



**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES AND
COMMISSIONS
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER- TOWN HALL
ON 3 DECEMBER 2014**

Present: Councillors N Arculus (Chairman), S Allen, R Brown, S Day, R Ferris, M Fletcher, L Forbes, JA Fox, JR Fox, D Harrington, A Iqbal, M Jamil, N Khan, Y Maqbool, E Murphy, G Nawaz, J Okonkowski, J Peach, B Rush, B Saltmarsh, D Sanders, J Stokes, N Thulbourn

Also Present: David Whiles, Healthwatch
Steward Francis, Co-opted Parent Governor Representative
Councillor Sandford, Group Leader, Liberal Democrats
Councillor Cereste, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Housing, Economic Development and Business Engagement
Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Member for Street Scene, Waste Management and Communications
Councillor Holdich, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University
Councillor Fitzgerald, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Councillor North, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital
Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Hiller, Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Services and Rural Communities
Councillor Casey, Cabinet Advisor to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Waste Management (Culture and Recreation)
Councillor Lamb, Cabinet Advisor for Health

Officers Present: Gillian Beasley, Chief Executive
Jana Burton, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing
Sue Westcott, Executive Director of Children's Services
John Harrison, Executive Director of Resources
Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, Director of Communities
Kim Sawyer, Director of Governance
Simon Machen, Director of Growth and Regeneration
Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Scrutiny

The Chair welcomed everyone present and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for all Members of each Scrutiny Committee and Commission to scrutinise Phase 1 of the 2015/16 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2024/25 and the Council tax support scheme 2015/16 as part of the formal consultation process before being presented to Cabinet on 15 December 2014.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Fower, Shaheed, Shearman, and Shabbir. . Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Scott, Cabinet Member for Childrens Services and Councillor Serluca, Cabinet Member for City Centre Management, Culture and Tourism.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

No declarations of interest or whipping declarations were received.

3. Budget 2015/16 and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2024/25

Members were given an overview of the Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget by the Cabinet Member for Resources. The following key points were highlighted:

- Overview and overall budget strategy
- Detailed proposals:
 - Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing
 - Children’s services
 - Communities
 - Governance
 - Growth and Regeneration
 - Resources (inc. Strategic Commissioning)
 - Staff Implications
 - Council tax support scheme
- Examples of achievements
- Scale of financial challenge
- Budget conversation approach
- Budget conversation timeline
- Phase 1 next steps

Each section of the budget was then taken in order according to how it was presented in the Budget Book. Each section was introduced by the relevant Cabinet Member before taking questions from the Committee.

Questions and observations were made around the following areas:

Item	Section of the Budget	Questions / Comment	Response
3	Introduction of the Budget and Overall Budget Strategy	Members sought clarification on why the budget was being dealt with in two phases.	The Cross Party Budget Working Group was keen to take a two phased approach and the benefit to this was to enable delivery of some of the savings as quickly to gain a full years benefit.
		Members welcomed the establishment of the Cross Party Budget Working Group.	
		Members referred to page 5 of the budget book, referring to <i>“Reducing the demand residents have for our services and enabling them to live independent and healthy lives”</i> . Members commented that the total savings being made came to 16% of the total adult social care budget. Was Cabinet confident that they would be able to deliver the savings package?	Members were advised that Cabinet was confident that it would be able to deliver the savings but the figure of 16% quoted by the Member was not a figure that either the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care or the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing recognised. An accurate percentage figure could be worked out if Members requested it.
		Will the efficiencies in Phase 1 be repeated in the same departments in Phase 2?	Each department will continue to be looked at to see if further savings could be achieved.
		<p>Will the outcomes of Phase 1 be implemented in January to achieve an extra Quarter savings?</p> <p>Is Phase 1 to deal with a potential financial crisis and has the use of reserves been taken into consideration.</p>	<p>Yes Phase 1 will be implemented in January to achieve the extra Quarter.</p> <p>There is £6M in the general fund which on the advice of the Director of Finance is considered to be a prudent level of reserves. This has been looked at by the Cross Party Budget Working Group. If money was to be taken out of the reserves this would have to be approved by the Finance Director and would mean</p>

Item	Section of the Budget	Questions / Comment	Response
			running at a higher level of risk with lower reserves. If reserves are used it would be a one off and could not be used again.
		Council Tax. Will the government grant cover everything?	If council tax were to be increased and not take the government grant there would eventually be a financial benefit overall to the council. However, if the grant is included in the general grant it could be subject to general reductions. There would be a very short term benefit by putting council tax up to the level of a referendum. The reason is that people will be asked to pay 2% on their council tax bill for a net benefit of 1% to the council.
The Committee noted this section of the budget.			
4.	Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing Appendix 2 (Pages 10 – 18)	Members had noted that the savings proposals for fees and charges and transport had not been achieved last year. How confident is Cabinet that the savings proposals will be achieved this year.	Fees and charges are always resisted and there are a number of things that can prevent these from being achieved. The proposals were professional estimates by officers and if not achieved in year there was always the ambition to do so. The transport slippage is related to the transformation of day care opportunities. All the figures presented were achievable.
		Members requested that Cabinet looked again at the longer term projections within the budget lines on page 18 of the budget book to ensure that they had taken into account the impact of the Care Act.	

Item	Section of the Budget	Questions / Comment	Response
		<p>One Member commented that some of the language in the budget book seemed vague and provided little information which made it difficult to scrutinise effectively.</p>	
		<p>High Cost Care Placements Review. Members were concerned that if the costs were driven down the people who would suffer would be the people receiving the care and the care workers. More information was therefore required concerning these budget items.</p>	<p>It was difficult to put detailed information in a budget summary as the detail was complex and one size did not fit all. Disproportionality the council were paying far too much for some services. The high cost placements out of town were driving up the costs. It was not about cost reduction it was about developing and delivering the services locally for the benefit of the community and the people in care. This would therefore save the council money.</p>
		<p>Members were concerned about the development of a local market and wanted assurance that there were people locally that had the capacity to deliver the model.</p>	<p>The council was playing catch-up after the transfer of Adult Social Care back to the council from the PCT. The breadth of work to cover the gaps had been enormous together with the challenging financial circumstances had meant that the work was taking some time for each area to complete. Services had been redesigned and cost efficiencies made.</p>
		<p>Members were reminded that the budget book was about estimates and financial planning. The numbers could not be guaranteed unless the work had been done. There was a level of risk involved but was based on professional judgement which was challenged by the Directors and Corporate Management Team which in turn was challenged by Cabinet.</p>	

Item	Section of the Budget	Questions / Comment	Response
	<p>Members wanted to know if it was realistic to make savings before the markets were in place.</p> <p>Members felt that the council should be looking at working with other partners on delivering joint services. There was a concern regarding the implementation of the Care Act and it appeared that Adult Social Care were taking the bulk of the cuts in Phase 1.</p>	<p>Some of the markets were already in place and some were embryonic. The savings were professional judgements and were being taken forward with the best professional view.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care advised that he would be happy to share the target operating model and invited Members to meet with him to discuss this and other issues in more detail.</p>	
<p>The Committee noted this section of the budget.</p>			
<p>5. Children's Services Appendix 3 (Pages 19 – 21)</p>	<p>Members referred to page 20, "<i>Meeting the needs of challenging behaviour in schools</i>". Was there a danger that withdrawal of the £150K to support children and schools to better manage behaviour would leave schools unsupported in this crucial area? Will this also have a longer term effect on costs? The Pupil Referral service was an excellent service but there was a feeling that it was over stretched.</p> <p>Members wanted to know if the new challenging behaviour model had been discussed with Head Teachers.</p> <p>Will Phase 2 proposals contain any further cuts to Childrens Services?</p>	<p>No money was being taken away from behaviour support services. A different stream of money from the Dedicated Support Grant from the schools high needs block would be used instead of the Government Revenue Support Grant. The Pupil Referral Service will be used as a vehicle to recruit three or four workers to work within schools to up skill the teaching assistants to help with challenging behaviour.</p> <p>It had been fully discussed with Head Teachers and the Head Teacher of the Pupil Referral Unit and had been agreed.</p> <p>Phase 2 will see a reduction in school transport costs. The school transport tenders were due for renewal.</p>	

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		<p>Members sought clarification as to why there was a lot of social workers on temporary contracts and what was being done about this.</p>	<p>25% of the 83 social workers were agency staff. The recruitment campaign had been refreshed and rebranded. A video had been created and there had been a successful television programme. An Academy was being developed for newly qualified social workers. Work was also being undertaken with the Department for Education (DfE) to recruit high calibre graduates.</p>
		<p>How successful had the recruitment campaign been to attract new social workers.</p>	<p>Three Team Managers had been recruited to the First Response Team to replace agency Team Managers. A number of other appointments had also been made recently. The figure remains high as some social workers had left for personal reasons.</p>
		<p>Members queried whether as much as £2.296K would be required for Social Care Workforce if agency staff were not being used. Could some of this investment be directed elsewhere?</p> <p>The recruitment advertisements could be done in a better way.</p> <p>Was there any scope for joint working and shared services with other agencies and other local authorities that might deal with the management problem in Peterborough.</p>	<p>Peterborough was already working with other authorities and the social care workforce costs would be reviewed at every stage. Any savings made would be offered back.</p>
		<p>Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Arculus recommended to Cabinet that they continue to focus on the recruitment of more permanent social</p>	

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	<p>workers and reducing the amount of agency social workers employed by the council.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and was unanimously approved.</p>		
<p>The Committee noted this section of the budget and made the following recommendation.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they continue to focus on the recruitment of more permanent social workers and reducing the amount of agency social workers employed by the council.</p>			
<p>6. Communities Appendix 4 (Pages 22 – 25)</p>	<p>Members sought clarification on the models of delivery for foster care agencies and were concerned that the £375K savings would not be achieved.</p> <p>Members referred to page 24 and the mention of additional investments. Members highlighted areas of £2M in savings which had been included in the</p>	<p>Consideration was being given to introducing a payment by results model. Children placed with very challenging behaviour tended to be placed with independent fostering agency placements. Some work recently done had indicated that if in house foster carers were paid more money they would be more likely to take children who were more challenging. It would still cost less than placing them with an independent fostering agency. Work was also being done with the DfE to look at a scheme which worked differently with one of the independent fostering agency providers. There was a genuine belief that the savings would be achieved.</p> <p>£1.8M of the £2M is for the number of Looked After Children (LAC). The budget was set to fund 360 children last year but had 25 more Looked after Children. This could not be considered as a failure to</p>	

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		<p>budget last year but not achieved and sought further clarification as to how confident Cabinet were that the savings listed in Phase 1 would be achieved.</p>	<p>deliver the savings. it was positive that issues were being identified and children were being brought into care. All local authorities had seen a big increase in Looked after Children mainly due to the increase in child exploitation. The reason Looked after Children had increased in Peterborough was because there had been an investment in Child Exploitation of £2M which identified a number of children in serious danger.</p>
		<p>Members were concerned at the proposed reduction of the small central team who were responsible for improving public Health awareness and sought assurance that public health awareness would not suffer as a consequence.</p>	<p>Public Health was everybody's business. Officers across other organisations who as part of their job visited families could give important messages to families about healthy lifestyles. This would be done at very little extra time and cost. Advice and training would be given to these people to ensure they were skilled to deliver public health awareness messages.</p>
		<p>Members felt that it did not look good to cut back on public health services and therefore there needed to be good public relations in place to ensure people understood that the services would still be provided.</p>	
		<p>Members commented that there was a growing elderly population and yet there was £1M being cut from the budget which provided services to them. Is Cabinet therefore making the right judgement with regard to savings?</p>	<p>No one had a crystal ball and officers had to be trusted to make the right predictions. It should be noted that the council had come in on budget for the last four years.</p>

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The Committee noted this section of the budget.			
7.	Governance Appendix 5 (Page 26 – 27)	Members commented that the Cross Party Budget Working Group were going to consider responsibility payments during Phase 2 of the budget.	
		Members commented that the Chief Executive was carrying out a review of the Executive team to try and deliver some savings. Members therefore requested that the Leader of the Council also carry out a review of the roles and responsibilities of the Cabinet to see if it was possible to stream line some of the roles and responsibilities in order to make some savings.	The Leader responded that a review would be undertaken.
		Members noted that there would be savings of £200K in the communications team and in particular a reduction from two people to one for the climate change communications function. Members requested that Cabinet look at other partner organisations who have communications departments and consider sharing services. Communications on messages regarding climate change was an important function.	Members were informed that the council were already looking at cross organisation communication functions.
		Members noted that certain Car Parking charges had been targeted with an increase of 10% to 12%. Blue badge	In deciding on an increase in parking charges consideration had to be given to what was happening in other car parks across the city. Several car parks

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		holders who were currently parking for free would have to pay the full cost. One Member thought it might have been more equitable if car parking had been increased across all car parks rather than some and a substantial increase to one group.	were owned by private commercial providers and the council needed to be competitive. The car parks which have been targeted were those that were considered could sustain the increase. For example where the current cost is 70 pence it would be increased to a £1 which would be a sensible charge and reasonable increase.
		Some Members felt it unfair to charge blue badge holders and the charging sounded complicated.	On street parking would still remain free.
		Members were concerned that the increase in parking charges would deter people from coming into the city centre to shop. How could it be equitable if some car parking spaces were free to blue badge holders and some were not.	There would still be a number of car parks that would not have an increase in charges. The increase would be in car parks where the demand was particularly high.
		There was a need to bear in mind perception of value for money and ensure that people parking in Peterborough had a good choice of shops.	
		Members noted that there were no figures included for the legal services provided to Rutland.	Legal services were provided to Rutland in the same way legal services were provided to the council. This was done under statutory arrangements which stated that we should not seek to make a profit. The costs however covered training, library and research materials. The legal services provided were known as good value for money within the market. The benefit of providing this service to Rutland provided resilience to the team. The service was continually being reviewed.

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		<p>What expenditure had there been for external legal advice this year and what is the proposed budget for external legal advice next year. Was there any room for savings?</p> <p>Can the figures on external legal costs be provided in Phase 2 of the budget?</p> <p>Was there any identification for savings on the use of consultants?</p>	<p>External legal advice was being reviewed to see if better value could be obtained. The actual spend can be provided but is not part of Phase 1.</p> <p>Yes the figures can be provided along with any other requests from Members.</p> <p>A quarterly report on consultants broken down by project is presented to the Audit Committee where it is scrutinised. There had been savings over the years.</p>
		<p>Councillor Khan seconded by Councillor Forbes recommended to Cabinet that the proposal to charge blue badge holders to park in council car parks be deferred to Phase 2 of the budget consultation.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (8 in favour, 1 against, 14 abstained)</p>	
		<p>Councillor JR Fox seconded by Councillor JA Fox recommended to Cabinet that all stakeholders affected by the proposal to charge blue badge holders to park in council car parks be consulted further on the proposed charges to obtain their views.</p>	

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	<p>The recommendation was put to the vote and unanimously agreed.</p> <p>Councillor JR Fox seconded by Councillor Ferris recommended to Cabinet that they look at increasing more free off road parking spaces for blue badge holders.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (18 in favour, 0 against, 5 abstained)</p>		
<p>The Committee noted this section of the budget and made the following recommendations.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee recommends to Cabinet that the proposal to charge blue badge holders to park in council car parks be deferred to Phase 2 of the budget consultation. 2. The Committee recommends to Cabinet that all stakeholders affected by the proposal to charge blue badge holders to park in council car parks be consulted further on the proposed charges to obtain their views. 3. The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they look at increasing the number of free on street parking spaces for blue badge holders. 			
8.	<p>Growth and Regeneration Appendix 6 (Pages 28 - 31)</p>	<p>Members welcomed the news of the shared planning services and much needed income. Members sought assurance that staff within planning services would be protected in the redesign of the service.</p>	<p>Members were assured that Planning Services would be fit for purpose.</p>

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		Members noted that future street lighting maintenance would be prioritised on the basis of public safety and requested that this include street lighting on pedestrian ways.	The Cabinet Member confirmed that street lighting maintenance on pedestrian ways was already included.
		Members noted that the savings on street light maintenance reduced to nil by 2018/19 and sought clarification on this.	There will be more lights in place by then and therefore the savings will be reduced.
		The Chair suggested that a charge be made for copies of historical planning documents.	The Director of Growth and Regeneration advised that there was legal case law that stated that a profit cannot be made from selling information that was already available. This was therefore not an option.
		The Chair suggested that another option would be to increase the CON29 part of local land charges.	The Director of Governance advised Members that this was currently under consideration but recent case law where a personal search agent was trying to claw back money for fees paid for searches over the years had not yet been settled. Once the case was concluded and the case law settled then this would be looked at again.
		Members sought clarification on Concessionary Bus Fares and that the saving would not impact on people's ability to travel for free.	The figures reflected what was actually being paid rather than the estimates that had been made before. Forecasts were not always exact and the forecast had been more than was actually used.
		Members suggested putting a lower figure for savings on concessionary fares and using the money to put back one of the bus services.	If the saving was reduced for the concessionary bus fares the money would have to be found elsewhere in the budget.
		Councillor Sandford recommended to Cabinet that they work with other organisations to ensure that the educational support regarding climate	The Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment Capital felt that this was an excellent suggestion and was already in the process of putting the idea forward at the next Environment Capital

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		<p>change which has currently been provided by the council to schools, businesses and communities continues to be provided.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (13 in favour, 2 against, 8 abstained)</p>	<p>Steering Group. It was important to continue the educational support to schools about climate change.</p>
		<p>Members commented on the Growth Capital Savings of £720K and the Highways contract inflation savings of £144K and asked if more savings could be made from these to find the money for an additional bus service.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Planning and Housing Services and Rural Communities advised that the Highways contract inflation savings could not be increased.</p>
		<p>One Member suggested a further reduction in savings for tree management.</p>	
		<p>Members held a short discussion with regard to making savings to provide money for a further bus route.</p> <p>Councillor Maqbool seconded by Councillor Murphy recommended to Cabinet that £150K be found from the savings in Phase 1 of the budget to reinvest in a further bus route in Peterborough.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (15 in favour, 2 against, 6 abstained)</p>	<p>The Executive Director of Resources advised Members that they could not reduce the savings on concessionary bus fares and that it was about utilising the budget and reducing the overall savings in Phase 1 to create extra investment in bus services.</p>

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		<p>Councillor JA Fox seconded by Councillor JR Fox recommended to Cabinet to extend concessionary bus fares to include carers who look after people with disabilities.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (18 in favour, 0 against, 5 abstained)</p>	
<p>The Committee noted this section of the budget and made the following recommendations.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they work with other organisations to ensure that the educational support regarding climate change which has currently been provided by the council to schools, businesses and communities continues to be provided. 2. The Committee recommends to Cabinet that £150K be found from the savings in Phase 1 of the budget to reinvest in a further bus route in Peterborough. 3. The Committee recommends to Cabinet to extend concessionary bus fares to include carers who look after people with disabilities. 			
9.	Resources including Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships Appendix 7 (Pages 32 – 43)	The Cabinet Member for Resources reminded Members that all ideas for investment or savings could be presented to the Cross Party Budget Working Group.	

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		<p>Members referred to the Amey Contract and the Street Scene Services and commented that the tidiness of the streets had deteriorated. Thought needed to be given to increasing the street scene services and not decreasing them.</p> <p>However further savings could be made by reducing further the number of times grass cutting and grass verge cutting took place.</p>	
		<p>Members were concerned at the proposals to close 4 of the city's seven bowling greens and 11 of the city's tennis courts. Both of the provisions were essential to enable people to enjoy their leisure time. The bowling greens in particular were used by pensioners which enabled them to get out and also provided a social activity.</p>	
		<p>Clarification was sought with regard to seeking commercial and community partners to take on the running of specific services such as water features and wanted to know if this included the paddling pool in Central Park. It was important that the paddling pool was run correctly for health and safety reasons and this might cause concern if handed over to community partners as they may not have the expertise to run it.</p>	

Item	Section of the Budget	Questions / Comment	Response
		<p>How will the decision be made as to which bowling greens to close and has the option been considered for the bowling groups to run the greens themselves.</p>	<p>Members were advised that no one wanted to make the cuts but the budget had to be balanced against the usage. There would however be opportunities for people to come forward and manage the bowling greens and a meeting had already been arranged with the Orton Bowling Club to look at their proposals. It should also be noted that not all of the bowls clubs were in the proposals for closure.</p> <p>The consultation process would help to determine which bowling greens would be closed. If there were community groups which were willing to take over the running of the facilities then they may be able to remain open.</p>
		<p>Members requested that they be invited to any meetings with community groups which affected their relevant wards.</p>	
		<p>A Member was concerned about the proposal for 20% of shrub removal across Peterborough. The shrubs were part of the green infrastructure of the housing areas and helped drainage, absorb carbon and improve the appearance of areas. The Bio-diversity Strategy talks about the removal of fast growing shrubs and replacing them with slow growing shrubs therefore the proposals were contrary to this strategy. Could this proposal be postponed until Phase 2 to allow further investigation?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Street Scene, Waste Management and Communications advised that he would be happy to delay the proposals in regard to Parks, Trees and Open Spaces until Phase 2 to allow further investigation into the suggestions made.</p>

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		<p>Councillor Peach seconded by Councillor Okonkowski recommended to Cabinet that they consider the changes to street scene services and look for additional frequencies in litter cleaning of the city and request that Cabinet do not go ahead with the proposed closure of the 11 tennis courts and 4 bowling greens and look for alternative savings.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (20 in favour, 0 against, 3 abstained)</p>	
<p>The Committee noted this section of the budget and made the following recommendation.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they consider the changes to street scene services and look for additional frequencies in litter cleaning of the city and request that Cabinet do not go ahead with the proposed closure of the 11 tennis courts and 4 bowling greens and look for alternative savings.</p>			
10.	<p>Staff Implications Appendix 8 (Pages 44)</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Resources advised Members that the latest number of Voluntary redundancies were 18 which made the compulsory redundancies 25.</p> <p>A Member requested that redesigning of service areas which impacted on staff be brought to scrutiny in the future.</p>	<p>Members were advised that the budget papers did include the redesign of service areas to allow Members the opportunity to scrutinise the proposals as part of the consultation process.</p>
<p>The Committee noted this section of the budget.</p>			

Item	Section of the Budget	Questions / Comment	Response
11.	Council Tax Support Scheme Page 13 Appendix 2 of covering report in the Agenda Pack published on 25 November.	<p>The Executive Director of Resources advised Members that following the outcome of the Call-In the Cabinet Member Decision Notice to go out to consultation on options above the current 30% which is 35% and 40% had now been implemented.</p> <p>The Committee were asked to give views on the proposals to feed into the process which would result in a decision to be taken by Council on 28 January 2015.</p> <p>A Member asked Cabinet to consider the impacts on people and to look at the merits of considering certain groups of people like service personnel, people with disabilities particularly those on a low fixed income. Everything between 0% and 100% should be looked at. Council tax banding should also be taken into consideration.</p> <p>New initiatives mentioned by the government should also be taken into consideration like people who had not resided in the UK for four years would not be entitled to benefits.</p> <p>Members wanted to see a more progressive scheme and one that did not apply an equal percentage across the scheme.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Resources requested that the Member document all areas for consideration and he would meet with him to discuss them further.</p>

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		<p>Had a review of the scheme been conducted to assess the impact on the people who have been paying the council tax?</p>	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment had been undertaken in 2012 and feedback had been received on the impact since then Officers had advised that the impact had not been significant.</p>
		<p>A Member commented that the council was in a difficult financial situation however those who were in a vulnerable position should be protected and not asked to pay more and those who could afford to pay more should.</p> <p>There was a danger of hitting those people who could not afford to pay and protecting those who could afford to pay.</p> <p>Cabinet should consider looking at council tax in conjunction with looking at the Council Tax Support Scheme.</p>	
		<p>Members noted that Peterborough was one of the highest charging authorities at 30%.</p>	<p>If the council were to remain at 30% then there would be no flexibility in Phase 2 and there would be even tougher choices at the start of next year.</p>
		<p>Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Ferris recommends to Cabinet that they fully consider the impact that the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme proposals will have on low income residents in Peterborough before making a decision.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (10 in favour, 0 against, 13 abstained)</p>	<p>The Leader of the Council commented that consideration had always been given to the impact on the people of Peterborough when making decisions.</p>

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<p>The Committee noted this section of the budget and made the following recommendation.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they fully consider the impact that the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme proposals on which they are consulting will have on low income residents in Peterborough before making a decision.</p>			
12	General Comments, any overall recommendations and Conclusion		
	There were no further comments or questions.		

The Chair thanked all members of the Scrutiny Committee and Commissions for attending the meeting and the Cabinet Members and Directors for attending and responding to the questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Childrens Services

The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they continue to focus on the recruitment of more permanent social workers and reducing the amount of agency social workers employed by the Council.

2. Governance

2.1 The Committee recommends to Cabinet that the proposal to charge blue badge holders to park in council car parks be deferred to Phase 2 of the budget consultation.

2.2 The Committee recommends to Cabinet that all stakeholders affected by the proposal to charge blue badge holders to park in council car parks be consulted further on the proposed charges to obtain their views.

2.3 The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they look at increasing the number of free on street parking spaces for blue badge holders.

3. Growth and Regeneration

3.1 The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they work with other organisations to ensure that the educational support regarding climate change which has currently been provided by the council to schools, businesses and communities continues to be provided.

3.2 The Committee recommends to Cabinet that £150K be found from the savings in Phase 1 of the budget to reinvest in a further bus route in Peterborough.

3.3 The Committee recommends to Cabinet to extend concessionary bus fares to include carers who look after people with disabilities.

4. Resources including Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships

4.1 The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they consider the changes to street services and look for additional frequencies in litter cleaning of the city and request that Cabinet do not go ahead with the proposed closure of the 11 tennis courts and 4 bowling greens and look for alternative savings.

5. Council Tax Support Scheme

5.1 The Committee recommends to Cabinet that they fully consider the impact that the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme proposals on which they are consulting will have on low income residents in Peterborough before making a decision.

CHAIRMAN

The meeting began at 6.00pm and ended at 9.40 pm