

## Appendix 13 - Comments on the budget from the Policy Overview Committees

Policy Overview Committees are an integral part of the consultation on the Cabinet's budget proposals each year. This opportunity enables Councillors, who are not in the Cabinet, to provide input or comment on aspects of the budget for the ensuing year.

The Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee met on 4 February 2014 to consider and coordinate all Policy Overview Committee comments and recommended them to Cabinet as set out below:

|   | <b>Budget remit</b>  | <b>Comments</b>  |
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| <p><b>Corporate Services &amp; Partnerships -</b></p> <p><b>14 January 2014</b></p> | <p><i>Administration and Finance Directorates and Residents Services (Asset Management).</i></p> <p><i>Consideration of Voluntary Sector Grants.</i></p> | <p>The Committee noted how successful the BID Programme had been in restructuring the way that the Council was run to make it more efficient and deliver an improved level of services to residents at a lower cost.</p> <p>Members also noted that the Council was embarking on a £382m capital programme including schools, new youth centres, a theatre and a museum.</p> <p>Within the Administration and Finance directorates fees had continued to be frozen, mostly at the same levels they have been since 2011.</p> <p>Members acknowledged that the delivery of services to residents of the Borough was not being affected by the savings which the Council was making.</p>   |
| <p><b>Children, Young People and Learning –</b></p> <p><b>15 January 2014</b></p>   | <p><i>Residents Services (Education Policy &amp; Standards) &amp; Children &amp; Young People's Services</i></p>   | <p>The Committee welcomed the budget report and commended officers' work to retain a high-quality service in this challenging financial environment.</p> <p>The Committee was particularly supportive of the Council's schools expansions programme and the ongoing work to ensure that every child in the Borough had a school place. Members were eager that the "bulge" continued to be monitored both at primary and secondary levels so that future generations of children could be ensured of access to high-quality educational facilities.</p> <p>Although the Council's attempts to make efficiency savings through the review of looked after children placements was supported by the Committee, Members wished to emphasise that the primary focus in this area should be on securing the right, rather than the cheapest, placement.</p> |

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| <p><b>Residents' &amp; Environmental Services –</b></p> <p><b>21 January 2014</b></p>      | <p><i>Residents Services (Public Safety, Policy &amp; Community Engagement)</i></p> <p><i>Green Spaces &amp; Culture,</i></p> <p><i>Highways &amp; Business Services)</i></p> | <p>The Committee wished to congratulate officers on the budget which had kept the full range of the Council's services on track despite the considerable cuts being faced.</p> <p>Members were particularly pleased to see that funds had been set aside for renovations to the grade 2 listed Uxbridge Cemetery Gatehouse. This was an area of great interest to the Committee and had made up a significant proportion of the recent review into the Borough's cemeteries.</p>  |
| <p><b>Social Services, Housing &amp; Public Health –</b></p> <p><b>29 January 2014</b></p> | <p><i>Adult Social Care and Residents Services</i></p> <p><i>(Housing / Public Health)</i></p>  | <p>The Committee noted the various budget proposals and welcomed the work of the Council in this demanding and complex area. In particular, the Committee was encouraged by the effective use of zero based budgeting and ongoing work in relation to the preventative agenda so that informed decisions were taken to mitigate future risks. The Committee acknowledged there may be a number of potential barriers in relation to the implementation of the Care Bill given the details which are still emerging, but were reassured that the Council's Programme Board had been established to examine the impact of the Bill on Hillingdon.</p> <p>The Committee were concerned about the overspend particularly in relation to Bed and Breakfast accommodation, but welcomed the ongoing work being conducted through the Hillingdon Improvement Programme to bring this back to sustainable levels. The Committee also congratulated officers on their market development work, in recognising the need for affordable housing and the actions that were being taken to increase this provision.</p> <p>Additionally, the Committee noted the successful redesign of services and the emphasis placed on the risk stratification process so that interventions are made earlier. The Committee also noted the importance of effective monitoring to ensure that early interventions result in better, and sustained, outcomes for residents as well as supporting service management.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the merger of the Rapid Response and Re-ablement Teams and the further work being conducted to support people to live independently in their own homes.</p> |