

<b>Mayor and Cabinet</b>			
<b>Report Title</b>	Comments of the Public Accounts Select Committee on the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals		
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item No.</b>	8
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Public Accounts Select Committee		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	17 November 2010

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report informs Mayor and Cabinet of the comments and views of the Public Accounts Select Committee, arising from discussions held on the report: "Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals" at the Committee's meeting on 9 November 2010. Comments made on the report to the Public Accounts Select Committee by other Select Committees, are attached at **Appendix 1**.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Mayor and Cabinet is recommended to note the views of the Public Accounts Select Committee as set out in section three of the report and the views of the other Select Committees as attached at Appendix 1.

## 3. Public Accounts Select Committee Views

- 3.1 On 9 November, the Public Accounts Select Committee considered the report: "Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals". The Committee considered written and verbal evidence from officers at the meeting.

- 3.2 The Committee would like to endorse the following comments on the savings proposals made by other Select Committees:

CYP49 – School Improvement: The Children and Young People Select Committee feels that the service has been of great benefit to schools in the past and the saving could have a substantial impact on the service going forward.

CUS01 – Housing Needs: The proposal to reduce staffing levels in the Housing Needs Service at a time of likely increased demand is of concern to the Housing Select Committee and it feels that the number of Housing Options staff should not be reduced until the current service review has been completed and the likely increase in demand has been quantified.

CUS22 – Refuse Collection Service: The Sustainable Development Select Committee feels that the introduction of a charge for replacement bins will be

controversial and will result in some unfairness due to the theft of some bins. The Committee would like to see the implementation of this charge handled delicately if agreed.

- 3.3 The Committee would like to make its own comments on the following proposals:

RES16/17 – Overview & Scrutiny and Committee & Business

- 3.4 The Committee accepts the Member Development part of the proposal but would like the Overview & Scrutiny element to be rejected at this stage, pending a review of the support function across governance.

RES22 – Corporate Communications

- 3.5 The Committee recommends that the publication of Lewisham Life (and its frequency) is reviewed again, in light of legislation and the strategic needs of the Council.

#### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report per se, although the financial implications of accepting the Committee's recommendations will need to be considered.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to refer reports to the Mayor and Cabinet, who are obliged to consider them.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals – Officer Report to Public Accounts Select Committee (09.11.10)

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Charlotte Dale, Scrutiny Manager (ext. 49534), or Kevin Flaherty, Head of Committee Business (ext. 49327).

Public Accounts Committee			
<b>Report Title</b>	Comments of the Children and Young People Select Committee on the Revenue Budget Savings Proposals 2011/12		
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item No.</b>	5
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Children and Young People Select Committee		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	09 November 2010

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report informs the Public Accounts Select Committee of the comments and views of the Children and Young People Select Committee, arising from discussions held on the Revenue Budget Savings Proposals 2011/12 at the Committee's meeting on 20 October 2010.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Public Accounts Select Committee is recommended to note the views of the Children and Young People Select Committee as set out in section three of the report.

## 3. Children & Young People Select Committee Views

- 3.1 On 20 October, the Children and Young People Select Committee considered the Revenue Budget Savings Proposals 2011/12. The Committee considered the written and verbal evidence from officers at the meeting.

- 3.2 The Committee would like to refer the following minutes relating to budget saving proposal CYP49:

### CYP49

- 3.3 Frankie Sulke informed the Committee that the school's White Paper, expected at the end of November, would provide more information on the national policy framework for school improvement services. She further informed the Committee that they already knew that they would lose the majority of grants for school improvement services in March 2011 and had already had to make cuts as a result of the in-year savings required by the Government. She advised that going forward the service would look to adopt a more flexible approach but we will need to wait to see whether there are any implications for this approach in the national policy to be set out in the White Paper. The saving put forward across both Phases represents a 23% saving in core funding.
- 3.4 In response to questions from the Committee, Frankie Sulke advised that:

- The Unions had supported the school improvement service and expressed some concern that the Council would not run the full service in the future.
- The medium impact the saving would have on certain equalities groups was due to the services provided that were aimed at raising the standard of underachieving groups, such as the Black Pupils Achievement Programme.
- Consultation had been undertaken with headteachers from Lewisham's schools, through the Primary and Secondary Strategic Groups.
- There were currently ongoing discussions about how to improve our charging mechanisms for school improvement and other services.

3.5 The Committee noted that the service had been of great benefit to schools in the past and expressed concern over the potential impact that such a substantial reduction could have. The Committee acknowledged that officers had taken these concerns into account having developed the proposal.

3.6 Chris Threlfall informed the Committee that intervention functions are still likely to remain for failing schools. Frankie Sulke advised that the reorganisation proposed would give us and schools flexibility if and when needed to buy in staff to support schools rather than support their costs year round.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report per se, although the financial implications of accepting the Committee's recommendations will need to be considered.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

5.2 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals – Officer Report to Children and Young People Select Committee (20.10.10)

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Dave Borland, Scrutiny Manager (ext. 47298).

<b>Public Accounts Committee</b>			
<b>Report Title</b>	Comments of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals		
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item No.</b>	5
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	09 November 2010

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report informs the Public Accounts Select Committee of the comments and views of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee, arising from discussions held on the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals at the Committee's meeting on 21 October 2010.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Public Accounts Select Committee is recommended to note the views of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee as set out in section three of the report.

## 3. Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee Views

- 3.1 On 21 October, the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee considered the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals. The Committee considered the written and verbal evidence from officers at the meeting.

- 3.2 The Committee would like to make the following comment on the proposals:

### COM01

- 3.3 Members were concerned about the impact of the reduction in staff accompanying the amalgamation of the Community Safety Service and the Community Wardens Service. Members felt that the new service should be monitored carefully and re-examined to ensure that the new service fulfils its objectives and is focussed on dealing with targeted areas of anti-social behaviour.

### COM02

- 3.4 Police Community Support Officers perform a valuable service to the community and are effective, when well managed, at reducing fear of crime, increasing public confidence and improving youth engagement. While the Committee would prefer that the level of PCSOs on the street and in the community were sustained, the

Committee accepts the need for cuts but hopes that operational decisions by the police will maintain an effective PCSO presence in the community.

### COM12/14/15

- 3.5 Members acknowledged the valuable work that local assemblies do, although they accepted that it is only fair for this area to share in cuts along with other services provided by the Council. However, the Committee felt that there should have been a more strategic approach to the cuts, examining the management structure of the team supporting the assemblies first in order to protect the frontline budgets from further reductions. Therefore the Committee would recommend that the management structure of local assemblies is examined.

### COM05

- 3.6 The Committee were disappointed that the relevant officers were not present in order to provide further insight into the equalities impacts that may arise from the proposals to the libraries. The Committee felt that there could be serious equality impacts due to the nature of the users of libraries, the location of the proposed library building closures and the issues that can arise when a community resource that plays an important function as a hub for that community is handed over with no financial support to sustain it. The Committee felt that they may need look at the equalities impacts of cuts and changes in further detail at a later date if the proposal is implemented.

## **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report per se, although the financial implications of accepting the Committee's recommendations will need to be considered.

## **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.3 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals – Officer Report to Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee (21.10.10)

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Andrew Hagger, Scrutiny Manager (ext. 49446), or Kevin Flaherty, Head of Committee Business (ext. 49327).

<b>Public Accounts Select Committee</b>			
<b>Report Title</b>	Comments of the Sustainable Development Select Committee on the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals		
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item No.</b>	5
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Sustainable Development Select Committee		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	09 November 2010

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report informs the Public Accounts Select Committee of the comments and views of the Sustainable Development Select Committee, arising from discussions held on the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals at the Committee's meeting on 27 October 2010.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Public Accounts Select Committee is recommended to note the views of the Sustainable Development Select Committee as set out in section three of the report.

## **3. Sustainable Development Select Committee Views**

- 4.1 On 27 October, the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals. The Committee considered the written and verbal evidence from officers at the meeting.
- 4.2 The Committee would like to make the following comment on the proposals:
- 4.3 The Committee was disappointed that not all the Equalities Impact Assessments were available in time for the Committee meeting. Therefore the Committee would like to make the Public Accounts Select Committee aware that its comments do not take into account all information contained within the Equalities Impact Assessments and that they should have special regard to these when formulating their own recommendations.
- 4.4 The Committee was also unsatisfied with the content of the Geographical Analysis section of the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals Report (paragraphs 8.12 to 8.16). The Committee acknowledged that while any cut or closure might impact on a number of areas within the borough, the analysis does not accurately reflect the localised impact of the cuts. Therefore the Committee would like to see a more detailed appraisal of the geographical impact of cuts within the borough by specifying affected wards.

#### CUS04

- 4.5 The Committee were concerned over the impact that this reduction in staffing will have on the Council's ability to drive up standards in private sector housing. This is especially important due to the significant increase in the size of the private housing sector in Lewisham over the last 9 years (The Strategic Housing Market Assessment shows a doubling in the number of households living in the private rented sector, going from 14% in 2001 to nearly 30% in 2007).
- 4.6 The Committee also felt that the Council should aim to maintain the handyman service at current levels for as long as possible. The handyman provides a valuable service to many people within the borough, and the Council should aim to pursue external funding to support and maintain this function, especially via the newly reorganised health organisations.

#### CUS22

- 4.7 The Committee ask that the Public Accounts Select Committee note the issue of introducing of charging for bins. The Committee feels that the introduction of this charge will be controversial and result in some unfairness due to theft of bins that will cause resentment amongst residents. Therefore the Committee would like to see the implementation of this charge handled delicately if agreed.

#### CUS24/25/26/27/30

- 4.8 The Committee felt that, while individually these reductions in service do not have a large impact, the cumulative effect of these cuts on the general appearance of the streets of Lewisham will be negative.

### **5 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report per se, although the financial implications of accepting the Committee's recommendations will need to be considered.

### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.4 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals – Officer Report to Sustainable Development Select Committee (27.10.10)

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Andrew Hagger, Scrutiny Manager (ext. 49446), or Kevin Flaherty, Head of Committee Business (ext. 49327).



<b>Public Accounts Select Committee</b>			
<b>Report Title</b>	Comments of the Housing Select Committee on the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals		
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item No.</b>	5
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Housing Select Committee		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	09 November 2010

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report informs the Public Accounts Select Committee of the comments and views of the Housing Select Committee, arising from discussions held on the report: "Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals" at the Committee's meeting on 1 November 2010.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Public Accounts Select Committee is recommended to note the views of the Housing Select Committee as set out in section three of the report.

## **3. Housing Select Committee Views**

- 5.1 On 1 November, the Housing Select Committee considered the report: "Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals". The Committee considered written and verbal evidence from officers at the meeting.

- 5.2 The Committee would like to make the following comments on the proposals:

### CUS01

- 5.3 The proposal to reduce staffing levels in the Housing Needs Service at a time of likely increased demand is of concern to the Committee. As a result of the comprehensive spending review, increased numbers of residents requiring housing assistance are anticipated as a result of increased homelessness, increased mortgage repossessions and an increase in residents with rent arrears. The Committee feels that the number of Housing Options staff should not be reduced until the current service review has been completed and the likely increase in demand has been quantified.
- 5.4 It is the Committee's opinion that any interims employed in the affected services should have their contracts terminated before any permanent staff are made redundant.

## CUS04

- 5.5 The Committee is concerned about the impact that the reduction in Environmental Health (Residential) staff will have on the Council's ability to drive up standards in private sector housing. The Committee notes that there has been a significant increase in the size of the private rented housing sector in Lewisham over the last 9 years and feels that a reduction in staff at this time will put increased pressure on an already pressurised service. Although it is difficult to foresee the full impact of the comprehensive spending review, it is likely that it will have a negative impact on standards in private sector housing and the Committee would like to be reassured that any savings proposals in this area will not have a detrimental effect on future levels of service.

## CUS12

- 5.6 The Committee is concerned about the proposal to move the Housing Benefits Overpayment team into the Corporate Debt Recovery team, as they feel that this might result in a loss of specialist skills and have a detrimental impact on some of the borough's most vulnerable residents. The Committee welcomes the current high level of service in this area and does not want this to be put at risk.

## **6 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report per se, although the financial implications of accepting the Committee's recommendations will need to be considered.

## **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.5 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals – Officer Report to Housing Select Committee (01.11.10)

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Charlotte Dale, Scrutiny Manager (ext. 49534), or Kevin Flaherty, Head of Committee Business (ext. 49327).

<b>Public Accounts Select Committee</b>			
<b>Report Title</b>	Comments of Healthier Communities Select Committee on the Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals		
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	<b>Item No.</b>	5
<b>Ward</b>	All		
<b>Contributors</b>	Healthier Communities Select Committee		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	09 November 2010

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report informs the Public Accounts Select Committee of the comments and views of the Healthier Communities Select Committee, arising from discussions held on the "Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals" report at the Committee's meeting on 3 November 2010.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Public Accounts Select Committee is recommended to note the views of the Healthier Communities Select Committee as set out in section three of the report.

## **3. Healthier Communities Select Committee Views**

- 3.7 On 3 November, the Healthier Communities Select Committee considered the report "Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals". The Committee considered written and verbal evidence from officers at the meeting.

- 3.8 The Committee makes comments on the following proposals:

### COM05

- 3.9 The Committee wishes to support the resolution passed at Full Council on September 23 2010, which urged the Mayor to not proceed with the full proposed reductions in the libraries service.
- 3.10 The Committee believes that the library service improves the quality of life for Lewisham residents, and believes that the closure of library buildings could result in an increase in the distance that residents must travel to access the service. This could have a detrimental impact on groups such as the elderly and people with impaired mobility.
- 3.11 The Committee notes the work that officers have undertaken with communities in Honour Oak, Pepys and Bellingham to examine ways in which to deliver a community-based library service.
- 3.12 The Committee emphasises the value that the library service and staff provide to unemployed residents and others seeking to develop their chances in the job market. In the current economic climate, the Committee believes it is important that the skills and advice contained within the current library service provision are retained to help improve the job prospects and health of unemployed residents.

- 3.13 The Committee welcomes the ongoing discussions between the Council, schools and partners in working to improve the delivery of the library service.

COM08

- 3.14 The Committee strongly urges officers within the Arts Service to contact the relevant performing arts trade unions to discuss donations, sponsorship and the sharing of expertise in order to ensure that the service continues to innovate, utilise best practice information and maintain a high standard of provision.

COM11

- 3.15 The Committee notes that the savings are to be made from the contract re-negotiations and not from a service reduction and emphasises that sports activity is important in meeting the Council's goals for becoming a healthier borough.

**4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report per se, although the financial implications of accepting the Committee's recommendations will need to be considered.

**5. Legal Implications**

- 5.6 The Constitution provides for Select Committees to make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Progress on General Fund Budget Strategy and 2011/12 to 2013/14 Savings Proposals – Officer Report to Healthier Communities Select Committee (03.11.10)

If you have any queries on this report, please contact Dave Borland, Scrutiny Manager (ext. 47298).