will regularly monitor service demand, and the impact that has on capacity and budget planning, through our existing finance and performance management regime.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cllr Blackburn</p>

4	That the Executive provide the merger action plan, and whatever details of proposed structures are currently available for the merged CYPS and CWB Directorates, for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee.		<p>The high level project plan and proposed management structure are embedded below. A link to the detailed project plan is available from Deborah Brownlee on request.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  New management structure.ppt </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Transition Plan.doc </div> </div>	31/3/13	Cllr Blackburn Cllr Cornes Cllr Barclay Cllr Young
5	That, in relation to the proposed re-tendering exercises for services such as Supporting People and Public Health, the Executive provide Scrutiny with assurances that tendering models and contract monitoring are robustly designed to protect quality, standards and volume of services specified, and not specifically (DB 26/11) to reduce tender prices.		<p>The re-tender of services will meet the commissioning and procurement requirements which reflect both quality and general efficiencies. The Council subsequently is assured that services subject to tender request value for money whilst encouraging potential service providers to be creative in the delivery of the service to customers in Trafford. The monitoring applied to services following an award of the contract is robust based on an embedded market management approach.</p>	Complete	Cllr M Young Cllr K Barclay
6	That the Executive provide for Scrutiny further analysis of the proposed savings within Supporting People, Housing Services (Proposal CWB16), and in particular of the acknowledged “significant reduction in service provision”.		<p>A full market review of supporting people services was carried out prior to the proposals being formulated. Providers and other stakeholders were fully involved in the review. The social inclusion housing services element of the review was led by Richard Roe the Council’s Strategic Housing Manager, this ensured that the review focused on how best to maintain and improve essential statutory housing services. The review provided the evidence base from which the savings proposals were developed. The full market</p>	Complete	Cllr M Young

review is available if further information is required. A comprehensive impact assessment is being prepared and will be completed on the 14th Jan, this will provide further analysis and will identify possible impacts and how these will be mitigated.

The detailed proposals are:

Short stay supported accommodation

We propose that there would be a new single service providing short stay supported accommodation. We would tender for this new service.

We could reduce costs by £129,000 from April 2013.

Floating support service

We propose to review the floating support service funded through Supporting People

We could reduce costs by £135,000 from April 2013 and £35,000 from April 2014.

Services for victims of domestic violence

We propose to re-tender the service. The new service would begin in April 2013.

We could reduce costs by £10,000 from April 2013.

Sheltered housing

We propose to end the Supporting People contribution towards the scheme manager role at sheltered housing from April 2013.

We could reduce costs by £338,000 from April 2013.

Community Alarm Service (Category One)

We propose to continue contributing to the community alarm service for Category One and sheltered properties throughout 2013/14. This contribution will end from April 2014. The community alarm service at both sheltered housing and Category One will be integrated into the telecare service. Access to the service would be linked to a needs assessment completed by adult social care, rather than type of accommodation. We could reduce costs by £231,000 from April 2014.

Home improvement brokerage

The pilot home improvement brokerage service comes to an end in March 2013. We propose not to re-tender this service. We could reduce costs by £50,000 from April 2013.

Support for young people

Supporting People funded services for young people will be retendered by Children and Young People's Services within Trafford Council. The service would focus on young people aged 16 to 19 years and those for whom the Council has a statutory responsibilities. We could reduce costs by £128,000 from April 2013.

<p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 6</p>	<p>That the Executive give further consideration to the potential impact of proposed savings in Information and Advice Services, particularly in view of the nature of the wider financial climate and envisaged demand increases arising from various aspects of welfare reform proposals.</p>		<p>The Information and Advice Review is based on a partnership approach to the future development of information and advice services in Trafford. This collaborative approach enhances the opportunity to determine how services can be delivered in a more efficient way, whilst at the same time respond to the anticipated demand increases arising from various aspects of the welfare reform proposals in the near future. The partner organisations have responded in an extremely positive way to date and are presenting innovative and creative options for consideration as part of the review process. The review will report in January.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">February 2013</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Cllr M Young</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">8</p>	<p>That the Executive assure itself about the deliverability of savings associated with the HR staffing review.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Y</p>	<p>The savings are deliverable albeit that they will have an impact on Managers who will have to be equipped to deal effectively with first level disciplinary, sickness, grievance type issues. HR staff will only have the capacity to support serious cases. Training will be restricted to statutory/mandatory and will be delivered primarily from the AGMA hub contract. Workforce development will be prioritised to support the changing shape of the organisation and the pace and level of change required. Opportunities to generate income could be impacted by these further reductions, this needs to be balanced against the benefits of</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Cllr Williams</p>

			additional income supporting the retention of staff. The impact of changes will be monitored.		
9	That the Executive ensure that it has the capacity to identify and deliver transformational change programmes including ensuring that the benefits associated with cross authority working are realised.		The final proposed structure for the Transformation Team presents a reduction of 10 FTE (including 2 vacancies). However, the LTA project will conclude in the Spring of 2013, releasing 4 FTE to undertake alternative transformation project activity. In addition, the programme of activity for the Transformation Team will continue to be approved/monitored by the Transformation Board and prioritised to ensure the resources in the team are utilised to the best effect to achieve the change and benefits realisation needed. To support this, director level representatives from each directorate will be guiding the review & development of the Transformation Programme for 2013/14 to ensure the team is deployed most effectively, in consideration of their support requirements and priorities.	The new structure will be in effect from 1/4/13	Cllr Williams
10	That whatever the response to the consultation on the future of library provision, the Executive undertake to maximise, wherever possible, availability of IT access in libraries for the Borough's residents.	Y	Providing public access to the internet through the Peoples Network is a statutory requirement and we provide 30 minutes free access per day in all libraries. This is supported by Age UK providing formal training in some libraries and staff supporting residents who want to use the internet or access Council services on-line. Library staff are currently helping residents without internet access to apply for the energy switching scheme.	Complete and ongoing	Cllr Williams

11	That the Executive ensure that impact of the savings associated with the dissolution of the Mersey Valley Partnership are fully identified and review whether the proposals are manageable given the time constraints.		<p>The Mersey Valley Partnership funding does not pay for any maintenance provided by Manchester City Council.</p> <p>The maintenance of the Mersey Valley is based on historical knowledge and is of a reactive nature. A small team of Trafford Council employees carry this work whilst monitoring the space.</p> <p>We will continue to work cohesively with all stakeholders to maintain the spirit of collaboration. There are a number of proposals being currently considered to manage the space in the future. These will be shared with Members when they are finalised.</p>	Ongoing	Cllr Mitchell/ Cllr Coupe
Page 8 12	That the Executive should ensure that its approach to the collection of food waste and the level of savings expected from the change in approach to its collection is realistic and achievable.		<p>The approach to food waste collections was detailed in the Executive report dated 26th November and the supplemental report of the same date. It is based on the following collection pattern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Bin – the green bin for food and garden waste is currently collected every fortnight and this will change to a weekly collection. • Grey Bin – the grey bin for general refuse is currently collected every week and this will change to a fortnightly collection. • All properties will be provided with 	Completed	Cllr Mitchell

			<p>a 7 litre kitchen caddy and a roll of compostable liners to assist residents in recycling their food waste.</p> <p>While the above collection service will be available to all properties, there are a number of bespoke arrangements for particular property types and household circumstance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terraced properties – if they are unsuitable for a green bin e.g. due to space limitations, will be provided with a 23 litre outdoor caddy in place of a green bin. • Apartments/Flats - Communal green bins will be provided to all apartment/flat complexes prior to the commencement of the weekly food waste collection service. • Large Families - Families with five or more permanent residents in the property will be entitled to a larger 240L grey bin. • Residents with medical conditions - Residents who have medical conditions causing them to generate waste which cannot be recycled will be entitled to a larger 240L grey bin. <p>The financial savings have been established</p>		
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		<p>based on experience from Stockport Council of operating the same frequency of food/garden and non-recyclable waste collections as are being outlined in this proposal. The Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority has estimated that 50% of the typical grey bin in Trafford is organic (food/garden) waste. The Council currently collects approximately 38,000 tonnes of waste in the grey bin and from this proposal it is estimated that the tonnage will reduce by 9700 tonnes. These tonnage figures, along with tonnage data for the existing waste collection service have been sent to the Waste Disposal Authority and the difference between the 'as is' service and the proposal for weekly food/garden and fortnightly non-recyclable waste is the basis for the savings proposal of over £1 million per annum put forward.</p>		
13	<p>That the Executive provide further details on the impact of the new initiative in respect of parks maintenance, in particular, whether differential standards would apply to different parks, or within different areas of parks.</p>	<p>The current proposed changes within the Groundforce Structure are focused on improving productivity by 15% and better deployment of our workforce and resources.</p> <p>It is being proposed that the Groundforce workforce is reduced by 10 posts. As Ground force covers both parks and street cleaning officers are confident that this proposal can be mitigated by more efficient delivery.</p> <p>This will deliver improved cost effective outcomes that will enable us to meet on our</p>	Ongoing	Cllr Mitchell

			<p>savings target whilst ensuring that our current standards are maintained in within our Green spaces in the 2013/2014 programme.</p> <p>A small number of parks are maintained to Green flag standard.</p> <p>Our initiative does not seek to reduce standards that our customers experience though there will be some operational changes to ensure cost effective and coherent delivery.</p>		
<p>Page 11</p> <p>14</p>	<p>That Executive provide assurance that the streetscene in Trafford Park will be maintained to ensure that it remains an attractive area to all businesses in the area. They should also ensure that their approach to ensuring this should involve the use of all available methods including, where possible planning and enforcement functions.</p>		<p>We will continue to maintain the Street scene within Trafford Park to the agreed standards that we currently operate to.</p> <p>Following the recent transfer of the enforcement function to ETO, Groundforce and other functions within the business are working more closely to establish synergies that will lead to more cost effective outcomes.</p> <p>This approach will enable the reduction of fly tipping and other anti-social activities across the borough.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Cllr Mitchell</p>

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TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive / Council
Date: 21 / 23 January 2013
Report for: Decision
Report of: Executive Member for Economic Growth & Prosperity and the Director of Finance

Report Title

Council Tax – Introduction of Empty Property Premium

Summary

The Government has recently given discretion to billing authorities to introduce a premium of 50% to council tax bills for long term (over 2 years) empty properties.

The introduction of a premium is expected to encourage owners to bring long term empty property back into use and therefore is consistent with the Council's Empty Property Strategy.

For clarification there are no plans to amend the 12 month, 100% reduction awarded to properties that are undergoing structural alteration or major repair work.

Recommendation(s)

That the Executive recommends the Council to approve:

1. That from 1st April 2013 a council tax premium of 50% be applied for properties that have remained empty for more than two years;
2. That the Executive has the discretion to vary this premium if it deems appropriate to do so following the expected release of guidance from the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Ian Duncan
Extension: 4884

Background Papers: None

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	This change would complement the Council's Empty Property Strategy.
Financial	There is the possibility of additional income of up to £200k per annum. However the intention is not to raise income as, if the initiative is completely successful in bringing long term empty property back into use, no additional council tax would be due.
Legal Implications:	The Council has discretion to implement this additional council tax charge by virtue of The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) Regulations 2012, Statutory Instrument (2012 No 3086).
Equality/Diversity Implications	None
Sustainability Implications	None
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	None
Risk Management Implications	None
Health and Safety Implications	None

Background

1. A report elsewhere on the agenda concerning the Local Council Tax Support Scheme makes recommendations for changes to council tax from April 2013. These relate to a substantial reduction in the exemption from council tax for empty properties and also to abolish the 10% discount currently given on second homes.
2. The ability to make these changes comes from a change in the discretionary powers given to local councils to vary council tax, to be introduced from 1 April 2013.
3. A further discretion is for authorities to levy a premium of 50% in council tax payable on long term (over 2 years) empty properties. There are currently 433 properties in Trafford that have remained empty for longer than 2 years.
4. In considering whether to introduce such a premium, the Council has an adopted Empty Property Strategy, which has the overall aim of reducing the number of empty properties in the Borough. Empty properties can have an adverse impact on neighbourhoods; attracting vandals, drug-dealing and anti-social behavior.
5. The Council takes enforcement action against the owners of empty properties in poor condition, which can include carrying out works in default if the owner hasn't carried out essential repairs. In addition Adactus Housing Association, supported by the Council, has secured funding from the Homes & Communities Agency to bring eight empty properties back into use.

6. The introduction of an increased Council Tax premium for properties empty over two years would complement this activity in providing an extra financial incentive for owners to return their properties to beneficial use.
7. The Government may issue guidance around the introduction and application of these new Regulations. It is anticipated that they will make reference to protecting home owners who are genuinely having difficulty in selling their property. It will be up to each Authority to decide what to it considers is reasonable. However, any protection offered in these circumstances could diminish the desired impact from a premium and add to the administrative burden of raising and collecting it. Nevertheless there is merit in considering this option.
8. For clarification there are no plans to amend the 12 month, 100% reduction awarded to properties that are undergoing structural alteration or major repair work.
9. From a financial viewpoint the primary intention is not to raise additional revenue (potentially £200k could be due) but rather to bring properties back into use. If this is successful there would be no additional council tax collected. Also there are avoidance tactics that could be used. However it is worth noting that each property brought back into use would qualify for the New Homes Bonus Grant, which is payable for 6 years.

Other Options

The Council could decide not to introduce the premium. However this would lose an opportunity to strengthen the Empty Homes Strategy.

Consultation

Consultation has not been carried out. The success of the initiative will be kept under review during 2013/14.

Reasons for Recommendation

To supplement the existing Empty Homes Strategy.

Finance Officer Clearance (type in initials).....ID.....

Legal Officer Clearance (type in initials).....JL.....

DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE

To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.

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