

Time Commenced – 6.00 pm  
Time Finished – 6.25 pm

## **Corporate Scrutiny and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Board**

**9 December 2013**

Present: Councillor Redfern (Chair)  
Councillors Carr, Dhindsa, Hickson, Holmes, MacDonald.

### **44/13 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pegg, Ingall and Whitby.

### **45/13 Late Items**

There were no late items.

### **46/13 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **47/13 Call-in**

There were no items.

### **48/13 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2013**

The Chair explained that an incomplete version of the minutes had been inadvertently circulated with the agenda papers. The correct version of the minutes were circulated at the meeting. The circulated version of the minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **49/13 Corporate Scrutiny and Climate Change Board Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals 2014/15 - 2016/17**

The Board considered a report which stated that the Council had published three year budget proposals for 2014/15 to 2016/17 for public consultation. The proposals were in line with the council's budget strategy agreed by Council in September 2013. The consultation document previously circulated to members in late 2012 contained details of individual proposals for savings to meet the multi-million pound budget challenge facing the Council in 2014/15. It reflected the council's position regarding the requirement from Government to make unprecedented levels of service reductions due to the Government's austerity programme.

The estimated levels of savings required to balance the budget, reported in the budget strategy in September 2013 was approximately £77 million over the next

three years. The latest forecast required savings of £81m to balance the budget. This included £29m in 2014/15, £31m in 2015/16 and £21m in 2016/17.

The Corporate Scrutiny and Climate Change Board (CSCCB) had a scrutiny responsibility for elements of the proposed revenue budgets of both the Neighbourhoods Directorate and the Chief Executive's Office, as well as Corporate Budgets and the Capital Programme. The board also had a responsibility to consider the budget recommendations coming forward from the other five scrutiny boards and an overarching responsibility to look at the budget as a whole and make recommendations further to those already made. The purpose of this report was to present these Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2014/15 and to allow members to scrutinise and be engaged in consultation on these proposals.

Proposals for the CSCCB elements of the Neighbourhoods Directorate Budget Proposals were covered on pages 41-48. There were no further specific proposals within the CSCCB remit on top of those identified and agreed under the Revenue Budget Proposals 2013/14 – 2015/16. The Board made no further comments on these elements of the budget proposals.

Proposals for the Chief Executive's Office were covered on pages 31-33 of the document. The document showed that the Chief Executive's Office had proposed savings of £275,000 in 2014/2015, £249,000 of which were savings identified and agreed under the Revenue Budget Proposals 2013/14 – 2015/16. Further savings of £26,000 and a reduction of 0 FTE were proposed under the direct remit of the CSCCB. There were no further budget pressures identified for 2014/2015 within the CSCCB remit on top of those already identified and agreed under the Revenue Budget Proposals 2013/14 – 2015/16. The board made no further comments on these elements of the budget proposals.

Corporate budget proposals and the Capital Programme Consultation were covered on pages 55 – 63 of the document. Members queried a line in the Capital Programme Consultation Summary on page 60 of the document. This noted that an amendment had been made to the existing capital programme through an efficiency saving in the e-services programme plus a switch between capital and revenue funding reducing the capital scheme requirements. Members asked why this was revenue and not capital if it was on the capital programme. The finance officer explained that some elements of the e-services programme included revenue elements, and a decision was made to treat them as such.

Recommendations made by the other scrutiny boards were circulated to board members prior to the meeting and were considered under this item. Members of the board discussed the recommendations made by the Adults and Public Health Board and the Children and Young People (CYP) Board and gave positive support to these recommendations. In particular members of the board were keen to support the CYP Board recommendation to work cross-party to increase the number of foster carers recruited by the council.

In respect of the recommendation made by the Planning, Housing and Leisure Board on festive lighting, the board supported the need to pursue options which would the provision of festive lighting to continue. Board members agreed a further

recommendation on the possibility of leaving some festive lighting in situ to reduce in order to reduce the costs associated with the installation and removal of festival lighting.

Outcomes from the public consultation and recommendations from overview and scrutiny boards would be submitted from this board and considered by Council Cabinet on 22 January 2014 and presented to Council for approval on 29 January 2014.

### **Resolved**

- 1. To request a breakdown of costs of equipment, energy usage and staffing costs from the Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods to be emailed to Board members.**
- 2. To request that Council Cabinet investigate if it is feasible to make savings through leaving some festive lighting in situ in some parts of the city where it is appropriate.**

MINUTES END