



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Held: THURSDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2011 at 7:00pm

P.R.E.S.E.N.T.

Councillor Grant – Chair
Councillor Bhavsar – Vice-Chair

Councillor Aqbany	Councillor Bajaj
Councillor Johnson (for Cllr Scuplak)	Councillor Kitterick (for Cllr Clair)
Councillor Newcombe	Councillor Potter (for Cllr Joshi)
Councillor Suleman	

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134. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Clair, Joshi and Scuplak.

135. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they had in the business on the agenda and/or indicate whether Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act applied to them.

The following interests were declared:-

Councillor Grant declared personal interests in Item 3 (2011/12 Budget Proposals) as his partner worked in the Chief Executives Office and his sister-in-law worked in a school in the City.

Councillor Johnson declared a personal interest in Item 4 (Divisional Budgets Pertinent to the Regeneration and Transport Task Group leader) as he and his wife were in receipt of concessionary bus passes.

Councillor Newcombe declared a personal interest in proposal number ES3, of Item 5 (Divisional Budgets Pertinent to the Environment and Sustainability and Culture and Leisure Task Group Leaders), as he was a Trustee of the Bradgate

park and Swithland Wood Trust. He also declared personal interests as his wife worked within Adults and Housing and several family members worked in cleansing services.

Councillor Potter declared a personal interest in proposals numbered ES11, ES12 and ES13 of Item 5 (Divisional Budgets Pertinent to the Environment and Sustainability and Culture and Leisure Task Group Leaders), as she knew some street cleaners personally. Councillor Potter also declared personal interests as she had a child in full-time education, her former mother-in law was in receipt of a Council care package and she was a Council tenant.

Councillor Suleman declared a personal interest in proposal CS08 of Item 5 (Divisional Budgets Pertinent to the Environment and Sustainability and Culture and Leisure Task Group Leaders), as he lived outside the City (but in the County).

Councillor Aqbany declared a personal interest in Item 6 (Divisional Budgets Pertinent to the Adults and Housing and Community Cohesion and Safety Task Group Leaders) as his mother was a Council lessee.

136. 2011/12 BUDGET PROPOSALS

The Deputy Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer were present to provide an introduction and general overview of the 2011/12 budget proposals.

The Chief Finance Officer explained that following a huge decrease in Government funding, the 2011/12 budget had been the most difficult budget to construct in decades and that significant cuts were unavoidable. The proposed budget aimed to protect Leicester's priorities. It was also pointed out by way of introduction that Council Tax had been frozen for the coming year if the proposals were adopted.

The in-year spending cuts announced on 25 May 2010 resulted in a drop of £9.2m of funding from central government, and the City Council had also been adversely affected by cuts to organisations such as the East Midlands Development Association (EMDA). Furthermore, the Comprehensive Spending Review saw a 29% real terms reduction in formula grants over four years at national level. In response to a query from Councillor Suleman, it was clarified that grants received by the Council were to reduce by 12.9%, in 2011/12. The Chief Finance Officer also stated that a number of specific grants had been rolled into formula grant, and that the appropriate sums had been added into the budget. This was not growth, just a change of funding.

The Board were informed that the Council had received a two year settlement from the Government, which would see an overall reduction of £30m in revenue grants and a £20m reduction in capital. It was also explained that this included a reduction of £9.6m in Children's Services specific grants for which budget proposals did not exist at the time the draft budget was published.

Further key funding changes included a cessation of the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system in 2012/13, the receipt of additional funding for adult care via the NHS and the transfer of £0.9m as a central provision for academies.

Members heard that a number of 'one-off' monies would be used for severance and for the 2011/12 budget. Total available monies amounted to £17.5m, The amount of one off monies which the budget proposed to use would exceed this, to cover the additional funding required for Children's Services. It was intended to review all budgets significantly in Spring 2012

In respect of the main features of the Budget, the Chief Finance Officer reported that protecting BSF funding was a key component; as was investing £750,000 into Safeguarding Children which reflected the increased number of children entering the care system. An extra £1m for concessionary bus travel had been provided in light of an average 5% increase in fares and a growing number of elderly citizens using buses.

In terms of savings, a proposed senior management review and savings within ODI and HR were key features. Savings within ODI were expected to grow from £5.6m to almost £9m by 2014. Savings within HR related in part to changes to the terms and conditions of staff which included proposals to reduce working hours to 35 hours. The Chief Finance Officer was expecting the trade unions to comment on these in their formal responses.

In relation to Children's Services specific grants, it was explained that the Government had announced major complex reductions in overall grant funding, which encapsulated a 22% reduction of Early Intervention Grant, which provided for schemes including Sure Start. Schools were reported as also suffering from forthcoming budgetary pressures, as a result of a pay award, and the reduction of several direct grants. It was also explained that the size of the gap in the overall position of the budget was expected to grow significantly from the draft proposals as a result of the impact of cuts in Children's Services grants.

The Chief Finance Officer reported that £4m would be received in each of the next two years via the NHS to deliver Adult Social Care work which directly benefitted health outcomes. Use of this money had to be agreed with the PCT. It was also noted that clarity from the Government was still awaited in respect of several other grants including youth justice.

The Chief Finance Officer believed the key areas of risk in the budget were the adult social care programme, the changes in staff terms and conditions, and the ODI programme. This was due to the size of the savings and the fact that programmes of activity were required to deliver them.

The Deputy Chief Executive spoke further on areas of interest to Members and explained that the current level of budgetary pressures had led to a greater number of services being brought into review. He stated that the overall level

of risk to the Council was sizeable in light of the reduction of the amount of money made available. He also made it clear to the Board that any changes to the terms and conditions of staff contracts were subject to full consultation with staff and Trade Unions, and that implementation of such changes would be far easier if Trade union support was provided. . Furthermore, the Deputy Chief Executive explained that consultancy spend over the last financial year had fallen from £9.6m to £3.3m and that agency spend had fallen by £2.3 million in the last year, well exceeding it's target.

Clarity was sought around the level of finance required for pension and severance costs. The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that £15m would be provided via "quasi borrowing" and by the use of available one-off monies. "Quasi borrowing" would be achieved by using monies set aside for capital (and then borrowing for capital works) or by using facilities within the pension scheme to defer cost. In response to a further query in relation to the proposal to reduce working hours, the Deputy Chief Executive said that £4m was proposed for this, which equated to 50% of the total possible saving and explained that the proposal could not be extended to all Council staff due to need for full coverage in some service areas.

Concern from members was expressed around the shortage of information around the ODI review budget. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that a significant amount of background detail on this programme was available which could be made available to Members. In response to further comments around a shortage of information around Adult and Social Care budgetary processes, the Deputy Chief Executive explained that a broader transformation process had shaped this area , which had made it difficult to break down specific figures in the same way as many other divisional budgets.

The Chair asked whether any particularly radical measures had been employed by the Council to try and address the overall budget situation. The Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that service transformation processes had commenced within many of the Council's larger and more expensive services. Further to this, a variety of other ways of remodelling services which included neighbourhoods, were being considered. He added that work on the 2012/13 budget would commence in the coming months and as part of this, many other services would be looked at in more of a transformational way.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the general overview of the 2011/12 budget proposals be noted; and
- (2) That further information on the ODI review budget be provided to Members

137. DIVISIONAL BUDGETS PERTINENT TO THE REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT TASK GROUP LEADER

Regeneration, Highways and Transport

The Divisional Director, Regeneration, Highways and Transport, was present to provide a summary of the budget for his division.

Members heard that the division had an overall budget growth of £1.4m , which would fall to £0.3m by 2013. This growth was composed of budget pressures of £3.1m in 2011/12 and savings of £1.7m in 2011/12 rising to £2.8m by 2013/14. it was explained that the pressures mainly related to concessionary fares and reduced design and supervision fees from a reduced capital programme. The savings mainly comprised of a reduction of 41 posts within the division and a £600,000 reduction in bus subsidies which would encompass the loss of 29 bus routes. A further saving of £300,000 in highways maintenance had been proposed. Further a number of questions in relation to the loss of these routes, the Director explained that a number of mitigating factors were considered before decisions were made and consideration in consultation with the bus companies was given to those which could be delivered commercially. The Director agreed with a suggestion by Councillor Newcombe that all subsidised bus routes in Leicester be reviewed in the future, and it was further suggested that a Task Group review in relation to this be considered as a future topic. Furthermore, members were informed that discussions were taking place with Leicestershire County Council around the possibility of linking the Birstall and Enderby Park and Ride services.

In light of a reduction in income from on-street and off-street parking, it was questioned whether more rigorous levels of enforcement of unauthorised car parking sites could be employed. In response, the head of Planning Management and delivery explained that he was aware of several unauthorised sites, and referred members to a legal case which was lost several years ago on the grounds of an inadequate policy and a shortage of evidence. He stated that the Council had now produced a Car Parking Supplementary Planning Document which was currently undergoing a period of consultation. The meeting heard that once adopted, this could help to significantly reduce the number of unauthorised car parks.

In response to a further question, the Director, Regeneration, Highways and Transport stated that he was optimistic that a reduction in the highways maintenance budget would not lead to a significantly poorer level of service as officers had access to a capital maintenance budget.

In response to a question around the Star Track system, the Director, Regeneration, Highways and Transport, confirmed that there would be no further capital investment into Star Track and that future alternatives to the system were to be considered.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Regeneration, Highways and Transport 2011/12 budget summary be noted; and
- (2) That consideration be given to setting up a Task Group to review subsidised bus routes.

Planning and Economic Development

The Head of Planning Management and Delivery and the Head of Economic Regeneration were present to provide a summary of the budget for the Planning and Economic Development division.

The Board were informed that the division had an overall reduction excluding grant transfers of £41k in 2011/12 rising to nearly £0.5m in subsequent years. There were budget pressures of 269,000 in 2011/12 and proposed savings of £310,000 in 2011/12 rising to £754,000 by 2013/14. It was explained that the budget pressures related to the cutting of the Housing Planning and delivery Grant and projected shortfalls in the Markets budget. The savings were mainly from a reduction in management and specialist staffing in the Planning Service and a reduction in funding for sub-regional economic development including the successor body of Prospect Leicestershire and Leicestershire Promotions.

In respect of economic regeneration, the Head of Economic Development informed the Board that there would be a 30% reduction towards the sub regional support unit, a 30% reduction in the Prospect Leicestershire grant and just under a 30% reduction in overseas links. It was also anticipated that increased income at Leicester Business Centre would improve the situation by £40,000 in 2011/12 and £80,000 in 2012/13 and beyond.

The Head of Planning Management and Delivery explained that the budget pressure of £182,000 in relation to the Housing Planning and Delivery Grant was as a result of the expiration of the grant from the Government. Further savings of £202,000 as part of a management review and £129,000 in specialist planning staffing had also been proposed. In response to a question, it was noted that such specialists included those that provide advice on trees, buildings of historic interest and in relation to urban design. It was reported that remaining planning specialists would be used in a more focused way. The Head of Planning Management and Delivery also explained that a proposal had also been included around reducing the amount of pre-planning application advice.

In response to concerns expressed to officers, the Head of Planning Management and Delivery confirmed that the cuts to service could lead to a reduction in the monitoring of the planning permissions, which in turn could potentially lead to a rise in the number of breaches.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Planning and Economic Development 2011/12 budget summary be noted.

138. DIVISIONAL BUDGETS PERTINENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY AND CULTURE AND LEISURE TASK GROUP LEADERS

With the agreement of the Committee, the divisional budget pertinent to the Environment and Sustainability Task Group Leader (Appendix C2) was

considered before that pertinent to the culture and Leisure Task Group Leader (Appendix C1).

a) Environmental Services

At the invitation of the Board, Councillor Russell, the Lead Member for Environment and Sustainability addressed the meeting, explaining that, wherever possible, innovative ways had been sought by which Environmental Services could be protected and service levels maintained.

The Board expressed concerns about the proposal to reduce park and play locking services, (proposal number ES20). It was suggested that not locking some of the City's parks or play areas would lead to anti-social behaviour in their vicinity and Members were reminded that a verbal assurance previously had been given that consideration would be given to which parks and play areas should still be locked.

In reply, the Director of Environmental Services confirmed that it had not been decided yet which parks and play areas would continue to be locked, but the history of each site would be considered before a decision was made. The Director further confirmed that consideration was being given to alternative ways of providing this service, such as outsourcing the service, the provision of automatic bollards at entrances, or using existing staff resources. It was recognised that there would be costs associated with these alternatives, but these also needed to be quantified.

Concerns were expressed that, once a way forward had been implemented, problems could be created for local residents, such as the presence of street drinkers, or incidences of anti-social behaviour. The Director of Environmental Services confirmed that it was only in parks and play areas where it was known that no anti-social behaviour problems existed that an alternative system would be implemented straight away and assessed while in operation.

At the invitation of the Board, Councillor Coley addressed the meeting commenting that, although some parks and play areas currently did not have any problems, these could arise if they were not locked, (for example, travelling communities moving on to unsecured areas).

Councillor Suleman enquired whether consideration had been given to park user groups taking over the locking service on a voluntary basis. The Director of Environmental Services confirmed that one option being considered was for the local community to take on the role.

Councillor Suleman then drew attention to the proposed increase in car parking charges, (proposal number ES21 referred), and questioned how this equated with the Council's efforts to encourage people to use the City's parks. He suggested that the proposal to increase car parking charges needed to be reconsidered, as the increase would deter people from travelling to City parks. However, it was noted that only two parks currently had car parking charges, which had been introduced to stop commuters using those car parks.

In considering the suggested closure of the Consumer Advice Centre (proposal number ES8), Councillor Russell reminded Members that much of the advice given at the Centre was available from other sources. However, it was recognised that some people preferred a face-to-face service, so existing Customer Services staff would be supported to enable them to provide this advice.

At the invitation of the Board, Councillor Shelton, Deputy Leader of the Environment and Sustainability Task Group, addressed the meeting, enquiring whether consultation had been started on the suggestion that a county-wide shared service for regulatory services could be considered. Councillor Russell explained that tentative approaches had been made to district authorities within the county. Positive feedback had been received at Chief Executive level where approaches had been made.

Councillor Shelton also enquired whether cleansing levels could be maintained following the proposed reductions in street cleaning and whether surplus equipment would be sold, (proposals numbered ES11, ES12 and ES13). Councillor Russell explained that the mechanical sweepers used by the Council were leased and that these leases were coming to an end.

Councillor Russell also confirmed that there was confidence that cleanliness levels would be maintained. It already had been found that cleanliness sometimes was higher in areas where hand barrows were used, as operatives could access smaller areas. Members of staff currently working on mechanical sweepers would be redeployed within cleansing services.

The Director of Environmental Services confirmed that amounts of visible litter in some areas could be greater than previously following this change to the service, but the risk of this had been taken in to account in presenting the proposal. If it was found that the level of service was unacceptable, resources could be redirected as part of the risk mitigation process. The frequency with which mechanical sweepers currently visited individual Wards depended on the nature of those Wards, as they were most effective in areas where there were wide, open spaces. Currently, every road was swept at least once per week, the majority of these sweeps being by hand sweepers.

Although the reduction in carbon emissions that could be achieved through the reduction in use of mechanical sweepers was welcomed, Members were concerned that the increased use of manual cleansing services could lead to an increase in the number of repetitive strain injuries (RSIs) experienced by members of staff doing this cleaning. The Director of Environmental Services advised that appropriate steps would be taken to ensure that staff could work safely and that the number of RSIs was not expected to increase. The Director undertook to circulate information on the number of RSIs reported in this service.

Councillor Potter reminded Members that she had declared a personal interest in proposals numbered ES11, ES12 and ES13, as she knew some street

cleaners personally.

Serious concerns were expressed about the proposed loss of a Gardener from Gilroes cemetery (proposal number ES15). This was important work that currently was done to a very high standard and Members were concerned that this service would not be maintained. They also questioned why the reduction could not be made at a management level. The number of actual posts to be lost was questioned, as it was suggested that this could be more than one when agency staff were no longer employed.

The Director of Environmental Services advised that the proposal was not to lose one post, but was for the loss of one gardener. It was expected that this would not lead to a significant reduction in the quality of service provided. The Director further explained that one management post in Bereavement Services already had been lost. There would be significant reductions in the Parks and Green Spaces service and it was hoped that as many of these as possible could be made at a management level. The opportunity also would be taken to rationalise service delivery, which would include consideration of having shared management for the Parks, Green Spaces and Cleansing services.

In response to further questions about how the staffing implications had been assessed, the Director of Environmental Services explained that there currently were three vacancies in Bereavement Services. One of these posts, that of Gardener, would be lost in the 2011/12 financial year, so no individual members of staff were at risk in that year. Two posts would be deleted the following year, one of which currently was vacant and one of which would come from the core pool of staff.

Councillor Suleman expressed concern at the proposal to increase non-cremation Bereavement Services fees and charges, (proposal number ES14), as the Council already owned the assets used in the service and he felt that there had not been proper consultation on the proposal. The Director of Environmental Services reminded Members that, although Bereavement Services currently generated a significant financial surplus for the Council, ambitious savings needed to be achieved across the whole division. Ways of achieving this without reducing service levels therefore had to be found. Some improvements to Bereavement Services were planned, such as the introduction of a florist and the extension of the chapel at Gilroes cemetery, and which would benefit everyone.

Councillor Newcombe reminded Members that he had declared a personal interest in proposal number ES3, as he was a Trustee of the Bradgate Park and Swithland Wood Trust.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the report be noted;
- 2) that Cabinet be requested to recommend to Council that the post of Gardener in Bereavement Services (included in proposal ES15) be retained; and

- 3) that Cabinet be informed of the comments made by the Board on the remainder of the proposals relating to Environmental Services.

b) Cultural Services

Richard Watson, Director of Culture, introduced the budget proposals for the Cultural Services division. He explained that the proposals sought to prioritise front line services and drew attention to the levels of projected growth and recommended savings set out in the report.

In considering the proposal to introduce alternative management and operational arrangements for four museum sites (proposal number CS04), the Board noted that, if an alternative was adopted, the Council still would need to retain curators and storage space for each museum. Sarah Levitt, Head of Arts and Museums, advised that the staff cost saving was approximately £339,000 as detailed in CS04. In view of this, Members questioned whether the saving that would be made by closing museums to visitors was significant enough to warrant the loss of this service.

In reply to further questions, the Head of Arts and Museums advised that it had not been decided how a scheme to offer free entry to museums only to city residents would operate (proposal CS08 referred). One possibility was the use of different coloured stickers to differentiate who could access different parts of a facility. This would include people attending events at the Council's museums.

City residents would be required to provide evidence that they lived in the City, such as utility bills, library tickets, or membership cards for local organisations. Councillors pointed out that many young people would not have these items and were advised that staff at the entrance to the museums would have to exercise an element of discretion in these cases. The precise charges to be made would be decided if the principle was agreed.

It was noted that those who had served with the Royal Leicestershire Regiment would not have to pay an entry charge to the Newarke Houses Museum. Consideration also would have to be given to what kind of entry could be given to various other categories of people, such as those who had made donations to the museums.

In reply to concerns that the Arts Council required free admission to some of its exhibitions, it was noted that this had been discussed with the Arts Council, which had indicated that it would consider this on an exhibition by exhibition basis. It was felt that arrangements could be made to accommodate such exhibitions, such as making special offers, (for example, free admission), when these exhibitions were held.

The following comments were made during discussion on this proposal:-

- Facilities such as the shops and cafés at the museums would lose revenue if visitor numbers reduced as a result of entrance charges being made;
- New Walk Museum and Newarke Houses Museum had over 170,000 visitors per year. Approximately 46% of these were from outside the City boundary, with approximately half of these being from outside the county;
- In view of the anticipated number of visitors from outside the City, the income required was unlikely to be raised from a minimal entry charge;
- The Leicester Mercury had quoted a possible entry charge of 20 pence, but it was not known how the newspaper had calculated this figure. The amount to be charged had not been decided and would have to take account of the possible reduction in visitor numbers;
- It was recognised that any system of charging admission would itself have a cost;
- Calculations had been made to identify how much visitor numbers could drop if entry charges were made. From these, it appeared to be worthwhile to introduce the charges as proposed;
- Proposal CS08 had been made to avoid having to charge everyone who entered the museums in question.

In view of the comments made, it was suggested that proposal CS08 should be deleted. Councillor Suleman reminded Members that he had declared a personal interest in this proposal, as he lived outside the City (but in the County). As such, he would not vote on the motion to recommend its deletion.

The Board also expressed concern at the proposal to consider alternative management arrangements for sports and leisure facilities (proposal number CS15). The Council would retain responsibility for plant and maintenance, so would still have significant costs to meet, and it therefore was suggested that this proposal should be deleted.

In response to questions from Councillor Suleman:-

- The Head of Arts and Museums advised the Board that the closure of the Fosse Arts music studio had been agreed as part of the budget for the 2010/11 financial year (proposal CS03 referred). Consequently, it had closed in September 2010; and
- Paul Edwards, Head of Sports, advised that sites across the City had been considered for the Football Development Project, (proposal CS02 referred), but Aylestone Meadows was the only site large enough to host 21 football pitches.

With regard to proposal CS05, to discontinue plans to replace the City Gallery, the Board enquired why alternative management options were not being

considered, as was suggested under proposal CS04 for other museums. Richard Watson explained that this was a different situation, as this was a proposal not to proceed with a new building to replace one that previously had been leased. However, consideration would be given to any offers by other organisations to take on management responsibilities. Approximately £300,000 had been spent to date on the feasibility costs and other professional fees related to the original proposed new site for the Gallery.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the report be noted;
- 2) that Cabinet be requested to recommend that proposal CS08 be deleted and admission charges be not introduced for non-City residents at New Walk Museum and Newarke Houses Museum;
- 3) that Cabinet be requested to recommend that proposal CS15 be deleted, so that management responsibility for sports and leisure facilities is retained by the City Council; and
- 4) that Cabinet be informed of the comments made by the Board on the remainder of the proposals relating to Cultural Services.

The meeting adjourned at 5.29 pm

139. DIVISIONAL BUDGETS PERTINENT TO THE ADULTS AND HOUSING AND COMMUNITY COHESION AND SAFETY TASK GROUP LEADERS

The following draft Budget Strategies 2011/12 – 2013/14 were presented: -

- i) Adult Social Care - (Appendix D1)
- ii) Housing Strategy and Options Division - (Appendix D2)
- iii) Housing Related Support (Supporting People) Fund – (Appendix D3)
- iv) Safer and Stronger Communities Division – (Appendix D4)

i) ADULT SOCIAL CARE APPENDIX D1

The Strategic Director, Adults and Communities presented the Draft Budget Strategy. A supplementary page of information relating to Clients Changing Services and Clients Receiving Less Of Their Existing Services was also tabled at the meeting.

Members expressed a view that the supplementary information should have been circulated prior to the meeting and not tabled and that consideration should be given to deferring discussion of the Strategy document to a Special meeting of the Board. Members were unclear about several issues contained within the report and requested further information from the officers.

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by the Vice-Chair, and agreed, that further discussion on the Adult Social Care Draft Budget Strategy 2011/12 – 2013/14 be deferred to an adjourned meeting of the Board, to be convened as soon as possible.

Members requested that further information on the areas identified as follows be provided prior to the meeting: -

- Proposed closures of residential homes, including a detailed cost analysis
- Meals on Wheels Service
- Personal Budgets
- Home Care Workers and the options
- Specific proposals regarding Extra Care
- Quality of Care

RESOLVED:

that discussion on the report be deferred to the adjourned meeting of the Board.

ii) HOUSING STRATEGY AND OPTIONS DIVISION APPENDIX D2

The Director, Housing Strategy and Options presented the Draft Budget Strategy and stated that Housing General Fund services would be adversely affected by severe reductions in capital reductions in government resources for the Homes and Community Agency, reductions in former Supporting People funds and the overall reduction in formula grant to the Council.

Members opposed, under the rationalisation of voluntary sector grants, the proposed withdrawal of funding for the provision of Corner Club, and Study Support, both of which were in-house services, and Family Support at Border House. It was felt that these were still much needed services and could lead to discrimination as some children at Border House would be eligible for support and others would not. Further information on the length of time families spent in hostels was requested and to be circulated to members.

Members supported the retention of the Homehandy Person Services but felt that there was an opportunity to promote this service better within the private sector.

Members supported the work being done to develop the Revolving Door Service at all hostels in the City that would provide focused support on those individuals that had been in the hostel more than once over the previous two years and would help them succeed when they next left the hostel.

RESOLVED:

that the Draft Budget Strategy be noted and Cabinet be informed of the comments made by the Board.

iii) HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT (SUPPORTING PEOPLE) FUND APPENDIX D3

The Director, Housing Strategy and Options presented the Draft Budget Strategy and stated that the report set out the actions required to make reductions of 15% in year 1 and 7.5% in years 2 and 3 for services funded from the former Supporting People grant. It was reported that the Care and Repair and the Supporting Tenants and Residents (STAR) services would be particularly affected by these cuts.

Members supported the work of the STAR service and questioned whether the work could be expanded, to offer support to clients for an appropriate period of time, instead of reducing the service. By way of clarification it was stated that there was not a fixed term of 3 months for each case handled by STAR.

Members further suggested that the proposed position regarding the ending of the contract with the Care and Repair service be re-visited as it was felt that this was a useful service.

Members questioned the savings referred to in the report that related to Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS) and Community safety. It was stated that these cuts related to contracts for particular services that were in place. Negotiations were underway by the Housing Related Support Team with the respective contractors to try and identify the necessary savings. Members stated that the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee had not been informed of these cuts to services for children and urged that they be consulted.

It was moved by the Chair and seconded by the Vice-Chair that discussion on the report be deferred to enable the information identified to be provided and to enable the members of the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee to be consulted on the proposed cuts to services to children.

RESOLVED:

that discussion on the report be deferred to the adjourned meeting of the Board and that members of the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee be consulted on the detail of the proposed cuts, and the Cabinet Lead Members for Children and Young Peoples Services and Community Safety be invited to attend the adjourned meeting.

iv) SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES DIVISION APPENDIX D4

The Head of the Youth Offending Service presented the Draft Budget

Strategy and stated that the division was heavily dependant on Central Government grant funding, with the Drugs and Alcohol Team 100% funded by Government and the Youth Offending Team 65% funded by Government.

It was reported that Information was still awaited from Central Government on a number of the funding streams identified in the report, and this information was being pursued by officers.

It was stated that, regarding the Youth Offending Service, discussions were underway with the Strategic Director Children to try and ensure that this area is work is not cut out by utilising some funding from the Early Intervention Grant that had been made available by the Government.

Members expressed concerns that actual savings could not accurately be determined because of the position reported by officers and surprise at the predictions that, despite cuts of some £1.5m, an improved level of service could be offered by way of re-commissioning and re-alignment of services and better ways of working, and sought what services would not actually be re-commissioned to achieve such savings.

It was moved by Councillor Newcombe and seconded by Councillor Potter, and agreed, that further discussion on the report be deferred to the adjourned meeting to enable the further information, referred above, to be provided by officers.

RESOLVED:

that discussion on the report be deferred to the adjourned meeting of the Board