

Cheltenham Borough Council
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
24 November 2010
Budget consultation

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| Accountable member | Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor John Webster |
| Accountable officer | Chief Finance Officer, Mark Sheldon |
| Accountable scrutiny committee | Environment O&S |
| Ward(s) affected | All |
| Key Decision | No |
| Executive summary | <p>The council is facing significant financial pressure and is likely to have to find savings of £2.6m in 2011/12 and £4.8m over the next 5 years. Given the enormity of the task, a town wide budget consultation took place over the summer of 2010.</p> <p>The committee is requested to consider the feedback from this consultation and indicate to the Cabinet any views on the consultation prior to the Cabinet finalising their interim budget proposals in December 2010.</p> |
| Recommendations | <p>1. The committee consider the consultation responses and identify areas, under the remit of the committee, where the Cabinet should look to maintain expenditure levels, reducing expenditure, stop the provision of services and make any suggestions for providing services differently.</p> |

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| Financial implications | <p>There are no financial implications arising from this report, although the formulation of the budget will include options which will bridge the funding gap.</p> <p>Contact officer: Mark Sheldon E-mail: mark.sheldon@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel no: 01242 264123</p> |
| Legal implications | <p>None arising at this stage</p> <p>Contact officer: Peter Lewis E-mail: peter.lewis@tewkesbury.gov.uk Tel no: 01242 264216</p> |
| HR implications (including learning and organisational development) | <p>None arising at this stage</p> <p>Contact officer: Amanda Attfield E-mail: amanda.attfield@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel no: 01242 264186</p> |
| Key risks | Risks will be identified in the final budget proposals |

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| Corporate and community plan Implications | None at this stage |
| Environmental and climate change implications | None at this stage |

1. Background

- 1.1** Given the coalition government desire to reduce the level of national debt through controlling the level of public spending, the outlook for the council's financial position looks challenging.
- 1.2** Given the level of cuts, some additional budget consultation was undertaken during the summer of 2010. This consultation consisted of 21 roadshows across the town using information boards containing lists of council services including financial information. Residents were asked to identify and prioritise, using sticky dots which services should be 'protected', 'reduced' in cost or 'stopped' altogether. The public used 21,000 sticky dots in the process. Whilst it is recognised that this was not a scientific exercise, it has engaged the public in a debate about what the council does and does provide a useful guide to the Cabinet in determining where to look to make cuts in future year's budgets.
- 1.3** The results have been analysed and services ranked in order under each of the headings of protect, reduce and stop.
- 1.4** Members are asked to consider these and offer any views to Cabinet on how the Cabinet should approach its decision making in the budget process.

2. Consultation and feedback

- 2.1** The consultation result will be tabled for consideration.

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| Appendices | Appendix 1 and 2 - Results from summer consultation |