

**Extract from the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment, Culture and Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 10 January 2012**

2012/2013 Draft Budget Proposals

The Director of Environment, Culture and Communities introduced the budget proposals which included detailed information on budget pressures and savings, proposed fees and charges and Capital Programme 2012/13 to 2014/15. Service pressures amounted to £275,000 and proposed savings amounted to £1,694,000 in 2012/13 and £250,000 in 2013/14.

Arising from members' questions, the following points were made:

- Budget Pressure –
The equalisation of working hours in Leisure and Landscape sections was an advisable pressure affecting 230 Leisure and 35 Landscape employees who worked at least 39 hours per week whereas other Council employees worked 37 hours per week. The Borough Solicitor advised members that employment legislation could not be compartmentalised into a departmental level.
- Budget Savings Proposals –
 - (i) South Hill Park Arts Trust - reduction of £85,000 to the grant. The £25,000 grant to help community groups had not been affected.
 - (ii) Car Parking – the anticipated increased income of £50,000 from car parking at The Look Out and Coral Reef.
 - (iii) Edgbarrow/Sandhurst Sports Centres – the Edgbarrow and Sandhurst Management Committee would meet next week to consider the budget proposals.
 - (iv) Waste Management, Brown Bins – existing users were exempt from paying the new charges for the first year, as when residents purchased their brown bins they thought the garden collection service would always be free. The exemption had been a member initiative.
- Proposed Fees and Charges -
 - (v) Golf Course – in relation to the charge for golf for residents aged 60+, the Golf Course Manager took demand into account and compared prices locally, coming to a professional view of how to maximise the Council's income.
 - (vi) Private Sector Housing Enforcement Action – the fee was calculated on officer time and it was benchmarked against other Berkshire authorities.
 - (vii) High Hedge Enquiries – the resident who raised the objection paid the fee.
- Capital Programme –
 - (viii) Car Park Controls at Look Out and Coral Reef - £200,000 had been included in the capital programme but it was not expected to cost that much. Currently the estimate was for just over £150,000, to include 14 machines, power supply and cabling, signage and contingency fees.
 - (ix) Waste Collection Contract Vehicles – The Council owned the SITA vehicles and £157,000 was the balance due on the recently purchased vehicles.

RESOLVED that, as requested by the Executive, a Working Group to review the proposed reductions to public transport subsidies and concessionary fare support be established comprising Councillors Finnie, Brossard and Gbadebo and that Councillors Finch and Leake be asked if they would like to be members of the Working Group.

Extract from the Minutes of the meeting of the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 17 January 2012

2012/13 Draft Budget Proposals

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health presented a report on the key themes and priorities for the Adult Social Care and Health Department as outlined in the Council's Draft Budget Proposals for 2012/13. The key themes included revenue budget, commitment budget, draft revenue budget pressures, draft revenue budget savings proposals, proposed fees and charges, equalities screening record form, capital programme report and summary, and proposed capital schemes.

Adult Social Care and Health major service areas included information and advice, assessment of need, support planning, purchasing and support, direct service provision – residential care, home support, day services, intermediate care/ reablement, commissioning and market management, joint work with health, financial assessment, and regulation/ contract management.

The draft budget proposals included information regarding people receiving support in Bracknell Forest. The majority of the day support was provided by the voluntary sector and funded by Bracknell Forest Council. There were a significant number of staff vacancies in Adult Social Care and Health at present. The cash budget gross spend in 2011/12 was close to £38 million. There was significant income from the Primary Care Trust, including £7.5 million to support people with learning disabilities.

There were significant budget pressures in relation to demographic changes in all care groups, including an increasingly ageing population. The Adult Social Care and Health Department were tracking and monitoring people from a young age regarding the support people received. The Dementia Advisor post had been funded for one year in 2011 and would continue to be funded at present. Self-funding service users sometimes found the funding for their care was exhausted and the local authority then became responsible for funding this care under regulations; £100,000 was spent in 2011 and was found within the budget for this.

The Autism Strategy had been launched and there had been an increase in the number of people presenting with autism for support. There had been a reduction in Supporting People funding. Significant budget reductions were proposed via the re-provision of home support, the recommissioning of Ladybank, Section 28A: demography and Continuing Health Care (CHC) taper, back office costs: management delayering, administration review and personal assistants, underlying underspend, changing working practices, and learning disabilities changes (Headspace/ day services). The first two proposals were out for consultation at present.

The Section 28A: demography and CHC taper involved the transfer of people with learning disabilities. A fixed amount of money was given for the support of people living in Church Hill House when it was decommissioned and when this was no longer needed there was a cost saving. Back office costs including the removal of a management post would result in £148,000 in savings altogether. There was an underspend of £200,000 and changing working practices included electronic monitoring and the creation of an organisation to run Headspace rather than Bracknell Forest Council.

The Community Team for People with Learning Disabilities would be re-located to the Time Square council offices and Waymead would then house day support and overnight respite care in the same building. The Community Capacity Grant funded a range of initiatives. The aim would be to develop more personalised approaches to Adult Social Care.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were made:

- The 'sales income and other grants' under the Headspace Service in Annexe C of the draft budget savings proposals referred to fees charged to attend the service and if artists sold work through Headspace there was a commission payable. The Headspace Service would be unable to apply for a grant whilst part of Bracknell Forest Council and the proposal was for the service to become a community interest company.
- There were seven residents currently in the accommodation at Ladybank.
- A management post would be removed from the Older People and Long Term Conditions Team. Administrative tasks would be reviewed and posts would be moved under the wider review of personal assistant support.
- In the transfer of learning disability funding, some of the funding in this grant was used to manage the Blue Badge Scheme now that the scheme had transferred from health to Bracknell Forest Council. An additional Occupational Therapist was needed to manage this process and provide clinical assessment of applications. The charge for blue badges would increase from £2 for three years to £10 for three years. The funding given for blue badges was more than that asked for and was a corporate saving rather than a departmental saving.
- Demographic changes did not particularly influence the investment into different Adult Social Care services in Bracknell Forest. More investment was being directed to services in Sandhurst to improve the service for people with additional needs. This would help to meet departmental objectives and the vision of the Adult Social Care and Health Department in providing and commissioning services. It was in keeping with the policy direction and a white paper was expected in the near future in relation to Adult Social Care and Health services.
- There would be monitoring of care provision and electronic monitoring of support when care workers arrived and left to provide support to service users which would be used to bill accurately with real time information. A roster and schedule of support was needed and there was potential for efficiencies.

Extract from the Minutes of the meeting of the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 18 January 2012

2012/13 Draft Budget Proposals

The Director of Children, Young People and Learning presented a report on the key themes and priorities for the Children, Young People and Learning Department as outlined in the Council's Draft Budget Proposals for 2012/13. The key themes included draft budget pressures, draft budget savings, draft budget net position, capital spend, staffing implications, and fees, charges and other income.

It was reported that the Department was subject to budget pressures of approximately £1million which were due to an increase in the number of looked after children and an increase in the number of children subject to Child Protection Plans. In addition the Department had also had to identify savings of approximately £1.6million for the 2012/13 financial year.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were made:

- The Youth Service was currently subject to a modernisation programme and part of this work would involve more centralised provision of youth services and the development of more targeted services
- The majority of responses to a recent survey of 5000 young people had found that the majority of them would prefer to access activities via alternatives to the traditional youth centre set up
- Although a number of the smaller satellite Children's Centres would be closed the reach of the remaining Centres would be extended
- The identification of vulnerable families requiring additional support would continue to take place as it did currently and follow up support would be provided by the main Children's Centres rather than the satellite centres
- The removal of support from the Early Years Graduate Leader and Training Programmes would impact on early years providers however a core service would remain and providers would be able to buy in additional service provision through a Service Level Agreement
- From September 2012, responsibility for the universal provision of careers advice and guidance would pass to schools. The Connexions contract would be re-let for the provision of a targeted service from September. Secondary schools would be able to buy into this service if they wanted to
- A core offer for the provision of the Education Psychology Service would be available to schools with additional services being made available through a Service Level Agreement
- A significant amount of work had been taking place to embed the Child Poverty Strategy into the day to day work of the Department

It was acknowledged that the budget reductions would be challenging however it was stressed that the Borough had a large range of voluntary sector providers who were very skilled and able and that this would go some way to mitigate their impact.

The Panel thanked the Director for her report and noted the draft budget proposals.