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18 January 2013

To: All Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Dear Member,

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 22nd January, 2013

I attach a copy of the following reports for the above-mentioned meeting which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda:

**6. BUDGET SCRUTINY - APPROVAL OF PANEL / OSC BUDGET SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS (PAGES 1 - 22)**

Please note that the remaining minutes of the Budget Scrutiny panels will be circulated to Members on 21 January 2013.

Yours sincerely

Felicity Parker  
Principal Committee Co-Ordinator

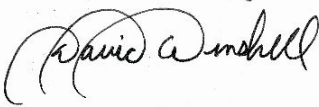
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**Haringey Council**

<b>Report for:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2013	<b>Item number</b>	
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<b>Title:</b>	Scrutiny of the Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2013/14-2015/16
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<b>Report authorised by :</b>	Cllr David Winskill Chair, Budget scrutiny 
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<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Melanie Ponomarenko Senior Policy Officer <a href="mailto:Melanie.Ponomarenko@Haringey.gov.uk">Melanie.Ponomarenko@Haringey.gov.uk</a> 0208 489 2933
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>Report for Key/Non Key Decision:</b>
N/A	

### 1 Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 This report lays out the recommendations made by the four Scrutiny Panels and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the scrutiny of the Draft Medium Term Financial Plan, 2013/14 – 15/16.

### 2 Recommendations

2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree the recommendations outlined in the body of this report for referral to Cabinet for consideration.

### 3 Other options considered



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N/A

#### **4 Background information**

4.1 As laid out in Part 4, Section G of the Haringey Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall undertake scrutiny of the Council's budget through a Budget Scrutiny process. The procedure by which this operates is detailed in the Protocol covering the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4.2 Also laid out in this section is that the Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Review process will be drawn from among the opposition party Councillors sitting on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall not be able to change the appointed Chair unless there is a vote of no confidence as outlined in Article 6.5 of the Constitution.

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Protocol**

4.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Protocol lays out the process of Budget Scrutiny and includes the following points:

- The budget shall be scrutinised by each Scrutiny Review Panel, in their respective areas. Their reports shall go to the OSC for approval. The areas of the budget which are not covered by the Scrutiny Review Panels shall be considered by the main OSC.
- A lead OSC member from the largest opposition group shall be responsible for the co-ordination of the Budget Scrutiny process and recommendations made by respective Scrutiny Review Panels relating to the budget.
- Overseen by the lead member referred to in paragraph 9.2, each Scrutiny Review Panel shall hold a meeting following the release of the December Cabinet report on the new 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan. Each Panel shall consider the proposals in this report, for their respective areas. The Scrutiny Review Panels may request that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Sustainability and/or Senior Officers attend these meetings to answer questions.
- Each Scrutiny Review Panel shall submit their final budget scrutiny report to the OSC meeting in January containing their recommendations/proposal in respect of the budget for ratification by the OSC.
- The recommendations from the Budget Scrutiny process, ratified by the OSC, shall be fed back to Cabinet. As part of the budget setting process, the Cabinet will clearly set out its response to the



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recommendations/ proposals made by the OSC in relation to the budget.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocol can be found at Appendix B of this report.

## **5 Comments of the Chief Financial Officer and Financial Implications**

5.1 The CFO has been consulted on this report and confirms that this review is part of the approved budget scrutiny process. Any financial implications resulting from the recommendations in this report will be considered by Cabinet at their February 2013 meeting when the Medium Term Financial Plan will be approved.

## **6 Head of Legal Services and Legal Implications**

6.1 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and makes the following comments.

6.2 The Head of Legal Services confirms that the Committee does have, within its Constitutional terms of reference, the power to make reports and recommendations to the full Council, the Cabinet or relevant non-Executive Committee in connection with the discharge of any functions - see Part 3, Section C, at paragraph 2(c) of the Constitution. The Committee also has the Constitutional power to take the action detailed in paragraph 2 of the report - see Part 4, Section G at paragraph 1.5 of the Constitution, which authorises the Committee to undertake scrutiny of the Council's budget through a Budget Scrutiny process.

6.3 The Legal Department has already had some input into some of the reports considered by the Committee / Panels. It is important that such involvement continues in relation to the subsequent formulation of the approach to be taken to the recommendations following the decisions made by Cabinet.

## **7 Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments**

7.1 Equalities Officers have been consulted on this report and make the following comments.

7.2 One of the key functions of Overview and Scrutiny is to hold decision makers to account. It is able to do this effectively through its open and evidence based approach and in a non-party political manner whilst being conducted in public.

7.3 When specific budget proposals have been finalised, it is expected that they will be subject to full Equality Impact Assessments, where appropriate, by



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respective services to identify any implications for the Council's public sector equality duty.

## **8 Head of Procurement Comments**

N/A

## **9 Use of Appendices**

- Appendix A – Recommendations
- Appendix B – Budget Scrutiny Protocol

## **10 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

[Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2013/14-2015/16](#)

### **Main Report**

## **11 Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### ***Community Based Budgeting***

11.1 During the meeting there was considerable discussion about the merits of Community Based Budgeting, both in improving the services provided to residents and as a means to save money.

**OSC recommends that the Council accelerate work around Community Based Budgeting with a view to improving integrated services as well as making savings for council and partner agencies.**

### ***Shared Services***

11.2 The OSC understands the difficulties and challenges around Shared Services, however it feels that Shared Services can help to achieve savings and greater value for money.

**The OSC recommends that the Council renew efforts into Shared Services.**

### ***Haringey People***

11.3 Haringey People is currently being reviewed to consider how it generates income. At the same time there is a need to be aware that it is a local



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magazine and therefore any advertising would need to be useful for local residents.

**OSC recommends that consideration be given to the outsourcing of sections of Haringey People with the intention of making it into a profit centre, whilst maintaining the Council's editorial control.**

### ***Overview and Scrutiny Budget Scrutiny process***

11.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that more detailed information on some of the budget lines would have enabled them to more effectively scrutinise the budget.

**That detailed information on savings / expenditure figures over certain thresholds (to be prescribed) be provided in future reports when scrutinising the budget.**

### ***Council Property***

11.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted that there is a lot of work being done around Council property and felt that this area merited further scrutiny involvement.

**For OSC to undertake a review of property, split into four themes – Accommodation strategy; Heritage & Regeneration; Corporate Portfolio; and Community buildings.**

11.6 The Committee requested more detail on Capital expenditure for the following areas to enable them to consider whether they wish to make any recommendations:

- Line 1 - Growth on the High Road – Tottenham Regeneration
- Line 11 - Repair and maintenance of Council buildings
- Line 12 - Accommodation strategy
- Line 16 - Bruce Castle
- Line 18 - Hornsey Town Hall
- Line 60 - IT Capital Programme
- Line 61 - Alexandra Park & Palace – regeneration



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- Line 62 - Alexandra Park & Palace – maintenance

## **12 Adults and Health Scrutiny Panel**

### ***A2 'New model of service delivery for Occupational Therapy and possibly Social Work Assessment.'***

12.1 The Panel were informed that:

- This line relates to the integration agenda and will involve service restructuring, consultation and change management as it is a complete change in the way that the service is managed.
- Consideration is being given to integrating Occupational Therapy with another provider. This already happens in Boroughs such as Islington and Croydon.
- The preference would be with commissioning a local healthcare provider.
- This proposal does not include merging social work with occupational therapy posts.
- There is still a lot of work to be done on this proposal and the service is still in the early stages of looking at models, including Haringey being the lead.
- Models are successful elsewhere for example the Central London Community Healthcare (CLCH) NHS Trust.
- Any model would need to ensure robust and clearly accountable local governance and management structures.

12.2 The Panel noted that any provider would need to focus on the needs of the whole Borough.

**The Panel recommends that any moves which are made in relation to the redesign of Adult social work assessment relating to Occupational therapy and social work assessment should focus on the integration of health and social care.**

**The Panel further recommends that Haringey Council should be the lead authority on service provision.**

### ***A16 'Develop a Supported Living Scheme to allow more young disabled adults to live in the community close to their families.'***

12.3 The Panel heard that this saving is about helping people with learning disabilities to live in the community as opposed to large institutions in line with national policy. The delivery model also achieved an average of a third less care costs.





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12.4 The service is currently working on 3 more possible schemes with housing where families would like their relatives to move out of institutional care. Options are being explored for housing, but this housing needs to be within Haringey.

12.5 The Panel asked whether it was possible to bring this saving forward from 15/16 as it is a positive saving. The Panel were informed that this would be dependent on the availability of housing.

12.6 The Panel asked who would provide care in these homes and was informed that, as with Campsbourne, there would be a high level of input from families on what care services would be commissioned.

**The Panel welcomes the move to enable more people with learning disabilities to live independently in the community and looks forward to hearing further updates on progress.**

**The Panel recommends that the Campsbourne model, which the Panel considered at its meeting in September, should be used as a model for other supported housing schemes.**

### ***A17 Further Staffing Efficiencies***

12.7 The Panel were informed that:

- Out of the total £400k savings, £184k had been identified and that the remaining £215k would be delivered in 14/15;
- The Mental Health posts due for deletion have been vacant for some time;
- Adults have discussed the deletion of these posts with Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust who are aware that savings need to be made whilst being aware of the possible implications;
- The service aims to minimise the impact as much as possible;
- Mental Health social worker posts have not been cut over recent years, when other services have had posts cut. If the savings are not made from these, vacant posts, then they will need to come from elsewhere;
- There are approximately 21 remaining Mental Health social worker posts. The vacant posts work has been taken up by existing social workers and management is ensuring that the service is still responding appropriately to demand.



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- In terms of local comparators, Haringey is better resourced in Mental Health social workers. A national CIPFA survey shows Haringey to be about average.
- The posts due for deletion are the “As Is” position as they are mainly vacant. However, the service is looking strategically with Managers and Partners.
- Savings are being made with consideration to how vulnerable people can best be protected.

12.8 The Panel noted that the Principal Policy Officer post is joint funded by Public Health and that should Public Health wish, they can fully fund the post.

12.9 The Panel asked whether future demand in relation to benefit cuts had been considered and were informed that the service is aware of the changes and demand. However this has to be managed within the approved budget.

**The Panel raised concerns that a Principal Policy Officer post in the Adult Commissioning service is being cut at a time of transition when these skills may be needed.**

**The Panel therefore recommends that Public Health consider picking up the full funding of the post, at least during the forthcoming transitional period.**

***NHS Grant to Support Care and Benefit Health***

12.10 The Panel noted that:

- This is a grant which has been given by the NHS for social care, and will continue in 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- The Grant is not ring-fenced, hence a growth bid has been submitted by Adult Services.
- Acute sector is getting better at getting people out of hospital quicker so they can be treated within the community and that this has an impact on social care services in terms of increased demand.
- Investment A2 reflects the projected increase in learning disability and mental health service users and also that people have a higher life expectancy with more complex needs.
- There are difficulties in managing the increased demand of people coming into the social care system, for example where the BEH MHT believe that someone is well enough to be treated in the community and social care is responsible for these services.

**The Panel welcomes the NHS Grant and recognises that the service needs**



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an injection of funding in order to manage the demographic changes and an increase in demand.

The Panel therefore recommends that the full amount of money is given to Adults in all of the remaining years of the grant.

The Panel also strongly supports making a further business case to ensure that the level of the NHS grant continues to keep pace with the increased pressures on the service and increased demand.

### *Health and social care integration*

The Panel is encouraged by the number of health and social care integrated services and recommends acceleration in the move to greater integration in order to improve outcomes for service users and improved financial efficiency.

### *Public Health*

The Panel understands that the Public Health budget is not yet available and looks forward to receiving the Public Health budget when it becomes available in order to allow the Panel to scrutinise the proposals as per its constitutional duty.

## **13 Communities Scrutiny Panel**

### ***P7 School Swimming – increase charges to schools***

13.1 The Panel noted that:

- The additional cost would be borne by schools.
- The new charge was likely to be £2.60 - £3 per session per child. This would be looked at together with the new service provider.
- The charges had remained static for a number of years.
- It was acknowledged that there was a risk that schools would stop using the service but swimming was part of the national curriculum and this was therefore viewed as unlikely.
- The increased charges were considered as not being out of line with those made by comparable authorities.



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13.2 The Panel were of the view that it was important to ensure that the proposed changes did not impact negatively on children but that it was unlikely that the increase would deter schools from using the service.

**That the option of obtaining external grant funding from appropriate national bodies with a role in sport promotion and, in particular, swimming, be explored.**

***P9 'Deletion of mobile Library Service'***

13.3 The Panel were informed that

- the service had 712 users who took out approximately 150,000 items per year. The figure for housebound people was approximately 14,000 items borrowed per year. The service covered streets, sheltered accommodation, housebound people, schools and children's centres. However, the number of users had been going down.
- The 180 housebound people who used the service all had a number of other service providers visiting them in their homes every day.
- It was not feasible to just run the service for housebound as the numbers were too small.
- It was noted that a review was planned and engagement with users would be arranged as part of the review.
- Partners would be closely involved and that this would include Age Concern.

13.4 The Panel were concerned at the potential impact on housebound and other vulnerable people.

13.5 The Panel were of the view that it was important that that partner agencies such as the London Fire Brigade, Police Service, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Mental Health Trust and any other relevant partners were also involved and that the option of integrating with health and safety services be fully explored.

**It is recommended that the following options be explored fully to enable the continuation of the mobile library service;**

- **Sharing responsibility with other service providers and, together with them, developing an integrated service; and**
- **Developing a joint service with a neighbouring borough.**

***P12 Revision of arrangements for Area Committees/Forums***



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13.6 It was noted that:

- The enablement team in Front Line services currently had 4 staff – 3 full time and 1 part time, it was proposed that all of the posts would be deleted.
- Part of the reason for their creation had been to sort out the distribution lists for area forums/committees and this had now been done. In addition, they also had a role in assisting with the development of area plans and attending meetings of area forums/committees. The remainder of their time had been used on other functions. The work that they had been doing on area forums/committees would need to be picked up elsewhere within the Council.

13.7 The Panel commented that progress on area plans had been slow. This was acknowledged by the Cabinet Member for Communities. In addition, a number of the actions that had been included within some area plans were things that were already being done or planned. It was open to question whether work on them represented value for money.

13.8 Panel Members questioned whether there was the capacity to effectively support area plans. Although money had been committed to facilitate this, progress still needed to be made. The Cabinet Member was of the view that the role of area forum/committee chairs was important. It was not solely about chairing meetings and there were other ways of engaging with residents.

**In view of Haringey's stated commitment in the last Governance Review to devolving decision making and greater involvement of the communities in the Borough, the Panel is greatly concerned that the possibility has emerged of withdrawing the funding for a significant portion of the support currently available for area forums and committees.**

**It recommends that, before any decision is made, clarity be provided on how the functions that directly support the work of forums/committees that are undertaken currently by the team to be deleted will continue to be provided.**

## **14 Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel**

### ***P6 Allotments – increase in fees***

14.1 The panel noted that:

- The increase affected the land element of allotment holder's rental. Thus the average rent would rise from £45.50 p.a. to £63.50 p.a.
- The proposal also included £30k for capital investment in allotments.



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- There were approximately 1,600 tenants across 27 allotment sites. 80% of tenants were resident in Haringey.

14.2 The panel were keen to assess what impact such an increase would have for low income tenants, or those on benefits.

14.3 The panel heard from a representative from Haringey Allotment Forum, who noted that:

- allotment holders had already had a 50% increase in rent two years ago,
- the £30k capital investment will not go far among 27 sites
- previous match funding for capital projects had not been identified.

**It is recommended that the allotments service should be revenue neutral and any increase should only be considered with the full consultation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders.**

**Any future revenue surplus made within the allotment service should be ring fenced and reinvested in allotments.**

***P8 Amend Council Policy to allow more events in Finsbury Park***

14.4 The Panel heard that:

- The current arrangements allow for 5 events per year.
- A policy change is proposed to provide more flexibility and to allow more events to take place (up to 12 per annum). It was anticipated that this would increase income from £65k to £150k per annum.

14.5 Panel members noted that Finsbury Park was well connected for transport which made it very desirable for event hire. In this context, the panel questioned whether the Council charges adequately reflected this and how prices compared with similar venues. It was noted that the £150k income was a net figure, once all associated costs had been deducted.

**Consideration should be given to whether enough is charged for the set up and break down of events at Finsbury Park, based on comparators.**

**Any increase in revenue should be from an increase in the cost of holding events at Finsbury Park and not an increase in the number of events held.**

***Cap Prog. 56 – Loft Conversions***



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14.6 Panel members noted that this capital investment would create additional room (loft conversions) in council owned properties which could help to relieve pressures on overcrowding (and increasing overall housing options).

14.7 Given the significant potential, panel members felt that there could be a case for additional investment.

**It is recommended that there be an increase in the number of well designed loft conversions to help to alleviate housing pressures in the borough.**

## **15 Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel**

***C1 'Reduction in Looked After Children Placements'***

***C3 'Net reduction in staffing requirements following early intervention processes and reductions in numbers of looked after children'***

***C6 'Looked after Children commissioning savings flowing from the work of the North London Strategic Alliance'***

15.1 The Panel noted that:

- When work on the MTFP had begun, the Children and Young People's Service had still been in special measures and therefore a more risk averse approach had been adopted.
- The proposed savings were based on the further reduction in the numbers of looked after children (LAC).
- The Director of Children Services stated that not only was the number of LAC coming down but the time that it took for children to be adopted had also reduced through quicker processes.
- The ultimate aim was to reduce the rate of LAC to a level more consistent with similar authorities by 2015. The reduction in LAC meant that there was also a reduced need for social work and legal support.

15.2 The Panel felt that projected reductions to 400 in the number of LAC were reasonable, particularly as unit costs per child could range from £50k to much higher.

15.3 It was felt that early intervention had the potential to yield greater reductions in due course and that at least some of the savings should therefore be reinvested in prevention.

**That the Panel notes that the success of the budget proposals is very much dependent on the continued reduction in the numbers of Looked**



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after Children and, although the projected reductions are very welcome, concern be expressed at the potential of these not being achieved and the implications that this might have.

#### ***C4 Reduction in Legal Services budget as a result of fewer care proceedings***

More information was requested by the Panel

#### ***School Funding Changes***

15.4 The Cabinet Member for Children reported that the Schools Forum had already agreed the revised funding formula for schools that had been formulated in the light of the reduction in the level of local discretion but the final allocation of funds for schools had not yet been completed fully.

15.5 The only schools likely to lose any funding were those that were not completely full. This was due to changes by the government to the relevant funding formula and would apply to Heartlands and St Thomas More. Other schools would get additional funding from other sources in due course.

**That the Panel recommend that, as far as is possible, no school should lose out as a result of the reduction in local discretion over the School Funding formula and noted the assurances provided that only two schools – Heartlands and St Thomas More are likely to be adversely affected.**

#### ***C2 – Review of Early Years Service***

More information was requested by the Panel.

#### ***John Loughborough School***

15.6 The Panel noted that:

- Children were still being admitted to the school. This was because it was necessary to place children in schools where there were vacancies.
- There was shortly to be a Cabinet Member signing in respect of future options for the school and whether or not to go ahead with proposals to close the school. Time had been allowed for people to respond and for the school to seek an external sponsor.
- Although the school had identified a potential sponsor, they had been rejected by the Department for Education. If a final decision was





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made to close the school, this would happen at the end of the summer term.

- Alternative school places would be found for children at the school. It was possible though that the school would be kept open for those young people taking their GCSEs in order to minimise any disruption that might impact on their performance.
- A significant number of children at the school came from outside of the borough so it was not necessarily the case that the schools closure would increase pressure on nearby schools.

15.7 The Chair raised the issue of whether any measures had been undertaken to protect the Council's investment in the school.

**That it be noted that that £4 million had been invested in John Loughborough School as part of the Building Schools for the Future project and recommend that, if the school were to close, that measures should be taken to protect the public money invested in the site.**

***C9 'Consolidation of arrangements for Youth Offending, alternative provision and behaviour support services to achieve efficiencies.'***

15.8 The Cabinet Member of Resources and Carbon Reduction reported the challenge that the Council faced in providing careers advice was how to ensure quality without providing the service itself.

**That advice given to young people on careers and further education should be aspirational to give them the best chances and that this should be monitored to improve outcomes for young people. The Council should take a lead role together with local businesses and schools to ensure the best outcomes for young people.**

***Bruce Grove Youth Centre***

15.9 The Panel heard that:

- Open times and days would vary.
- It had been open for 5 days per week during the summer when £200k had been obtained for the summer programme.
- There had been good feedback on this. The number of days that it was open had since reduced to 4 and then 3 days per week.
- The 12 for 12 pledge had never been a formal decision by the Council.



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- The service had not been good at advertising and this had now been rectified.

**That, in respect of Youth Services, the Panel request details of work commissioned and of the planning that had been made for extending the service to younger children and that these be submitted to the March meeting of the Panel, which is already scheduled to have a youth focus.**

#### **General process recommendation**

**That in future years, the effective scrutiny of budget proposals be assisted by Members being provided with details of variance from previous years budgets.**

## **APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX A

### Recommendations

#### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Council accelerate work around Community Based Budgeting with a view to improving integrated services as well as making savings for council and partner agencies.
2. The Council renew efforts into Shared Services.
3. Consideration be given to the outsourcing of sections of Haringey People with the intention of making it into a profit centre, whilst maintaining the Council's editorial control.
4. Detailed information on savings / expenditure figures over certain thresholds (to be prescribed) be provided in future reports when scrutinising the budget.
5. OSC to undertake a review of property, split into four themes – Accommodation strategy; Heritage & Regeneration; Corporate Portfolio; and Community buildings.

#### ADULTS AND HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. a) Any moves which are made in relation to the redesign of Adult social work assessment relating to Occupational therapy and social work assessment should focus on the integration of health and social care.  
b) The Council should be the lead authority on service provision. **(A2)**
2. a) The move to enable more people with learning disabilities to live independently in the community is welcomed and the Panel looks forward to hearing further updates on progress.  
b) The Campsbourne model, which the Panel considered at its meeting in September, should be used as a model for other supported housing schemes. **(A16)**
3. The Panel raised concerns that a Principal Policy Officer post in the Adult Commissioning service is being cut at a time of transition when these skills may be needed. The Panel therefore recommends that Public Health consider picking up the full funding of the post, at least during the forthcoming transitional period. **(A17)**



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4. The Panel welcomes the NHS Grant and recognises that the service needs an injection of funding in order to manage the demographic changes and an increase in demand.

a) The Panel therefore recommends that the full amount of money is given to Adults in all of the remaining years of the grant.

The Panel also strongly supports making a further business case to ensure that the level of the NHS grant continues to keep pace with the increased pressures on the service and an increased demand. (NHS Grant to Support Care and Benefit Health)

5. - The Panel is encouraged by the number of health and social care integrated services and recommends acceleration in the move to greater integration in order to improve outcomes for service users and improved financial efficiency. (*Health and Social Care Integration*)

6. *Public Health* - The Panel understands that the Public Health budget is not yet available and looks forward to receiving the Public Health budget when it becomes available in order to allow the Panel to scrutinise the proposals as per its constitutional duty.

## **COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the option of obtaining external grant funding from appropriate national bodies with a role in sport promotion and, in particular, swimming, be explored. (P7)

2. It is recommended that the following options be explored fully to enable the continuation of the mobile library service;

- Sharing responsibility with other service providers and, together with them, developing an integrated service; and
- Developing a joint service with a neighbouring borough. (P9)

3. In view of Haringey's stated commitment in the last Governance Review to devolving decision making and greater involvement of the communities in the Borough, the Panel is greatly concerned that the possibility has emerged of withdrawing the funding for a significant portion of the support currently available for area forums and committees.

It recommends that, before any decision is made, clarity be provided on how the functions that directly support the work of forums/committees that are undertaken currently by the team to be deleted will continue to be provided. (P12)



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## **ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING SCRUTINY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. a) The allotments service should be revenue neutral and any increase should only be considered with the full consultation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders. (P6)  
  
b) Any future revenue surplus made within the allotment service should be ring fenced and reinvested in allotments.
2. a) Consideration should be given to whether enough is charged for the set up and break down of events at Finsbury Park, based on comparators.  
  
b) Any increase in revenue should be from an increase in the cost of holding events at Finsbury Park and not an increase in the number of events held. (P8)
3. That there be an increase in the number of well designed loft conversions to help to alleviate housing pressures in the borough. (Capital programme 56)

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The Panel notes that the success of the budget proposals is very much dependent on the continued reduction in the numbers of Looked after Children and, although the projected reductions are very welcome, concern be expressed at the potential of these not being achieved and the implications that this might have. C1/C3/C6
2. That the Panel recommend that, as far as is possible, no school should lose out as a result of the reduction in local discretion over the School Funding formula and noted the assurances provided that only two schools – Heartlands and St Thomas More are likely to be adversely affected. (School Funding changes)
3. That it be noted that that £4 million had been invested in John Loughborough School as part of the Building Schools for the Future project and recommend that, if the school were to close, that measures should be taken to protect the public money invested in the site. (John Loughborough School)
4. That advice given to young people on careers and further education should be aspirational to give them the best chances and that this should be monitored to improve outcomes for young people. The Council should



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take a lead role together with local businesses and schools to ensure the best outcomes for young people. (C9)

5. That, in respect of Youth Services, the Panel request details of work commissioned and of the planning that had been made for extending the service to younger children and that these be submitted to the March meeting of the Panel, which is already scheduled to have a youth focus. (Bruce Grove Youth Centre)
6. That in future years, the effective scrutiny of budget proposals be assisted by Members being provided with details of variance from previous years budgets. (General Budget Scrutiny Process recommendation)



## APPENDIX B

### Budget Scrutiny Protocol extract from Overview and Scrutiny Protocol

#### Budget Scrutiny review

The budget shall be scrutinised by each Scrutiny Review Panel, in their respective areas. Their reports shall go to the OSC for approval. The areas of the budget which are not covered by the Scrutiny Review Panels shall be considered by the main OSC.

A lead OSC member from the largest opposition group shall be responsible for the co-ordination of the Budget Scrutiny process and recommendations made by respective Scrutiny Review Panels relating to the budget.

To allow the OSC to scrutinise the budget in advance of it formally being set and convey those recommendations to the Cabinet, the following timescale is suggested:

- **Scrutiny Review Panel Meetings: May to November**  
Each Scrutiny Review Panel shall undertake budget scrutiny in their respective areas, to be overseen by the lead member referred to in paragraph 9.2. Between May and November, this shall involve scrutinising the 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan approved at the budget-setting full Council meeting in February.
- **Cabinet report on the new 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan to members of the OSC: December**  
The Cabinet shall release their report on the new 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan to members of the OSC, following their meeting to agree the proposals in December.
- **Scrutiny Review Panel Meetings: January**  
Overseen by the lead member referred to in paragraph 9.2, each Scrutiny Review Panel shall hold a meeting following the release of the December Cabinet report on the new 3-year Medium Term Financial Plan. Each Panel shall consider the proposals in this report, for their respective areas, in addition to their budget scrutiny already carried out. The Scrutiny Review Panels may request that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Sustainability and/or Senior Officers attend these meetings to answer questions.
- **OSC Meeting: January**  
Each Scrutiny Review Panel shall submit their final budget scrutiny report to the OSC meeting in January containing their



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recommendations/proposal in respect of the budget for ratification by the OSC.

- **Cabinet Meeting: February**

The recommendations from the Budget Scrutiny process, ratified by the OSC, shall be fed back to Cabinet. As part of the budget setting process, the Cabinet will clearly set out its response to the recommendations/ proposals made by the OSC in relation to the budget.