

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 19 February 2014
Report for: Information
Report author: Corporate Director, Transformation & Resources

Report Title

Outcome of the Budget Consultation with the Public and Stakeholders 2014/15

Purpose of Report

To provide an over view of the Budget Consultation 2014/15 process and the outcomes of the consultations with the public and wider stakeholders, including how proposals have changed as a result of consultation.

Recommendations

That the report be noted

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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

[CORPORATE] DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE

(electronic).....

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

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	This report refers to the budget proposals for 2013/14 put forward by directorates in the Council and therefore implications for these areas are
Financial	
Legal Implications:	

Equality/Diversity Implications	presented in the report.
Sustainability Implications	
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	
Risk Management Implications	
Public Health Implications	
Health and Safety Implications	

1. Background

- 1.1 In October 2012, the Council released detailed budget proposals for the period 2013-2015 and these were supplemented by the launch of the Vision 2015 document. The aim of this approach was to support residents and other stakeholders to understand how the proposals may affect them in the short and medium term.
- 1.2 Due to a shortfall in savings for 2014/15, additional proposals were developed. These additional proposals have been the subject of a recent consultation process, which has now concluded.
- 1.3 Given the potential impact of the proposals on the workforce and the public, the consultation process included a statutory 30 day consultation with the recognised trade unions and also, where appropriate, public and stakeholder consultation. The consultation with wider stakeholders commenced on 19th November.
- 1.4 The consultation process was progressed by the same cross Council steering group which managed the consultation process for 2013/14.
- 1.5 The additional budget proposals comprised £ (3.3) m of policy choice decisions; these proposals were thematically summarised as:
- A greener borough
 - Education Support Services
 - Waste Management
 - Culture and Sport
 - Community Support
 - Public Protection
 - Highways
 - Council Tax & Benefit Administration

1.6 The budget consultation ended on 8th January 2014 and this report outlines the approach taken to the consultation, the outcome and how the consultation has shaped the budget proposals, including the impact on staffing numbers.

2. **Approach to Public & Stakeholder Consultation**

2.1 The budget consultation was delivered through staff briefings, media briefings and a dedicated Budget Consultation 2013-2015 section on the Council's website. Consultation with wider stakeholders commenced on 19th November 2013.

2.2 As this year's consultation was an extension of last year's process, the approach focused on the new/additional proposals only. Directorates used a variety of methods to ensure that they were able to reach their service users, carers, providers and partner agencies. These included:

- 'Easy read' versions of the proposals;
- Questionnaires and FAQ documents;
- Face to face meetings and briefings with providers;
- Providers were supported to engage and consult with their customers;
- Briefings with Strategic Partners;
- Email briefings with partners.

2.3 Website & Media Communications

2.3.1 Website Communications

A page was set up on the Council's website to support the consultation phase. This was located on the 'Have Your Say' section of the website. It consisted of different sections including a summary of the budget situation, where the Council gets its money from, a summary of the directorates and their proposals as well as a link to the full budget report. It enabled residents to feed back through the 'Have Your Say' mechanisms on the page – phone, email and letter. Between November 2013 and 8th January 2014, there were 82 unique visits to the budget consultation pages, 33 to 'Transforming Trafford' and 27 to 'Service Proposals and Consultations'. A full breakdown of the unique visits to all the different web pages can be found in Appendix 1.

2.3.2 Media Communications

A media briefing took place to ensure the local press were fully aware of the proposed decisions. There was representation from radio and print media. The attendees were taken through a presentation which outlined the budget situation, the proposed consultations and changes. The media were then given the opportunity to speak to relevant Executive Members and officers for

wider context where required. This briefing resulted in coverage in the local newspapers including Messenger and Advertiser as well as local radio stations Key 103 and Radio Manchester. A press release was also issued by the Council which was published on the Council's website and via Twitter (which has over 5955 followers).

2.4 Business Breakfast

The Council carried out a consultation event with local businesses on the 2014/2015 budget on the 6th December 2013. The event was extensively promoted via the Council's website and its business database, whereby just over 2,000 businesses were directly contacted. Fourteen businesses attended the event including representatives from Duro Felguera UK Ltd, Pozzoni LLP and Kier Construction. Cllr Anstee led the budget presentation and discussion which was then followed by a presentation from John Ashcroft, Chief Economist to the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, on the Autumn Statement and the state of the UK economy.

3. **Outcome of Public and Stakeholder Consultation**

5.1 As this years' consultation was an extension of last year's process, the approach focused on the new/additional proposals only and Directorates undertook public and stakeholder consultations in this context; the details and impact is detailed below:

5.2 Children, Families & Well Being

5.2.1 Adult Social Care

Many of the Adult Social Care proposals, including those relating to support for people with learning disabilities, pre-payment cards and Supporting People, were a continuation of work consulted on last year covering a 2 year period. It is for this reason that Adult Social Care did not have any proposals which required statutory consultation. However, all Adult Social Care proposals were taken to established forums for stakeholder consultation which covered proposals about Ascot House, Transport, Telecare and Reablement.

No changes have been deemed necessary to the original savings proposals as a result of this consultation.

5.2.2 Children's Services

None of the Children's Services proposals required statutory consultation. However, briefings were provided on all the proposals but with a focus on those pertaining to the Connexions and Education Welfare services, to the following partners:

- Secondary Heads Conference
- Special Heads Conference
- Primary Heads Cluster Leads
- Greater Manchester Police
- Clinical Commissioning Group

No changes have been deemed necessary to the original savings proposals as a result of these briefings.

5.3 Transformation and Resources

The only proposal in this directorate which was consulted on more widely with stakeholders was regarding the Culture and Sport proposal to disestablish the Arts and Cultural Development post. The consultation took place with members of the Cultural Partnership Network.

No changes have been deemed necessary to the original savings proposals as a result of this consultation.

5.4 Environment, Transport and Operations

Consultation with the Friends of Parks Groups (manned parks) took place regarding the proposal to change to parks maintenance programme and removal of Pets' Corner.

No changes have been deemed necessary to the original savings proposals as a result of this consultation.

5.5 Economic Growth & Regeneration

Most of the EGP proposals relate to income generation, rather than budget savings. A consultation has taken place regarding the Introduction of pre-application fees for registered social landlords (which is on-going). In relation to this proposal, an initial informal discussion has taken place with Trafford Housing Trust, and further consultation is to take place through the Strategic Housing Partnership. So far, feedback suggests that there will be no need to change the original proposal.

Appendix 2 provides more detail regarding the consultation activity completed

Appendix 1

Breakdown of unique web page visits:

Budget Consultation	82
Transforming Trafford	33
Service Proposals & Consultations	27
Budget background	19
Your Children, Families & Wellbeing	14
Income & Expenditure	8
Your Council & Community	7
Equality Impact Assessments	6
Your Environment	5
Your Economy	4

Appendix 2

Breakdown of Public & Stakeholder Consultation