



**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEES AND
COMMISSIONS
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER- TOWN HALL
ON 10 FEBRUARY 2014**

- Present:** Councillors N Arculus (Chairman), M Harper, P Kreling, D Lamb, M Lee, G Nawaz, J Peach, B Rush, JA Fox, JR Fox, D Harrington, B Saltmarsh, L Forbes, N Khan, E Murphy, N Thulbourn, M Jamil, D Fower
- Also Present:** David Whiles, Healthwatch
Councillor Cereste, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Growth, Strategic Planning, Housing, Economic Development and Business Engagement
Councillor Elsey, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Waste Management
Councillor Scott, Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Councillor Holdich, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University
Councillor Fitzgerald, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Councillor North, Cabinet Member for Environment Capital and Neighbourhoods
Councillor Seaton, Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Walsh, Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion, Safety and Public Health
Councillor J Goodwin, Cabinet Advisor to the Leader (Business Engagement, Tourism and International Links)
Councillor Dalton, Cabinet Advisor to the Leader (Planning and Housing)
Councillor Casey, Cabinet Advisor to the Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation and Waste Management (Culture and Recreation)
Councillor Todd, Cabinet Advisor to the Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion, Safety and Public Health (Community Cohesion and Safety)
- 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 for Communities
Kim Sawyer, Director of Governance
Steven Pilsworth, Head of Strategic Finance
Jonathan Lewis, Head of Corporate Property and Children's Resources

Kevin Dawson, Group Manager Construction, Compliance and Resilience
Paulina Ford, Senior Governance 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 the 2014/15 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2023/24 as part of the formal consultation process before being presented to Cabinet for approval on 24 February 2014.

The Chair had been advised that there were some members of the public present who had requested to speak at the meeting and the Chair advised that if they were given permission to speak that they would be allowed three minutes each.

The Chair read out to the Committee a letter that the Leader had received from Brandon Lewis MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary regarding recorded votes at Budget Meetings. The letter advised the Leader of new regulations that had come into force making it mandatory for councils as soon as was practicable to amend their Standing Orders so as to include provisions for recorded votes at budget meetings. As there had been no facility to amend the council's standing orders prior to the Joint Scrutiny meeting the Chair asked the Committee if they wished to adopt a recorded vote for any recommendations that may come forward at the meeting. There would be a requirement of at least 25% of the councillors in attendance to vote in favour. There was little interest from the councillors in attendance to adopt recorded votes. Councillors felt that it was not a budget meeting but a Scrutiny meeting at which the budget was being scrutinised and therefore it was not necessary to record votes.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Allen, Day, Maqbool, McKean, Over, Serluca, Nadeem, Johnson, Sandford, Sharp, Shabbir, Shearman and Sylvester. Councillor Jamil attended as substitute for Councillor Shearman. Apologies for absence were also received from Simon Machen, Director of Growth and Regeneration.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

No declarations of interest were received.

3. Budget 2014/15 and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2023/24

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:**
 - Capital Strategy, Asset Management Plan and Treasury Strategy
 - Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing
 - Chief Executive's
 - Children's services
 - Communities
 - Governance

- Growth and Regeneration
- Resources (inc. Strategic Commissioning)
- Staff Implications
- The Councils priorities
- **Settlement 2014/15 and 2015/16**
 - 2014/15
 - Grant will be £9m less previous year
 - roughly £1m worse than expected when budget planning started
 - 2015/16
 - Grant will be £12.5m less previous year
 - roughly £11.5m worse than expected when budget planning started
 - Overall reduction of nearly 40% (£44m) across 5 years
- **Pressures and Investments**
 - Inescapable budget pressures:
 - Looked after children
 - Gvt changes for learning disability following Winterbourne
 - Impact of continued economic downturn
 - Capital Investment:
 - Extra care provision
 - Roads infrastructure (Fletton Parkway and Bourges Boulevard)
 - Improvements to city centre
 - Additional places at primary and secondary schools
 - Waste strategy
 - Renewables – Income built into future years' budgets
- **Scale of the Financial Challenge**
 - Summary position for 2014/15:
 - Grant reduction of £9m
 - Financial pressures of £10m
 - Overall budget gap of nearly £19m
 - Gap increases in 2015/16:
 - Grant reduction of £12.5m
 - Financial pressures of £4m
 - Budget gap increases by £16.5m
- **Council Tax**
 - One of lowest council tax levels in the country
 - Previously approved Budget assumed 2% per annum increase (i.e. at current referendum limit threshold)
 - Proposals put forward are on the following basis:
 - 2014/15 - Council Tax frozen
 - 2015/16 - Council Tax frozen
 - Lose freeze grant if we increase. Potential impact:
 - 2% increase costs taxpayers roughly £1.2m
 - Grant loss around £0.7m
 - Net benefit around £0.5m
- **Reserves, balances and risk**
 - £6 million working balance is maintained
 - Capacity building reserve – low
 - Tight financial control even more important
 - Key risks:
 - Business rate retention – impact if Government growth targets are

- not hit, appeals etc
- Savings plans
- Council tax benefit

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
4	Introduction of the Budget and Overall Budget Strategy (Pages 1 -71)	<p>Members referred to the slide 'Meeting the Financial Challenge' and suggested the following should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax to be put up by 2% to provide additional income of £500,000. • Increasing efficiency savings e.g. make the management more efficient. • Look at the claims for VAT and reducing some of the costs in buildings. • Additional income could be gained from marketing the buildings that are being used for children's centres. They could be used at weekends and evenings. The income would then help towards the reduction in cuts to Children's Centres. 	<p>A Council Tax increase of 2% brings in £500,000 extra to the Council, but would mean that that residents pay an extra £1.2M. If the Government does not put into the Councils baseline the Grant Freeze Monies going forward then the benefit would be higher in future years.</p>
		<p>Members sought assurance that the Grant Freeze monies would continue.</p>	<p>It had been confirmed that the freeze grant for 2014/15 would continue into 2015/16, but Government could not guarantee that the Grant Freeze Monies would continue into the next Parliament.</p>
		<p>Please explain the funding reductions.</p>	<p>The table includes Public Health which is an increase that cannot be used for any other purpose than Public</p>

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		Page 7, paragraph 5.4 the table shows funding for 2013/14 of £119M and the funding for 2014/15 is £112.2M. On page 10 para 5.14 there is a table showing inescapable and essential costs of £10,343k for 2014/15. If this is the budget shortfall why are we making savings of £16.2M	Health matters.
<p>Action</p> <p>The Committee noted this section of the budget.</p>			
5	<p>Treasury Management Strategy 2014/2015 – 2023/2024 (Pages 72 -95)</p> <p>Capital Strategy 2014 – 2024 (Pages 96 – 123)</p> <p>Asset Management Plan 2014 – 2019 (Pages 124 – 151)</p>	<p>Appendix 2, page 94 – Summary of capital and treasury prudential indicators. In the section ‘Ratio of financing costs to net revenue budget’ there is an ever increasing percentage of revenue budget going towards financing costs. Is this being kept in hand?</p> <p>Asset Management Strategy. Two of the car parks are being sold which will provide a good capital receipt. We are investing in the city centre and want people to come into the city with their cars and will therefore need car parking facilities. Are there any further plans to sell any of</p>	<p>This was due to the Energy from Waste Plant investment and investment in schools.</p> <p>The car parks are not at saturation point and there is plenty of capacity within the city centre. It is therefore appropriate that the council considers other opportunities for those sites.</p>

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		the other car parks?	
		Cost for translation is £50k but it is probably more like £100K.	A policy regarding translation was introduced some years ago which states that the council should only spend money on translation where there is a statutory or legal requirement. An example would be translation of documents for court proceedings.
		In Cambridge the authority has a project called 'Making Assets Count' which maps out and analyses usage of all their assets. Is this something that is done by PCC and if so where can the information be found?	The budget book includes the Asset Management Plan which details the council's approach to managing assets with partners in a similar way to the Cambridgeshire project.
		Could the commitment of a Healthy City be added to the council's priorities?	This was a worthwhile suggestion and Cabinet would consider this.
		How flexible are the budget pressures. Can the risk be moved up or down to relieve pressures elsewhere?	One of the responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer was to advise the council on the robustness of the budget estimate which included management of risk. Pages 32 to 36 of the budget book details the risks and how these are managed.
		As the budget processes are getting better and efficiencies are being produced and the budget is reducing. Could we reduce our reserves from £6M to a more appropriate level of £4 or £5M?	The Chief Financial Officers role is to recommend to Members whether the £6M is an adequate amount for the reserves. At the start of the year there are always pressures which may eat into the £6M. When looking at a £17M budget deficit for 2015/16 if the balances are not right then the money would have to be replaced the following year. The Chief Financial Officer cautioned against moving away from the £6M.

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		<p>Councillor Murphy remarked that Looked after Children needed to be looked at as there appeared to be tens of thousands of pounds spent on visits by social workers to Bulgaria.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Children's Services requested that Cllr Murphy provide evidence that Social Workers were being sent to Bulgaria or withdraw his remarks. No Social Workers had been sent to Bulgaria.</p> <p>The Executive Director for Children's services confirmed that no Social Workers had been sent to Bulgaria. It may have been that placements had been identified to place children in their country of origin which would cut down on the money being spent on Looked After Children.</p>
		<p>Page 20, paragraph 1.2.5 the budget projections are not taking into account the retained business rates. However at paragraph 1.2.3 it indicates increased funding as a result of that. If this were reanalysed would this produce different figures.</p>	<p>There is a degree of offsetting there between increases in business rate income and future reductions in grants from Central Government.</p>
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Councillor Lamb seconded by Councillor Lee recommended that Cabinet include as part of the Councils Priorities on page 4 of the Budget Book the Commitment to a Healthy City. <p style="padding-left: 40px;">The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (18 in favour, none against, none abstained)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The Committee recommend that Cllr Seaton investigates whether Business Rates retention would impact on the revenue budget and whether more accurate forecasts would assist in revenue allocation and budget setting. 			

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Action			
The Executive Director of Children's Services to provide the Committee with a full briefing note regarding the comment about Social Workers that may have been sent to Bulgaria and placements for children in their country of origin.			
6.	Adult Social Care Appendix 1 and related Capital Programme (Pages 16 – 25)	Supplementary report, Appendix 1, page 5. ASC – Quality Information and Performance show savings of £50K regarding joint initiatives with Children's Services. What is this and why is it listed under Adult Social Care.	There has been a reorganisation of the Councils Senior Management Team and commissioning of children's services and adults now come under one area. This efficiency saving is about bringing responsibilities of the workforce development functions together across adults and children's services.
		Supplementary report, Appendix 1, page 5. What does the proposed cut of £80K in services for Mental Health cover? Is it the funding to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust (CPFT)?	There is a Section 75 arrangement with the CPFT the Mental Health Trust for the provision of Adult Social Care Services. Work had been done on the personalisation agenda with them and this is where the £80K saving has come from.
		There is mention of aiming for a more modern service. Can you give an example of what service is being offered now that is not modern?	Adult Social Care transformation is about the transition from providing very traditional day services, residential services and home care services in a very traditional way to a better service with the aim to enable everyone to live as independently as possible. Part of this is giving people skills to obtain employment. In doing this the dependency on statutory services is often reduced.
		Will the Gloucester Centre be closed?	The Gloucester Centre is not run by the Council. It is operated by the CPFT and the Council provide funding to 35 of the 40 users who also use the

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			Gloucester Centre. The Council are also providing the same funding directly to the Gloucester Centre which cannot continue. The CPFT gave notice to the Council to discontinue the service.
<p>Action</p> <p>The Committee noted this section of the budget.</p>			
7.	Chief Executive's Appendix 2 and related Capital Programme (Pages 26 – 27)	No questions were submitted.	
<p>Action</p> <p>The Committee noted this section of the budget.</p>			
8.	Children's Services Appendix 3 and related Capital Programme (Pages 28 – 32)	No questions were submitted.	
<p>Action</p> <p>The Committee noted this section of the budget.</p>			

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9.	Communities Appendix 4 and related Capital Programme (Pages 33 – 37)	<p>Angela Brennan a Member for the Public who was in attendance asked the following questions:</p> <p>With regards to children's centres, what is this figure made up of? Could I have a break down? Has the budget now encompassed the extra 100K coming from the EIG grant to setup new children's groups or the Bus Fares that the council are now promising everybody who is getting to the new proposed hubs?</p> <p>What is the figure for the transport costs and is this included in the £100K.</p> <p>Members were concerned that the councils priority of 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Children and Adults was being compromised by closing the children's centres.</p>	<p>The £931K in the supplementary report on page 8 is there because the savings will not be made by 1 April. The full year effect would be £1,181K and does include the £100K to support parent groups etc.</p> <p>If people need to go to a hub or an outreach centre and are not in a position to fund their transport but they needed to go to a centre for some particular therapy then we would look to help them with their costs. We did not say that we would fund all the transport.</p> <p>Members were referred to Appendix 3 of the budget book – Children's Services. There was a commitment to the social workers in the city to maintain the safeguarding work that they do and the service to help the most vulnerable children in need.</p> <p>Every Council in the country has had to look at the expenses associated with Children's Centres. The Government are putting £10M of ring fenced money into Peterborough this year to fund 15 hours of free</p>

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			child care to all three and four year olds in the city and to children aged two years who meet the criteria.
		The Werrington Children's Centre was opened less than four years ago and now it is being closed. Where was the forward plan for this?	Members were referred to the Settlement for 2014/15 and 2015/16 to remind Members of the reduction in funding. 2014/15 - £9M less than previous year. 2015/16 - £12.5M less than previous year.
		Supplementary report, Appendix 1, page 8 – 'Communities'. Could an explanation be given for the £1,019K pressures against the CHS – Strategy, Commissioning and Prevention section?	Most of the £1,019K relates to the upward trend in numbers of Looked After Children which is a national trend. There are also some elements of related transport cost.
		<p>A member of the public Bobby Day who works at a Children's Centre was in attendance and asked the following questions.</p> <p>In the Cabinet report on Children's Centres presented at the Cabinet meeting on 3 February there was a document, Appendix 5, Calculation of savings required for each Children's Centre. The Westwood and Ravensthorpe Children's Centre was £233,370. Please can you provide a breakdown of costs and does it include the running costs of being at Ravensthorpe School.</p>	It did include Ravensthorpe at the time it went out to tender but not now. The Director for Communities did not have the detailed information at the meeting and offered to meet with the member of public to provide a comprehensive response outside of the meeting.

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		Westwood and Ravensthorpe Children's Centre was initially over two sites. The Children's Centre had not been in Ravensthorpe school for some time.	
		<p>A member of the public Chris York was in attendance and asked the following questions.</p> <p>David Cameron has said that he was increasing funding to Children's Centres. Why therefore are the council cutting Children's Centres budgets?</p>	The report presented to Cabinet on 3 February included a letter from Elizabeth Truss MP from the Department of Education which clearly states that Children's Centres funding was included in the Early Intervention grant. This is possibly what David Cameron was referring to.
		More work needs to be done to look at the specific budgets to see if savings can be achieved through identifying efficiencies and additional income to reduce the level of cuts.	Councillor Murphy had been invited to meet with the Director of Communities and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to discuss ideas for the identification of further efficiencies.
		Children's Centres. Have the lease closures and terminated contracts already been included in the budget?	Yes these had been included.
		Officers should provide assistance in supporting Members in discussing alternatives ways of saving money and identifying efficiencies. A working party	The Chair advised Members that there was not enough time to establish a working party and allow suitable deliberation before the budget had to be approved. It was therefore suggested that other Members of the Scrutiny Committee may also wish to meet with the Director of Communities to discuss

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		<p>could be established to look further at this.</p>	<p>alternatives to saving money.</p> <p>The Director of Communities extended the invitation to all Members of the Scrutiny Committee to attend the meeting to be held with Councillor Murphy at 4.30pm on Tuesday 11 February at Bayard Place.</p>
		<p>David Whiles from Healthwatch asked the following question.</p> <p>The reduction in budget of £45K to pay for the running of St Georges Hydrotherapy Pool will mean that it will close on 31 March 2014. The 1700 service users will have no alternative provision. The Health and Wellbeing Board in September endorsed the role of hydrotherapy for the physical and mental wellbeing of the people of Peterborough. What alternative provision will be put in place for the 1700 users?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Environment Capital and Neighbourhoods advised that he had been working with local groups at the hydrotherapy pool. The groups were looking at raising sufficient funds to keep it open three months beyond the due closure dates. If the funds can be raised then it will provide some time to look at ways of keeping it open over the next two years. The question arises as to whether the NHS should provide the funding.</p> <p>The St Georges centre requires some maintenance work and funding would not be available. The school in which the centre is housed is due to close in two years' time. Discussions are being held with PJ Care to see if they have hydrotherapy provision.</p>
		<p>David Whiles from Healthwatch asked the following question.</p> <p>The NHS and the Council both have some degree of responsibility for hydrotherapy. Please can the council use their</p>	<p>It is the intention to pursue NHS funding.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council commented that by working unilaterally a new sports centre had been provided in Hampton. There was a possibility of two more sports centres being provided in the city with swimming pool facilities. This might provide an</p>

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		<p>best officers to persuade the NHS to fund the commissioning of this service in the city?</p>	<p>opportunity to explore the possibility of having a hydrotherapy pool at one of the new facilities. If the Council, the NHS and users of the hydrotherapy pool worked together to provide funding it might be possible to keep the hydrotherapy pool open until other possibilities were explored.</p>
		<p>Could a breakdown be provided of the maintenance and running costs of the hydrotherapy pool?</p> <p>Could a full assessment of the condition of the building also be completed?</p>	<p>The Head of Corporate Property and Children's Resources informed Members that a report has been prepared to answer these questions. He also advised that the building was safe and a full conditions report has been completed.</p>
		<p>Councillor Fox recommended that funding be found to keep the hydrotherapy pool running until an alternative could be found.</p>	<p>The Leader of the Council requested that the NHS should be included within the recommendation.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care informed the Committee that it was the responsibility of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group to provide the hydrotherapy service and he was having discussions with them concerning this.</p>
		<p>Angela Brennan a member of the public asked if any charities had been contacted about the closure of the hydrotherapy pool to see if they could assist with costs. This would then put less strain on the budget.</p>	<p>The Chair requested that charities be included in any recommendation made.</p>

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		<p>Members requested that the Community Leadership Fund (CLF) contributions be unblocked so that they could be used to help towards funding to help the hydrotherapy pool stay open longer.</p>	<p>Members were advised that the CLF had not been blocked but had been held until the decision had been made on whether the hydrotherapy pool would close or not. Subject to the agreement that the hydrotherapy pool stays open the CLF money will go towards the funding.</p>
		<p>Supplementary report, Appendix 1, page 8 – ‘Communities’. Section OPS – Neighbourhoods. The homelessness Bed and Breakfast Costs - £150K. This appears to be increasing and yet the housing budget is being reduced by £50K. The housing budget should be increased to reduce the demand for homelessness bed and breakfast accommodation. Can Cabinet review the use of bed and breakfast accommodation?</p>	<p>The £150K that has been put forward is in response to the impact of welfare reform and the changes that are taking place. The assessment of need indicates that there are likely to be more people who are temporarily homeless. The £50K is for the increase in the charge to Registered Social Landlords for the choice based lettings. The assessment report can be provided to the Committee.</p>
<p>Recommendations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="280 1066 1968 1133">1. Councillor Murphy seconded by Councillor Forbes recommended to Cabinet that on going and additional work is done to identify efficiencies and income generation to mitigate the current level of service reductions in Children’s Centres. The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (11 in favour, 5 against, 2 abstained) <li data-bbox="280 1232 1968 1326">2. Councillor JR Fox seconded by Councillor Lee recommended to Cabinet that they seek to maintain St George’s Hydrotherapy Centre running until alternative sources of funding are identified. This to be done by working with services users, the NHS, and the voluntary sector to keep the pool open for two years until a solution or an alternative is found. 			

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<p>The recommendation was put to the vote and was unanimously approved.</p> <p>Action</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Director of Communities to provide the Committee with the Assessment of Needs report produced to inform the reason for increasing the funding of Homelessness Bed and Breakfast costs. 2. The Head of Corporate Property and Children's Resources to provide the Committee with a copy of the report detailing the running costs of the hydrotherapy pool and a breakdown of repairs with costings for both the pool and building. 			
10.	Governance Appendix 5 And related Capital Programme (Page 38 - 40)	<p>Page 39, Reducing the Community Leadership Fund - saving of £183K. Please can you explain how this figure has been arrived at?</p> <p>In reducing the CLF to £1K per councillor what assessment has been done to ascertain the impact on deprived areas or is this an arbitrary approach to save money.</p> <p>How can an arbitrary approach like this be taken when it could potentially discriminate against councillors with large wards for example rural wards which cover fourteen or more villages.</p> <p>A request was made that the Director of Governance provide</p>	<p>The Chair provided an explanation. Last year the default rate of £10K per ward was kept even though the budget was reduced for one year to £7K. This year it is proposed that it is reduced permanently to £1K. This is how the figure is arrived at.</p> <p>It was an arbitrary approach to save money.</p> <p>CLF funding does not have an ongoing revenue implication. By definition the spend year on year should not be supporting services and therefore no implications. There is no equality impact assessment on CLF.</p> <p>The Director of Governance confirmed that it was an annual discretionary spend with no ongoing impact.</p>

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		an explanation in writing.	
		<p>Councillor Lee seconded by Councillor Fower recommended that the CLF funding be raised to £10K per ward.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and NOT approved. (5 in favour, 6 against, 7 abstained)</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Resources reminded the Committee that when making recommendations to increase the budget that consideration needed to be given to where money could be saved elsewhere.</p>
		<p>Supplementary report, Appendix 1, page 9 – ‘Governance’. CEX – Legal. What are the £50K changes to the Electoral System for?</p>	<p>Page 40 of the budget book details why £50K is having to be spent on changes to the Electoral System. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act requires every resident in the city to fill in their own individual electoral registration form. As a consequence there will be increased postal and canvassing costs to ensure forms are sent to every resident rather than every household. It will also pay for additional canvassers to chase non-returned forms.</p>
		<p>Could Cabinet have a look at the Communications Department and to see if further savings can be made?</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion, Safety and Public Health invited Councillor Murphy to meet with the Communications team to help him to understand the rationale behind the budget figure.</p>
		<p>Councillor Harper seconded by Councillor Peach recommend that Cabinet reduce the CLF fund to zero and put it back into the budget to use on vital services.</p>	

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		The recommendation was put to the vote and NOT approved. (6 in favour, 7 against, 5 abstained)	
<p>Recommendation</p> <p>Councillor Saltmarsh seconded by Councillor Harrington recommend that Cabinet (only) reduce the Community Leadership Fund to £5000 per ward.</p> <p>The recommendation was put to the vote and approved. (9 in favour, 5 against, 4 not voting)</p> <p>Action</p> <p>The Director of Governance to provide in writing an explanation as to why the CLF funding does not have an ongoing revenue implication.</p>			
11.	Growth and Regeneration Appendix 6 and Related Capital Programme (Pages 41 – 44)	No questions were submitted.	
<p>Action</p> <p>The Committee noted this section of the budget.</p>			
12.	Resources including Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships Appendix 7 and related Capital	Will the Arts Festival be continued going forward.	There will be an Arts Festival. The council took the decision that under the current circumstances it would not be best use of council funds to put on an Arts Festival however following discussions with Vivacity they have found some additional funding from

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	Programme (Pages 45 – 61)		elsewhere and there will be an Arts Festival in some form.
		Could you provide details of the book fund? What are we loosing from the book fund?	The book fund is reducing by £70K and Vivacity believe they can still offer a comprehensive service as close to the current service as possible.
		Angela Brennan a member of the public referred to the page 53 of the budget book – ‘Resources’ - Football ground income loss of £303K. Why after buying the Football ground at an extortionate over inflated price is the Council now recording massive income losses?	The income loss is due to rent abatement as some parts of the ground cannot be used at the moment.
		If people do not opt to pay for the collection of brown bin waste are people more likely to use the black bins for garden waste therefore increasing the amount going to landfill. This would mean increased charges for the council. Would it be better to cut the collection frequency of the brown bin by fifty percent rather than charge?	There were 103 authorities that had already implemented a charge for collection of garden waste. These authorities had noted that an additional 3% of garden waste was going into black bins and there was no reason to believe Peterborough would be any higher than that. The amount that would add to gate fees for landfill tax was included within the savings stated. It would need 35% take up to achieve the savings. Other authorities had shown that this was achievable.
		How will you implement the brown bins? Will there be a chip facility on the bins.	There will be an in cab computer system on the vehicles which will advise the crew which properties are participating or not in the scheme.

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		<p>What happens to areas where people have to put their bins at a designated collection point? How will the crew know which bin belongs to which household and if they have or have not paid.</p>	<p>As part of payment people will receive a tamper proof sticker on the bin. If someone tries to remove the sticker it will disintegrate therefore no one can remove a sticker from someone else's bin and apply it to their own. The in cab information will also advise the crew of which people have paid for the service.</p>
		<p>Has there been an impact equality assessment completed on this policy as it would seem that regardless of income everyone will pay the same.</p>	<p>It is an optional service and if someone cannot afford the service then they do not have to take up the service. The charge of £39 per years in the lower quartile of charges compared to other authorities.</p>
		<p>What happens if the sticker is tampered with and disintegrates and it is not the owners fault.</p>	<p>The sticker will remain on the bin and it cannot be removed in any kind of useable piece. A replacement sticker will be provided.</p>
		<p>For those people who decide that they do not want their brown bins emptied what will happen to the bin.</p>	<p>The bin is part of the property and will therefore need to remain at the property for the use of any future owners or tenants of the property who may wish to take up the service.</p>
		<p>Angela Brennan a member of public asked the following questions.</p> <p>What would happen if the brown bin charges went ahead and people decided to sweep the leaves from their property onto the street? How much more money will then be spent cleaning up the streets. How much money will go into policing the new charges?</p>	<p>If leaves are in the street they will be collected by the street cleansing regime which is already in place. Any additional work like this has been taken into consideration within the cost savings.</p>

Item	Section of the Budget	Questions / Comment	Response
		<p>Bobby Day a member of public asked the following questions.</p> <p>Has the new charge included the cost of having to collect dumped rubbish like fly tipping?</p> <p>Chris York a member of public asked the following question.</p> <p>As our food waste goes to Northampton has the council had an increase in gate fees and if so is this the reason that our brown bins are now going to be charged for.</p>	<p>Yes this has been included.</p> <p>No.</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>The Committee noted this section of the budget.</p>			
13.	<p>Staff Implications Appendix 8 (Page 62)</p>	No questions were submitted.	
<p>Action</p> <p>The Committee noted this section of the report.</p>			
14	General Comments, any overall recommendations and Conclusion		

Item	Section of the Budget	Questions / Comment	Response
		<p>Councillor Murphy questioned the freeze on council tax and felt that this might jeopardise services even further in the long term.</p> <p>Councillor Murphy requested that Cabinet should consider the implications of not increasing the Council Tax by 2% over future years.</p> <p>Page 122 of the budget book. Capital Receipts Summary from 2014 to 2018.</p> <p>When is the land at Riseholme, Orton Goldhay scheduled for disposal and also Thorney Tank Yard?</p> <p>Councillor Arculus commented that unused assets should be disposed of as quickly as possible.</p>	<p>Members were advised that if Council Tax is raised above 2% then a referendum will need to be held.</p> <p>Members were referred to page 14 of the budget book, paragraphs 7.8, 7.9 and 7.10 for further clarification on Council Tax.</p> <p>Both of these assets are currently being reviewed and there are no timescales currently in place for disposal.</p>

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

The Committee recommends that:

1. Cabinet include as part of the Councils Priorities on page 4 of the Budget Book the Commitment to a Healthy City.
2. Cllr Seaton investigates whether Business Rates retention would impact on the revenue budget and whether more accurate forecasts would assist in revenue allocation and budget setting.
3. To Cabinet that on going and additional work is done to identify efficiencies and income generation to mitigate the current level of service reductions in Children's Centres.
4. To Cabinet that they seek to maintain St George's Hydrotherapy Centre running until alternative sources of funding are identified. This to be done by working with services users, the NHS, and the voluntary sector to keep the pool open for two years until a solution or an alternative is found.
5. Cabinet (only) reduce the Community Leadership Fund to £5000 per ward.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Committee requested that:

1. The Executive Director of Children's Services to provide the Committee with a full briefing note regarding the comment about Social Workers that may have been sent to Bulgaria and placements for children in their country of origin.
2. The Director of Communities to provide the Committee with the Assessment of Needs report produced to inform the reason for increasing the funding of Homelessness Bed and Breakfast costs.
3. The Head of Corporate Property and Children's Resources to provide the Committee with a copy of the report detailing the running costs of the hydrotherapy pool and a breakdown of repairs with costings for both the pool and building.

CHAIRMAN 6.30- 9.38 pm