

Date of issue: 26th November, 2010

MEETING

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Councillors M S Mann (Chair), Bains, Bal, Basharat, Coad, Haines, Shine, O'Connor and Walsh)

DATE AND TIME:

THURSDAY, 2ND DECEMBER, 2010 AT 6.30 PM

VENUE:

COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, BATH ROAD, SLOUGH

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
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SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS

The following Papers have been added to the agenda for the above meeting:-

- * Item 3- Part of the report was not available for publication with the rest of the agenda.
- * Item 4- The report was not available for publication with the rest of the agenda.
- * Item 7- Report is a substitute for version that was previously circulated with the agenda.

PART 1

<u>AGENDA ITEM</u>	<u>REPORT TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>WARD</u>
3.	Performance and Financial Reporting 2010/2011	1 - 20	All
4.	Medium Term Financial Strategy and Related Savings	21 - 30	All
7.	Draft Voluntary and Community Sector Funding Policy	31 - 34	All

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ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Please find below an update on the annual assessment of performance for both Education & Children's Services and Adult Social Care for 2009/10.

Children's Services Assessment for Education & Children's Services 2009/10

Ofsted carry out an annual assessment of performance in Education and Children's Services in each local authority, based on performance information and inspections that have taken place during the year. This is called the 'Children's Services Assessment'. It is due for publication on December 10th but is embargoed until then. A brief report will be tabled at Cabinet on 13th December with information for Members about Slough's Children's Services Assessment. The full report will be available on the Ofsted website from December 10th.

Annual Performance Assessment Adult Social Care 2009/10

For the second year running Slough has achieved an overall rating of **Grade 3 - 'Performing Well'**:

'People who use services find that services consistently deliver above minimum requirements.'

'A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements, is cost-effective and makes contributions to wider outcomes for the community'.

The introduction of the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) of Councils with Social Services responsibilities was first announced by Alan Milburn in 2001. In April 2008/9 the Care Quality Commission was established, to replace the Commission of Social Care Inspection as the regulatory body responsible for the APA, and a new performance assessment framework introduced. New grades and descriptors were applied for the outcome domains and the star ratings replaced with one of 4 new grades. These changes reflect the introduction of a 'harder test', a narrowing of the top band, making the overall achievement of 'performing excellently' more challenging than the previous 'excellent'.

This is the second consecutive year the Council has received a judgement under these changes. There is a requirement upon the statutory director to report the findings and judgement to Cabinet.

The achievements for each of the 7 assessment outcome domains are also consistent with the judgements made in 2008/9. Slough has therefore sustained the performance position as follows:

Delivering Outcomes	Grade Awarded
Improved health and emotional well-being	Performing Well
Improved quality of life	Performing Well
Making a positive contribution	Performing Excellently
Increased choice and control	Performing Well
Freedom from discrimination or harassment	Performing Excellently
Economic well-being	Performing Excellently
Maintaining personal dignity and respect	Performing Well
Overall Rating	Grade 3 Performing Well

The text in **appendix XXXX** provides a headline summary illustrative of the areas in which the Commission believe Slough is 'performing well' or 'excellently'. Actions are being taken to address areas for improvement.

Table 1 below sets out the performance grades and descriptors used by CQC to evaluate Council services.

Grade	Descriptor
Grade 4: (Performing excellently) People who use services find that services deliver well above minimum requirements	A service that overall delivers well above minimum requirements for people, is highly cost-effective and fully contributes to the achievement of wider outcomes for the community.
Grade 3: (Performing well) People who use services find that services consistently deliver above minimum requirements	A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for people is cost-effective and makes contributions to wider outcomes for the community.
Grade 2: (Performing adequately) People who use services find that services deliver only minimum requirements	A service that delivers only minimum requirements for people, but is not consistently cost-effective nor contributes significantly to wider outcomes for the community.
Grade 1: (Performing poorly) People who use services find that services do not deliver minimum (performing adequately) requirements	A service that does not deliver minimum requirements for people, is not cost-effective and makes little or no contribution to wider outcomes for the community.

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Assessment of Performance Report 2009/10

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE 2009/10: Slough

Contact Name	Job Title
Maureen Burton	Compliance Manager
<p>The report will produce a summary of the performance of how the council promotes adult social care outcomes for people in the council area.</p> <p>The overall grade for performance is combined from the grades given for the individual outcomes. There is a brief description below – see Grading for Adult Social Care Outcomes 2009/10 in the Performance Assessment Guide web address below, for more detail.</p> <p>Performing Poorly - not delivering the minimum requirements for people. Performing Adequately - only delivering the minimum requirements for people. Performing Well - consistently delivering above the minimum requirements for people. Performing Excellently - overall delivering well above the minimum requirements for people.</p> <p>We also make a written assessment about</p> <p>Leadership and Commissioning and use of resources</p> <p>Information on these additional areas can be found in the outcomes framework To see the outcomes framework please go to our web site: Outcomes framework You will also find an explanation of terms used in the report in the glossary on the web site.</p>	

2009/10 Council APA Performance

Delivering outcomes assessment Overall council is:	Well
Outcome 1: Improved health and well-being	Well
Outcome 2: Improved quality of life	Well
Outcome 3: Making a positive contribution	Excellent
Outcome 4: Increased choice and control	Well
Outcome 5: Freedom from discrimination and harassment	Excellent
Outcome 6: Economic well-being	Excellent
Outcome 7: Maintaining personal dignity and respect	Well

Council overall summary of 2009/10 performance

The council is aware of the needs of the local population and what services are required to meet those needs. The council has published a plan which sets out the overall aims, values and principles of the council to ensure that local services are delivered in ways that improve the quality of life for local people living in Slough.

The personalisation agenda is progressing well in Slough. The council has implemented the 'putting me first' programme which aims to support people to get services that meet their needs in a more personal way. The number of people who have a personal budget is relatively low; however the number of people who receive a direct payment to pay for their care services has increased. The council has worked to provide alternatives to residential care for older and vulnerable people. Examples include, extra care services, which is aimed at supporting people to maintain their independence by providing a range of services to people in their own homes.

The council has well established processes in place for the effective management of safeguarding referrals. A high number of staff both within the council and in organisations providing social care had received safeguarding training. This was significantly higher than in similar council areas. Despite increased awareness of safeguarding issues and high levels of staff training, the overall number of referrals is low.

The council has a performance management system in place, which involves ensuring that the council works in an effective and efficient way.

Leadership

"People from all communities are engaged in planning with councilors and senior managers. Councilors and senior managers have a clear vision for social care. They lead people in transforming services to achieve better outcomes for people. They agree priorities with their partners, secure resources, and develop the capabilities of people in the workforce".

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

Slough Borough Council is aware of the needs of the local population and what services are required to meet those needs. The council has consulted extensively with local people about how services could or should be provided to help maintain independence, offer choice and control and increase well being. The council has published a plan which sets out the overall aims, values and principles of the council to ensure that local services are delivered in ways that improve the quality of life for local people.

The council has reviewed the joint strategic needs assessment and analysis, which has given an up to date knowledge of the needs of the local population. This analysis is a government led initiative to ensure that the health and social care needs of a local population are fully understood. This forms a 'duty to cooperate' between primary care trusts, who commission healthcare and the local authorities that commission social care, to work together to deliver services to ensure that health and social care needs are met. The council has developed good working relationships with partner organisations delivering healthcare.

Slough has made progress in the implementation of the 'putting people first' programme. This is a reform of public services which is aimed at helping people to live their lives as they wish and to receive services that are of high quality, are safe and promote independence, dignity and well being. The number of people who have a personal budget is relatively low; however the number of people who receive a direct payment to pay for their care services has increased.

The council has worked with service providers in helping them to understand that services need to be provided in a more personalised way and moved away from the previously more traditional delivery of social care. The council has also made progress in delivering local priorities to reduce health inequalities for people in Slough and to promote Slough as a healthy place to live. The council has already implemented the electronic social care record for recording care plans for people who use services.

Fewer staff left employment within the council during the year and the council has fewer vacant posts compared with similar councils. Absences caused through sickness have reduced; however sickness absence rates remains higher than for similar councils.

The council has a performance management system in place, which involves ensuring that the council works in an effective and efficient way. This is regularly monitored to identify any risks to delivering services early so that these can be investigated in a timely way.

Key strengths

- The council is aware of the needs of the local population and what services are needed to improve the quality of life for local people.
- The council actively engages local people in deciding what services should or could be provided.
- The council has made good progress in the implementation of the 'putting people first agenda'.

Areas for improvement

- The council needs to increase the number of people receiving personal budgets to improve control and choice over the services they receive.

Commissioning and use of resources

"People who use services and their carers are able to commission the support they need. Commissioners engage with people who use services, carers, partners and service providers, and shape the market to improve outcomes and good value".

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

In Slough the council ensures that local people who use services and their carers have opportunities to be involved in the planning, development and future of adult social care services that support independent living. The East Berkshire joint strategic commissioning board is a forum that has been established to agree priorities for services across the three local authority areas working closely with partner organisations that provide healthcare. The council has a number of services which are jointly funded with organisations providing health care. These contracts have been reviewed to move away from the way that care services have been traditionally delivered in the past to provide more personalised services. The personalisation agenda is progressing well in Slough. Personalisation is an approach to social care which aims to provide people who receive services, funded by the council or themselves, with increased choice and control over the support that they can receive. In Slough the 'putting me first' programme aims to support people getting services that meet their needs in a more personal way. The council has appointed a manager to oversee all commissioning of services. This post is jointly funded with the primary care trust.

The council has effective procurement arrangements, in place to deliver comparable low cost quality services for people in each of the care groups. The council has worked hard to provide alternatives to residential care for older and vulnerable people. Examples include, extra care services, which are aimed at supporting people to maintain their independence by providing a range of services to people in their own homes. Services include the increased use of telecare which consists of equipment or services that help to maintain safety in peoples home. Information systems have been improved and upgraded to help the council make better use of information about the needs of individuals and the services they have.

The council has a number of 'partnership boards', which have been established with membership from people who use services. These boards bring together service users, carers and service managers, to plan and develop services. The council has identified the needs of individuals and communities where there have been fewer uptakes of social care services. Referred to as 'reducing the gap', the scheme seeks to identify where fewer people receive care services, the reasons for this and work to improve access to services for people who need them.

The council was successful in securing additional funding during the year, to meet increasing demand for services. However, the council did not fully meet its efficiency target of 3%.

Key strengths

- The council is well aware of the needs of the local population and the care services needed to meet those needs.
- People using services are encouraged and supported to contribute to how local services are planned and delivered.
- The personalisation agenda is progressing well in Slough.

Areas for improvement

- The council needs to ensure that in the current economic climate and with increasing financial pressures that services are delivered with the agreed allocated budgets.

Outcome 1: Improving health and emotional well-being

“People in the council area have good physical and mental health. Healthier and safer lifestyles help them lower their risk of illness, accidents, and long-term conditions. Fewer people need care or treatment in hospitals and care homes. People who have long-term needs and their carers are supported to live as independently as they choose, and have well timed, well-coordinated treatment and support”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to carry forward the judgement awarded for *outcome 1* from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform “Well” in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 2: Improved quality of life

“People who use services and their carers enjoy the best possible quality of life. Support is given at an early stage, and helps people to stay independent. Families are supported so that children do not have to take on inappropriate caring roles. Carers are able to balance caring with a life of their own. People feel safe when they are supported at home, in care homes, and in the neighborhood. They are able to have a social life and to use leisure, learning and other local services.”

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to carry forward the judgement awarded for *outcome 2* from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform “Well” in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 3: Making a positive contribution

“People who use services and carers are supported to take part in community life. They contribute their views on services and this helps to shape improvements. Voluntary organisations are thriving and accessible. Organisations for people who use services and carers are well supported”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to carry forward the judgement awarded for *outcome 3* from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform “Excellently” in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 4: Increased choice and control

“People who use services and their carers are supported in exercising control of personal support. People can choose from a wide range of local support”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to carry forward the judgement awarded for *outcome 4* from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform “Well” in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 5: Freedom from discrimination and harassment

“People who use services and their carers have fair access to services. Their entitlements to health and care services are upheld. They are free from discrimination or harassment in their living environments and neighborhoods”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to carry forward the judgement awarded for *outcome 5* from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform “Excellently” in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 6: Economic well-being

“People who use services and their carers have income to meet living and support costs. They are supported in finding or maintaining employment”.

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The Care Quality Commission has agreed to carry forward the judgement awarded for *outcome 6* from the 2008/09 year into the 2009/10 assessment. The council has confirmed, through self declaration that it is continuing to perform “Excellently” in 2009/10 for this outcome. CQC will continue to monitor this performance.

Key strengths

Areas for improvement

Outcome 7: Maintaining personal dignity and respect

"People who use services and their carers are safeguarded from all forms of abuse. Personal care maintains their human rights, preserving dignity and respect, helps them to be comfortable in their environment, and supports family and social life".

Conclusion of 2009/10 performance

The council has its own safeguarding adults partnership board aimed at protecting people who live in Slough from any form of abuse. The board has senior membership from a number of partner organisations and is led by an independent chair. A number of subgroups have been established for areas such as, quality assurance and governance, which are systems for monitoring and evaluating all aspects of safeguarding management and ensuring that policies and practices are consistently applied.

The number of safeguarding referrals has increased but, despite this, the overall rates of referral are lower than for similar councils. However the number of safeguarding cases that are investigated and completed in a timely way has increased.

The council has worked to raise awareness of safeguarding issues through a series of publicity campaigns. Posters and information about safeguarding were displayed in a number of community and healthcare facilities. High numbers of council staff and staff working in organisations that provide social care, have been trained to identify and assess risks to vulnerable people. The council has also extended training to staff in areas such as leisure and sports facilities. Commonly referred to as safeguarding training, the number of staff who have received training is significantly higher than in similar council areas.

At the beginning of the year the percentage of people in residential care homes rated as poor, by the CQC, was substantially above the average when compared with similar councils. However, council staff worked very closely with staff in the poorly rated services to raise standards of care for the residents and improve the management of those services. This resulted in an improvement and by the end of the year when there were no residents in homes rated as poor.

The council has worked to raise the awareness of the deprivation of liberty safeguards. These safeguards are designed to protect people in hospital or in residential care. Applications need to be made to local councils if a vulnerable person is to be deprived of their liberty for treatment or care in their best interests or to protect them from harm. Whilst the number of referrals has been lower

than anticipated, as is the case nationally, information about the safeguards led to an increase in referrals in the latter part of the year.

Key strengths

- The council has well established processes in place for the effective management of safeguarding referrals.
- Raising awareness about safeguarding issues has led to an increase in safeguarding referrals.
- A high number of staff both within the council and in organisations providing social care had received safeguarding training. This was significantly higher than in similar council areas.

Areas for improvement

- Despite increased awareness of safeguarding issues and high levels of staff training, the overall number of referrals is low. The council should review referrals rates to understand the reasons for this and if further publicity or other action needs to be taken.

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 2nd December, 2010

CONTACT OFFICERS: Julie Evans , Strategic Director Resources (01753 875301)
Annal Nayyar, Deputy Director of Finance (01753 477228)

WARD(S): All

PART I
FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/12 to 2014/15

1. Purpose of Report

This report sets out the latest projections of the Council's Revenue budget for the period 2011/12 to 2014/15 following the previous Cabinet report of 9th November 2010 and the Policy, Performance and Review Group (PPRG) on 23rd November 2010.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is requested to note the following recommendations that will be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 13th December, 2010:

- a) That the current council projected revenue budget for 2011/12 to 2014/15 be noted.
- b) Confirm the savings plan for 2011/2012 as set out in Appendix A (TO FOLLOW) and note progress to date.
- c) Consider and agree the areas of savings allocation for elements of support services as summarised in para 5.7, and request officers, to implement them with immediate effect where possible.
- d) Consider and agree the proposed areas for allocated savings from GBE (Appendix B)

3. Key Policy Priority Implications

- 3.1. The Revenue and Capital budgets are the Council's financial plans for the forthcoming year. As such, the budgets will allocate resources to enable the delivery of the Council's Key Policy Priorities through the individual departmental and service plans.

4. Other Implications

Financial Implications

- 4.1. These are contained within the body of the report. In the short term the summary application remains as reported at November 2010 meeting: £4.423m savings already committed in 2011/12 from the 2010/11 PPRG process and anticipated further savings potential of £6.9m in 2011/12 secured via a combination of cross cutting corporate initiatives, management reductions, and savings secured from back office functions and support service areas. To date £2.68m of savings have been identified and agreed subject to consultation. Full details are provided in Appendix A. A further £1.6m savings are identified for consideration in para 5.7

Human Rights Act & Other Legal Implications

- 4.2. The Council has various legal responsibilities around financial matters but, of primary importance: the Council must not plan to spend more than the resources it has available to it in any one year – the Council must set a ‘balanced budget’.
- 4.3. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) presents the projected financial position of the Council for 2011/12 to 2014/15; and includes:
- 4.4. The 2003 Local Government Bill places a duty on the Council to consider the robustness of budget estimates, the adequacy of reserves and the affordability of its capital programme in preparing its budget for the year.
- 4.5. There are no other legal or Human Rights Act implications.

Workforce

- 4.6. If agreed, the savings options to be considered will involve a combination of the deletion of vacant posts alongside voluntary redundancy/ early retirements on the ground of efficiency and reductions in working hours arising from expression of interest submitted by staff under the workforce planning exercise currently underway. Compulsory redundancies may be considered as a last resort, the Council will ensure that HR policies are applied to minimise the impact of redundancies and will look for redeployment opportunities for affected staff.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1. Members will recall from the budget report presented to Cabinet on 9 November 2010 that the outcome of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) for local government did not alter the Councils 2011/12 – 2014/15 medium term financial strategy of achieving savings of circa £20m over the next 4 years.
- 5.2. Interestingly the CSR looked to ‘front load’ savings in the early years, which fell in line with what the strategy the Council was already looking to adopt . The next significant milestone will be the provisional settlement where the Government will

provide the Council with an estimate of the level of national grant they can expect to receive for next year and possibly beyond.

- 5.3. Consequently this paper provides members with progress against the savings targets pending news of the provisional settlement expected in early December 2010.

Table 1: SBC Revenue Budget Projection 2011/12 to 2014/15

Slough BC Medium Term Financial Model - 2010/ 11 to 2014/ 15

Details	Latest position post CSR 20-Oct-10				
	10/11 £'000	11/12 £'000	12/13 £'000	13/14 £'000	14/15 £'000
Opening Budget	102,395	103,979	98,911	95,880	96,350
Inflation					
Pay (Freeze 11/12, 12/13, CPI thereafter)	0	0	0	1,200	1,200
Pay award held from 10/11	600	0	0	0	0
Low pay (£250 annual increase)	0	150	150	0	0
NI Increase (Government state impact will be minimised)	0	300	0	0	0
Prices inflation allocated in 10/11	600	0	0	0	0
Prices (CPI - HMT Projections)	0	960	760	800	800
Prices (CPI - commentators projections & expenditure review)	0	340	290	300	300
Total Inflation	1,200	1,750	1,200	2,300	2,300
TOTAL AGREED GROWTH	5,875	3,273	2,232	(211)	22
TOTAL NEW GROWTH	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL AGREED SAVINGS	(4,051)	(4,423)	(1,835)	(200)	0
TOTAL NEW SAVINGS	0	0	0	0	0
Adjustment to original budget gap	0	1,258	361	1,259	(1,066)
TOTAL PENSIONS ADJUSTMENTS	0	475	510	540	30
CAPITAL PROGRAMME ADJUSTMENTS	(1,440)	(508)	734	0	0
BUDGET REQUIREMENT	103,979	105,804	102,113	99,568	97,636
COLLECTION FUND	0	0	0	0	0
FORMULA GRANT	56,756	50,513	47,482	47,007	44,187
COUNCIL TAX	47,223	47,223	47,223	48,167	49,131
COUNCIL TAX freeze subsidy/grant	0	1,175	1,175	1,175	1,175
TOTAL ESTIMATED FUNDING AVAILABLE	103,979	98,911	95,880	96,350	94,493
TOTAL BUDGET GAP	0	(6,893)	(6,233)	(3,218)	(3,143)
CUMULATIVE BUDGET GAP		(6,893)	(13,126)	(16,344)	(19,487)
Savings already identified (Appendix A)		(2,683)	(71)	17	5
Balance of savings to find		(4,210)	(6,162)	(3,235)	(3,148)

Reducing the future funding gap – progress to date

It can be seen that, primarily related to the CSR and related funding assumptions, there remains a substantial funding gap for 2011/12 to 2014/15 that will need to be managed. The Council has proposals for savings for £6.9 million and securing these is critical in reducing the impact on services of the challenging cuts in future years.

- 5.4. Progress made against the first tranche of savings representing an estimated savings value of £6.9million w.e.f. 1st April 2011 are set out in Appendix A. The

focus of the savings in line with Members requirements is focussed away from customer facing front line services and requires reductions in corporate areas such as management costs, and support services.

5.5. The proposals for reducing the senior management costs of the council have been reported previously and are currently subject to formal consultation. These proposals alongside a programme of cost reductions from the Council's back office processing functions and general support services are key elements of the £6.9million target.

5.6. The following summarises the proposed elements of savings opportunities for 6 support service areas;

(a) Policy ,Performance & Learning & Development estimated saving value £298k

Key elements: Changes in the amount of statistical information we are required by external and government agencies to produce and report on, has presented the opportunity to review the number of performance and policy staff employed in this service area. Improved and increased commissioning of training and development has reduced costs and allowed a reduction in the number of staff required to deliver this service in the future.

(b) Revenues & Payments, Council Tax & Cashier Services total savings £107k

Key elements: The savings will be achieved by the deletion of current vacant posts and reductions in service operational costs.

(c) Economic Development & Inclusion saves £270k

Key elements: The transferring of activities carried out within this service area to other Directorates has lead to the deletion of an Assistant Director post.

The streamlining and introduction of a new voluntary sector funding policy will enable savings to be delivered in commissioning services in the future.

(d) Customer Services saves £397k

Key elements: A review and streamlining of the management and support structure of MyCouncil will deliver the above savings. The impact on customer will be kept to a minimum.

(e) IT services save £559k

Key elements: It has been possible to reduce the senior IT management team considerably by streamlining the operating structure of IT via efficiencies of service.

In recent years has the Council reviewed it's IT infrastructure to maximise performance and stability and introduced new technology, has co-located the Council's server estate, therefore making it possible to reduce the amount of IT support and technical staff required in the future.

(f) Housing Benefits Service saves £301k

Key elements: As the majority of the budget is staff related a review of the management arrangements, the Quality Controls and the Assessment Team will deliver the above savings. A reduction in the use of agency staff will also make a significant contribution to these savings.

(g) Communications and Marketing saves £153k

Key elements:

The proposals reflect a review of the service resulting in reduced management costs and a smaller focussed team continuing to deliver high impact functions such as media relations, website management, community publications internal communications and key community events.

(h) Printing estimated savings £175 k

Key elements: The vacation of the Town Hall at the end of the financial year requires a review of the future of Printing Services. Options including full relocation and full outsourcing have been considered. Two options which involve a significant reduction of the in house team have emerged and will achieve a minimum saving of £175k. These options are being further developed and will be the subject of full consultation

Analyses proposed savings

Area of Activity	Overall Saving year 1	Progress	Savings Proposed		
			2011/12		
			EOI's	Other	Total support
			£'000	£'000	£'000
Target	6,900				
agreed to date	2,683				
Service areas:					
Printing			0	175	175
Policy, Performance & Learning Development			100	198	298
Revenues & Payments			42	65	107
Economic Development & Inclusion			131	139	270
Customer Services			0	346	397
IT			306	253	559
Housing Benefits			111	190	301
Communications & Marketing			22	131	153
Sub total	4,217		712	1,497	2,260
Current target	4,217				
Contribution if agreed	1,497				
Remaining requirement by 1/04/2011	2,720				

5.7. As can be seen in the table above the proposals presented for consideration represent total savings from these areas circa £2.2million and exceed the required minimum of 20% for these areas. In line with Members direction, wherever possible

savings have been secured via voluntary expressions of interest, the deletion of vacant posts and the removal of temporary staff. Taking into account expressions of interest already agreed (£712k), the total savings proposed reflect an additional contribution circa £1.5million to the £6.9m savings target on top of the £2.6m already secured. After taking into account vacancies, fixed term contracts and temporary arrangements the proposal reflects a net reduction of a further 23 permanently occupied posts with the associated risk of potential redundancy for the affected post-holders

- 5.8. If agreed, prior to implementation the detail of the above proposals will be subject to the requisite consultation and impact assessment process.

Asset Management Review

- 5.9. The Council is currently undertaking a review of its Assets both land and premises and trading functions which will be reported to Cabinet in January 2011. Land and premises are being reviewed on the following basis:

- Community Benefit
- Revenue costs
- Revenue generating opportunities
- Alternative use to enhance community benefit
- Disposable opportunities

- 5.10. The asset management review will also cover the Council looking to re-profile and reduce the capital programme. In preparing the proposed revised capital programme, departments and AMG have considered the overall capital strategy and service priorities to enable delivery of the Council's business plans and within projected resources available, at a prudent and sustainable level. Council's future revenue business plans will also impact on the capital programme as any changes to the service provision could result in either a capital asset being identified as surplus to requirement and therefore potential additional capital receipt or additional capital required to upgrade an asset to enhance the service provision. These will also be considered and reviewed as part of the budget build process. The outcome of the asset management review will be a changed capital programme.

Review of Trading Functions

- 5.11. Those functions which currently trade and/or could increase trading are being reviewed for;

- In house income generating opportunity
- Fees and charges review
- Arms length income generating opportunity – where this increases income to the Council

Review Specific Grants

- 5.12. The Council receives a substantial amount of funding through specific grant regimes. However, it should be noted that the Council is unlikely to be informed of many future Specific Grant allocations estimated to be sometime in December.

Reserves

- 5.13. SBC's general reserves are £5.4m. Drawing on reserves to fund any budget gaps is a last resort and a clear and timely plan for their replenishment would need to be agreed.

Inflation

- 5.14. The medium term financial plan includes provision for inflation based on government estimates for CPI adjusted for economic analyst's projections which assumes an annual rate of 2.6% for the financial year 2011/12. The latest published CPI rate for the year ending October 2010 indicates that CPI is currently running at 3.2% which is 0.6% above the estimated annual rate for 2011/12.
- 5.15. Whilst the latest rate of 3.2% is not necessarily reflective of the annual rate that will prevail in 2011/12 it is worth noting that it has somehow to drop to align itself to the rate predicted by central government and economic analysts. Consequently the actual rate of inflation will continue to be reviewed over the coming months and should it remain higher than currently provided for in the budget any necessary adjustments will be reflected and reported to members as appropriate. It is worth noting that the current 'gap' of 0.6% equates to an additional cost of £300k.

Inflation Analysis	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Estimated amended annual CPI inflation rate used in MTFP	2.6%	2.1%	2.2%	2.2%
Current annual CPI rate for year ending October 2010	3.2%			

The Effect of the Decisions

- 5.16. Some of the savings proposed within this report would, if implemented, result in a number of posts being deleted, and therefore there is the potential for redundancies. In the event of any compulsory redundancies, the Council will immediately implement a 'redeployment process' to try to find suitable roles for affected staff. Dependent on decisions, officers will also consider whether there is scope to apply for a direction from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to capitalise all redundancy costs incurred.

Risks

- 5.17. Budgets are necessarily based on assumptions about what will happen during the next financial year; and therefore there is an inevitable risk that these assumptions might be wrong.
- 5.18. The main foreseen risk is that the proposed savings are not delivered. In an attempt to reduce this risk the budget will be closely monitored via the monthly

financial management reports and updated budget information, including savings achieved, will be reported to Cabinet throughout the financial year.

6. Comments of Other Committees

6.1. None.

7. Conclusion

7.1. This paper sets out the latest assessment of the Council's Revenue Budget for the years 2011/12 to 2014/15.

8. Appendices

- A - Detail of £6.9m savings progress to date (TO FOLLOW)
- B - Detail of proposed GBE allocated savings

Green & Built Environment – Savings Options 2011/12

Savings of 0.645m were agreed by Cabinet on 20th September 2010. However, a further £140k savings still need to be found by the directorate. The table below outlines the savings proposals to meet this target.

	Service Area & Function	Saving Option Description	Amount Revenue	Implications
1	Transport	Reduce consultancy support	20k	Reduce the spend on Atkins support on traffic schemes and new technology. The result will be a slowing down in introduction of road safety schemes and traffic flow improvement schemes
2	Transport	Reduce consultancy support and other funds to parking service	26k	Improved technical expertise in parking service through training input will mean reduced reliance on external support. Also reduced revenue support to resident scheme implementation budgets which will reduce the number of schemes implemented each year
3	Highways	Reduce the cost of activating the winter maintenance service through in-house monitoring role	4k	We have taken the weather monitoring and winter gritting activation role in-house this year and are already showing a saving on the cost previously paid to consultants. This saving will be effective without a change in the operational service.
4	Highways	Reduce revenue budget on bridge maintenance	15k	This saving will ensure adequate funds are still available for all inspections of bridges which is a statutory responsibility. Any maintenance work resulting from these inspections can be covered from other maintenance budgets and will be prioritised
5	Environmental Services Waste management	Retendering some minor contracts	40k	Efficiency savings – no implications
6	Environmental Services Recycling efficiency	Stopping all but 5 recycling bring sites – those at the big supermarkets. Allowance made for new Sainsbury	14k	Recycling bring sites not contributing significantly to recycling rate. Introduction of red bins have reduced usage of these sites
7	Environmental Services Recycling efficiency	Stop all 1100 wheeled bring banks	21k	As above
		TOTAL	£140k	

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **DATE:** 2 December, 2010

CONTACT OFFICER: Rafiq Chohan, Assistant Director, Economic Development and Inclusion (875849), Surinder Jassal, Programme Manager (875597)

WARD(S): All

PART I

FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION

DRAFT VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR FUNDING POLICY

1 Purpose of Report

This report presents the Draft Voluntary and Community Sector Funding Policy for all future commissioning, funding and support by Slough Borough Council to the voluntary and community sector (VCS).

2 Recommendation

Members are requested to scrutinise the policy and make suggestions for amendment prior to the report being presented to Cabinet on 13 December. The report will also recommend that existing funding arrangements are terminated at the earliest possible date following implementation of the new funding policy and scrutiny's view on this will be welcomed.

3 Community Strategy Priorities

Celebrating diversity, enabling inclusion
Being safe, feeling safe
Prosperity for all

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no additional financial implications emanating from this report.

(b) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no legal implications. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out.

5 Supporting Information

Background Information

- 5.1.1 The policy sets out a strategic approach to the Council's funding arrangements with the voluntary and community sector, and includes making the link of any funding activity with the community strategy priorities and the LAA, ensuring accountability, transparency, accessibility and consistency in all funding transactions with the VCS, and reviewing funding priorities and criteria in line with changing needs of the local community.
- 5.1.2 This Policy is a result of a strategic review of all the Council's funding, commissioning and support arrangements with the local voluntary and community sector. This included an extensive council-wide mapping exercise providing information on all grants and contracts provided by the council, and related support and monitoring arrangements. A consultation was carried out with the voluntary and community sector to gain their views on current systems and provision, as well as to identify training and support needs and sustainability and development themes for the future. The consultation was sent out to 350 organisations based or working in Slough. A range of funded and non-funded organisations responded to the consultation, from some very small community groups with no paid staff through to large well established organisations.
- 5.1.3 The key issues identified by the voluntary and community sector were around issues of accessibility to information and funding; transparency of processes and decision making; proportionate monitoring; lack of uniformity of information from different directorates; support to complete applications, in particular for smaller groups and organisations where English is not the first language; and the need for small grants to be provided for longer than one year to enable groups to develop. Issues of sustainability, capacity building, and training and collaborative working were also highlighted. All of these issues have been taken on board and are incorporated in the draft policy and are reflected in the priorities for future commissioning/ funding.

Policy Details

- 5.2.1 The key aims of the policy are to improve communication, understanding and trust between the Council and its voluntary and community sector partners; clarify and better co-ordinate all forms of support to the VCS; support accountability and transparency in spending public money, and strengthen partnership working between the Council and VCS.
- 5.2.2 The policy sets out the Council's revised role in providing funding for the voluntary and community sector in Slough. The policy integrates with SBC's Commissioning Framework. At time of writing this report the Policy is still at draft stage and will be presented to CMT. If, after that meeting there are any significant changes required, a further report will be provided to Overview and Scrutiny at the next meeting in January 2011.
- 5.2.3 Slough boasts a very active Voluntary and Community Sector which is valued by the Council and the wider community. The Policy explains that financial restrictions will require the Authority to seek closer alignment of activities funded through VCS organisations with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

- 5.2.4 The Policy details the opportunities that will become available to VCS organisations with the adoption by the Council of a corporate approach to commissioning (the Strategic Commissioning Framework). The Policy recognises the need with the move towards more formal commissioning for the sector to provide quality monitoring information, focussing on outcomes, to assess the impact of services provided, and ensure value for money.
- 5.2.5 In relation to “support in kind” the Policy proposes that where Council buildings are made available to VCS organisations there should be a presumption that such facilities will be shared with other voluntary / community groups. Where possible the Council should be aware of the cost of “support in kind” eg lost opportunity cost of making premises available.
- 5.2.6 Financial resources will be allocated to time-limited grant funding for VCS organisations. Services and activities that are not in receipt of significant or on-going commissioning from the Council will be prioritised for support from the corporate budget. Activities which will be supported through the corporate voluntary sector budget will include capacity building and infrastructure support, volunteering, advice services and activities aimed at reducing inequalities and promoting community cohesion.
- 5.2.7 The Policy was presented to the Voluntary Sector Members Panel on 21 September 2010. The Voluntary Sector Members Panel welcomed the policy and was keen to see greater transparency in all the Council’s dealings with the VCS, as well as improved monitoring and removal of duplication in funding. The Panel was concerned that sufficient time should be given to the VCS organisations during this transition stage from grants to grants/commissioning; and wanted to ensure that adequate capacity building support was provided to the sector to help them make the move towards the more structured commissioning framework.
- 5.2.8 The Policy is being consulted on with the voluntary and community sector in a number of ways, including via the Compact Group, Slough Infrastructure Group, Slough Community Network, and via e-mail to all organisations on Slough Council for the Voluntary Sector’s mailing list.

Timescales

- 5.3.1 A draft timetable with tight deadlines giving the minimum time requirement to each stage of the commissioning procedure has been produced (appendix B). With the proposed possible start date of 12 January 2011, once the policy has been agreed by Cabinet in December, and following correct OJEU guidelines, the earliest date that larger contracts could be awarded is 29th June 2011.
- 5.3.2 Further with the current re-structure exercise being carried out, and the proposed move of responsibility for this area of work to another directorate, as well as the need to ensure that any commissioning/tendering of work relating to the voluntary sector is carried out according to the council’s new commissioning framework, it is recognised that sufficient time needs to be factored in for this transition from grants to commissioning, as well as the internal re-structure. Therefore it is proposed that existing funding arrangements will continue to ensure there is no gap in service

provision, and that these funding arrangements are terminated at the earliest possible date following implementation of the new funding policy.

6 Appendices

Appendix Draft Voluntary and Community Sector Funding Policy and RFP/RFQ
Restricted Procedure deadlines (included in main agenda papers)