

EDUCATION LEISURE AND LIFELONG LEARNING AND SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSING

Joint Report of the Director Of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning, Director of Social Services, Health and Housing, Head of Planning and Performance, Head of Support Services and Commissioning Development, Leisure and Contracts Manager and Head of Children and Young People Services

SECTION B – MATTER FOR INFORMATION

WARDS AFFECTED: All

BUDGET STRATEGY PROPOSALS 2015/16

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee with relevant information concerning the budget strategy proposals for 2015/16 and beyond with a view to aiding the scrutiny of those proposals.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council has been advised by the Minister for Local Government to plan for a reduction in the settlement from Welsh Government in 2015/16 of up to -4.5% and for similar orders of settlement in the following two years. This change in the amount of funding that local government gets has created an unprecedented funding gap for Neath Port Talbot Council and other councils across Wales. More specifically, for 2015/16 the Council will need to deliver £23 million of savings in 2015/16 to achieve a balanced budget with some £50 million to be cut from expenditure in the next three years. This amounts to 10% of spending in 2015/16 and 25% of spending over the three year period.
- 2.2 All areas of the Council will be required to reduce spending over the three year period. In some areas services will cease altogether, in other areas, services will reduce or be delivered in very different ways.

- 2.3 Over the summer months heads of service and corporate directors have been working up proposals for achieving the required level of savings. The output of that work was set out in a report to the Cabinet on 1st October 2014 by the Corporate Directors' Group "Budget Strategy for 2015/16 (and beyond)".
- 2.4 Additional scrutiny committee meetings have been arranged at the request of the Chief Executive to ensure that Members of scrutiny committees have a full opportunity to scrutinise the proposals set out in the report of 1st October, prior to the Council setting the Council Budget in early 2015.
- 2.5 This report provides each scrutiny committee with a copy of the proposals that have been authorised by the Cabinet for public consultation. Where considered appropriate, officers have also provided supplementary information to inform the scrutiny process. Clearly, Members of the Scrutiny Committees may also request additional information should they consider that necessary.

3. **Papers Included for Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee**

- 3.1 The following reports are included for consideration by the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee
 - (a) Cabinet Report 1st October 2014 – Report of the Corporate Directors' Group "Budget Strategy for 2015/16 (and beyond);
 - (b) Cabinet Report 25th September 2014 – Report of the Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning Services "Budget Savings Proposals 2015/16".

4. **Recommended**

- 4.1 That Scrutiny Members consider the information provided with this report and scrutinise the budget proposals for 2015/16 and beyond that fall within the committee's purview.

Officer Contact:

Mr A Evans, Director of Education, Leisure and Lifelong Learning
Contact: a.evans@npt.gov.uk or telephone 01639 763298

Mr N Jarman, Director of Social Services, Health and Housing
Contact: n.jarman@npt.gov.uk or telephone 01639 763279

Mr C Millis, Head of Planning and Performance
Contact: c.millis@npt.gov.uk or telephone 01639 763226

Mr A Thomas, Head of Support Services and Commissioning
Development
Contact: a.d.thomas@npt.gov.uk or telephone 01639 763314

Mr P Oakeshott, Consultant
Contact: p.oakeshott@npt.gov.uk or telephone 01639 763475

Mr A Jarrett, Head of Children and Young People Services
Contact: a.jarrett@npt.gov.uk or telephone 01639 763327