

Update from Scrutiny Chairman to Cabinet: 13 December 2016

This report provides an update on the following scrutiny meetings:

Scrutiny Committee – 30 November 2016

Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee – 1 December 2016

Scrutiny Committee – 30 November 2016

1. The Scrutiny Committee met on [30 November 2016](#), when it considered and made recommendations in respect of the following:

Pre-Cabinet Decision Scrutiny of the 2017/18 Revenue and Capital Budget

2. At Agenda Item 5, the Committee considered the current financial position of the County Council and the process and proposals that had been developed to set the budget for 2017/18. Following consideration of the evidence received, the Committee agreed:
 - a) To acknowledge the good work done to find efficiencies and savings, and to recognise the difficulty of producing a balanced budget in the current period of tight constraints on public sector spending.
 - b) To ask the Cabinet Member for Finance to reconsider the risk to continuity of service from those areas where there are relatively small reductions in funding (such as culture, heritage and sport, library services, trading standards, strategic development) and whether the financial risk to the Council, if such services were lost or curtailed, is proportionate to the relatively modest savings involved.
 - c) To recommend to the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Heritage and the Director of Resource Management:
 - i) That opportunities for income generation should be fully explored.
 - ii) That the following information should be included as part of the report to the Cabinet on 24 January 2017:

Corporate

- Further details about the Highway Needs Based Capital Maintenance line in the Draft Capital Programme 2017-20, giving a breakdown of the figures under clear headings;
- The Council’s response to the information gathered from the budget consultation exercise (whether provided at meetings or online);
- A table providing an analysis of income streams;
- A table showing earmarked reserves for the previous three years (projected and actual);

- A breakdown of service reserves;
- Information as to how Suffolk's budget per capita compares with comparator authorities.
- A list of voluntary and community sector organisations affected by reduction in grants, whichever department the funding has been coming from, together with a narrative on the anticipated impact of these reductions.

Children and Young People's Services (CYP)

- A breakdown of the budget line for Early Help and Specialist Support (£61.61m in 2016/17 and £65.91m in 2017/18).
- Further breakdown of the "Home to School Transport" line, if possible in a matrix showing school type and transport type (ie dedicated bus, commercial bus, taxi etc).

Resource Management

- Clarification as to whether the councillors' highways budgets will carry forward after the County Council elections in May 2017.
- A breakdown of the support services savings.
- Information about the highways schemes connected to the Park and Ride proposals and how much they are expected to cost

d) To request information bulletins setting out:

- how the On Street Parking Account will be used in 2017/18;
- a list of voluntary and community sector organisations commissioned to provide services;
- a table setting out what Supporting Lives Connecting Communities has achieved to date and is forecast to achieve in terms of managing down demand for ACS services (by Tier), for the next two years and at least the two previous years;
- details about how assessments for Disabled Facilities Grant are being undertaken/delivered and the performance of this service;
- the number of people assisted through Housing Related Support over the last three years and projected in the year ahead;
- figures to demonstrate how successful changes to fostering services have been;
- further information about new mechanisms for bidding to provide school transport;
- further information about the public health budget and services provided;
- analysis of the costs of County Council accommodation occupied by County Council staff and rented out, including numbers of people accommodated, area involved and total cost.

- e) That all councillors should be encouraged to sign up to the Trading Standards weekly “scams” alert and to promote these messages within communities.
 - f) That the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport should be asked to consider whether steps could be taken to improve the online tool for reporting highways defects by providing a “smarter” response to users.
3. The minutes of the meeting are due to be confirmed at the Committee’s next meeting on 20 December 2016.

Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee – 1 December 2016

4. The Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee met on [1 December 2016](#), when it considered and made recommendations in respect of the following items:

Agenda Item 5 - MyGo (young person’s employment service) and Young People Age 16 -18 Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

5. The Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee **recommends** to Cabinet, the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, and the Director of Children and Young People’s Services, to:
- a) Bring to the attention of the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders Group, with regard to Suffolk’s Participation and NEET Prevention Strategy, including the MyGo employment service, that there is a need to ensure continued funding and sustainability, and to make sure there are no duplications of resource or overlaps between County and Borough/District Council staff.
 - b) Look to clarify the relationship of the MyGo employment service with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), and the sustainability of funding for MyGo in future.
 - c) Provide an information briefing that gives a complete breakdown of all the funding streams, and their duration, for the MyGo service.
 - d) Provide further information about the options and plans for ensuring the future sustainability of the MyGo service, and to continue to engage with Members of Parliament to clarify the Government’s intentions regarding expansion of the Apprenticeships scheme.
 - e) Look further into ways to reach and engage with young people’s parents / carers outside of the school setting.
 - f) Provide an information briefing on which of the Suffolk schools are engaging well in relation to young people’s participation in education, employment or training, and NEET prevention, and the reasons why the other schools are not engaging as well.
 - g) Ensure that the Council’s strategic approach to young people Participation and NEET Prevention explicitly factors in the need for:
 - (i) Coaching expertise.

- (ii) Acting as the ‘honest broker’ / ‘glue’ between the various services required to address the young persons’ needs.

Agenda Item 6 - Pupils aged 16 to 25 with Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans

6. The Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee **recommends** to the Cabinet, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, and the Director of Children and Young People’s Services, to:
- a) Bring to the attention of the Suffolk Health and Wellbeing Board the perceived concerns that Health agencies are not meeting the legal requirements for responding and participating in EHC needs assessment and EHC Plan co-production.

[The Committee also **resolved** to flag these concerns at a joint discussion with Health Scrutiny Committee on 19 Jan 2017 regarding Children’s emotional health and wellbeing.]
 - b) Update the Committee on outcomes from the Supported Internship work, and for the Cabinet Member to seek further support and lobbying with a view to increasing the number of supported internships.
 - c) Request an Information Bulletin update in June 2017 on the progress in meeting the SEND/EHCP statutory requirements, and to schedule a further scrutiny review of this topic in December 2017.
 - d) Increase the public knowledge and awareness of how to access an Education Health and Care Plan, in general and in particular for the age range 19 – 25, including situations where the individual has had no previous SEND statement.
7. The Committee **requested** of the Suffolk Parent Carer Network that it provide the Committee with further detail of the analysis from its recent parent survey, for the survey results relating to Age 16-25 young people.
8. The Committee **resolved** that two of the committee members would engage further with the School Transport Lead officer in relation to certain legislative and operational aspects of the transport services available to Age 16-25 young people.
9. The Committee **resolved** that the Chairman should write to the Chairman of Suffolk County Council Scrutiny Committee to recommend that it look further into how well the Council is disposing of and realising value from former Middle School assets, including the trial arrangement with Cornerstone. *[reference pg93/94 of the papers for the meeting]*
10. The next meeting of the Education and Children’s Services Committee will take place on Wednesday 1 March 2017.