

**Report for:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016

**Item number:** 12

**Title:** Proposals for pre-budget engagement

**Report authorised by :** Tracie Evans, Chief Operating Officer

**Lead Officer:** Simon Jones, Assistant Director for Communications

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1. This report sets out proposals to engage the public, businesses and our partners on the council's budget challenges, to feed into a forthcoming MTFS consultation.

**2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

2.1 Since 2010 the Government has cut Haringey Council's spending, in real terms, by 40%.

2.2 In many ways, just like other councils, we find ourselves in the perfect storm with local government continuing to take the brunt of the Government's austerity agenda.

2.3 Since 2010 we have identified £190 million of savings, yet at the same time our ability to deliver the savings is being outstripped by rising demand for acute services, particularly in social care and temporary housing.

2.4 This will result in the continued need to make difficult decisions while changing the way we deliver many of our services. At the same time the Leader of the Council has made it clear that she refuses to manage decline.

2.5 It is therefore important that we involve the public and our partners in the issues that we face and how best to use the resources at our disposal to get the best outcome for residents and businesses. That is why we are recommending the launch of a pre-budget engagement exercise.

2.6 In launching this exercise our aim is to be as transparent as possible, sparking as many conversations as possible in the time we have available on how best to use our diminishing resources and what services and support are most important to local people.

2.7 This is the start of an on-going process of public involvement in budgetary decision-making which will continue and intensify as the process evolves and

develops, ensuring that everybody has the chance to feed into the issues and challenges that we face.

### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 That the committee reviews plans for pre-budget engagement.

### **4. Reasons for decision**

4.1 Pre-budget engagement, while not a statutory requirement, is designed to involve the public and our partners as much as possible to inform future decision-making on the council's budget.

### **5. Alternative options considered**

5.1 The alternative would be not to engage at this stage but we do not believe that is the right approach.

### **6. Background information**

6.1 In 2015 The Council set out a three-year programme to save £70 million. While the savings are being delivered, a significant increase in demand in acute services is resulting in the need to identify additional savings.

6.2 In preparation for a forthcoming MTFs savings programme, The Council plans to launch a pre-budget engagement exercise, the purpose of which is to involve the public, businesses and partners at the earliest possible stage to inform future decision-making.

6.3 The aim of the engagement exercise is to be as transparent as possible about the council's financial position, our priorities and how we are planning to change to deal with the pressures that we face. Through the work we will put the spotlight on the range of support provided by the council, inviting the public to tell us their priorities.

6.4 This will be done through a series of events and activities over a four-week period starting on Monday October 24<sup>th</sup> and running until Sunday November 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **7. Pre-budget engagement plan**

7.1 The engagement exercise, called 'Your Haringey, Your Future' will comprise of the following elements:

- A 4-page budget booklet which will be delivered via Haringey People, while also sent to partnership organisations, voluntary groups and businesses
- Information will be replicated online with a survey which allows people to feed back their priorities
- Six public drop-in events in town centre locations and libraries

- A business forum
- A partnership forum with the voluntary sector

7.2 A four-page booklet, distributed with Haringey People, will provide information in most accessible way possible, explaining how the council's budget is currently allocated, how the budget has changed and why and how the council is changing to deal with cost pressures. The information will also be made available online, inviting people to complete a questionnaire.

7.3 The booklet will also be sent to partnership organisations and voluntary groups as well as made available in libraries, along with a printed version of the questionnaire.

7.4 The booklet will be made available, upon request, in a variety of languages and other accessible formats.

7.5 Six drop-in events will be held at the following times and location, allowing people to feed back directly.

Muswell Hill Broadway - St James Square	Monday 24th October, 1pm to 4pm
Crouch End, Town Hall Square	Tuesday 1st November, 3pm to 6:30pm
Tottenham, Marcus Garvey Library	Wednesday 9th November, 1pm to 4pm
Wood Green, The Mall Shopping Centre	Saturday 12th November, 11am – 2pm
Hornsey Library	Tuesday 15th November, 4pm to 7pm
Tottenham, The High Road junction with West Green Road	Thursday 17th November, 1pm to 4pm

7.6 In addition separate events are planned with the voluntary sector and businesses.

## 8 The feedback process

8.1 The proposed questionnaire sets out the major areas of council spend in relation to services and support that people receive. This will be done across all Corporate Plan priority areas.

8.2 Through this process we will invite people to select five areas that are most important to them and 5 areas that are least important. The prioritisation list is set out in Appendix A.

- 8.3 There will be an ‘open comments’ section which allows people to feed back other information and views.
- 8.4 We will ask for equalities and demographic information which will allow us to assess the results against different population groups.
- 8.5 The information will be fed back into the MTFS process and made available to Overview and Scrutiny Committee before any decisions are taken.

## **9 Promotion, publicity and accessibility**

- 9.1 The engagement exercise will be promoted using the following means:
- Haringey People, which will be distributed between October 19<sup>th</sup> and October 23<sup>rd</sup>
  - The Council’s weekly resident e-newsletter during the 4-week period which goes to 23,000 people
  - Social media
  - Community websites
  - Local newspapers
  - The local Turkish and Cypriot press
  - Poster sites in town centre locations
  - Distribution via voluntary groups and community organisations
  - Through the CCG and a network of GPs and pharmacists
  - Via local schools
  - Via Haringey Business Alliance
  - Via the council’s partnership news bulletin which goes to 450 different groups

## **10 Contribution to strategic aims**

- 10.1 The engagement exercise contributes to the council’s strategic aims by allowing residents and business to feed back on the priority areas that are most important to them.

## **11 Finance and Procurement comments**

- 11.1 This report concerns the public engagement around the development of the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy and is an important part of the budget decision making process. There are no financial or procurement impacts as a result of this report however the information obtained from the engagement process will be used to inform the development of the MTFS.

## **12 Legal comments**

- 12.1 Whilst the consultation proposed is not statutory, the council must ensure the common law rules relating to consultation exercises are followed, specifically the duty to ensure the consultation is procedurally fair. The general principles of good

consultation should also be followed, specifically that consultation should occur when proposals are at a formative stage; should give sufficient information on proposals to enable intelligent consideration by consultees ; should allow adequate time for consideration and response; and that the specificity of the consultation should be influenced by those being consulted.

### 13 **Equality Comments**

13.1 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to:

- tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
- and foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not

13.2 The Council is required to collect equality information to ensure that we are reaching all diversity groups. This information helps us to assess how plans or proposals effect various sections of the community. Therefore as part of our consultation processes, we will ask respondents to identify themselves under particular groups, protected under the Equality Act. This information is held in the strictest confidence and can only be used for the purposes stated above.

13.3 Copies of the booklet and questionnaire will be made available in different languages and formats upon request.

#### **Use of Appendices**

- Appendix A sets out a list of areas intended to be used in the questionnaire to gain feedback on priorities.
- Appendix B includes the budget engagement booklet

## **APPENDIX A**

Council prioritisation list

### **LIBRARIES AND CUSTOMER**

#### **Libraries**

We have 9 libraries with 770,000 books borrowed every year.

#### **Customer Service Centres**

Our customers contact and transact with us online, on the phone and in person. We take around 740,000 contacts from our customers each year.

### **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

#### **School improvement and learning**

We support schools, children's centres and nurseries to maintain high standards while making sure that every child has a school place and participates in education. This includes a Virtual School specifically for children in foster or residential care. We also provide support and training for governors.

#### **Early help and prevention**

We work with young people and families to identify any problems or challenges they may be experiencing so that the right type of community-wide support can be provided. This includes children's centres and the Bruce Grove Youth Hub.

#### **Family support /safeguarding**

We work more intensively with families experiencing difficulties, doing everything possible to keep the family unit together while making sure that their children are not at risk. We also recruit foster carers to look after children who are at risk.

#### **Children in Care**

As a last resort we will take children at risk into our care, making sure that the young people receive the right support and education.

### **ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

#### **Maintaining independence**

The Council's reablement and enablement services support patients who have experienced changes in their health as a result of surgery, illness or injury. We help people to regain their independence and to learn or relearn daily living skills which prevent them from staying or going into hospital or residential care

#### **Assessment and long term care**

We work closely with individuals; their family and/or carer to create a support plan that describes the care and support needed - this could be in the community, through housing-related support or schemes such as Shared Lives -and how they can use their

personal budget to best effect to pay for it. Most of the budget in this area is spent on care packages for adults.

### **Adults Safeguarding**

We work with health service and other agencies to reduce the risk of harm for people with care and support needs. Working with the courts, we also protect people who are unable to make their own decisions about treatment or care.

## **HEALTHIER LIVING**

### **Protect and improve health while preventing illnesses**

For example, this is through promoting immunisation programmes, sexual health services, drugs and alcohol services, health visiting, school nursing and the Family Nurse Partnership programme.

### **Promote healthy lifestyles**

This includes support to reduce obesity and help for people to give up smoking.

### **Improve healthcare services**

We provide advice and evidence of what works and doesn't work to the local NHS.

## **SAFER AND CLEANER NEIGHBOURHOODS**

### **Leisure centres**

We have four leisure centres which are operated on the council's behalf by Fusion.

### **Sport development**

We promote physical activity with events throughout the year. This includes the Learn to Swim programme, London Youth Games, the Year of Walking and activities for older people.

### **Parks**

We maintain 25 parks and open spaces, 22 of which have been accredited with Green Flags.

### **Community safety**

We work with partners to prevent and reduce crime – for example we work with young people to reduce gang activity. We also work with ex-offenders to reduce re-offending.

### **Roads maintenance**

We maintain 214 miles of roads and 23,000 street lights. Last year (2015/16) we repaired 3,960 potholes

### **Refuse and recycling collection**

We empty 130,000 bins every week and collected a total of 32,313 tonnes of recycling last year (2015/16).

### **Street cleaning**

We spend £8 million a year on street cleaning, which includes cleaning our town centres and main roads at least daily and the rest of the borough's roads at least once a week, and picking up, on average, 600 fly-tips every week. We hand out in the

region of 400-500 fines each year for dumping, littering and not dealing with waste responsibly.

## **INVESTMENT, GROWTH AND JOBS**

### **Jobs, skills and new opportunities**

We bring new investment into the borough encouraging business growth, job creation and helping people develop new skills

## **HOUSING**

### **New homes**

By seeking investment we encourage new homes to be built, making them as affordable as possible. In Tottenham and Wood Green we want to see 16,000 new homes built across Tottenham and Wood Green by 2025.

### **Homeless advice and support**

We give help to families at risk of becoming homeless, providing information, advice and support on what their housing options are.