

**MEDIUM TERM SERVICE AND FINANCIAL PLANS 2013-14
SUMMARY OF RESOLUTIONS FROM THE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND
SCRUTINY PANELS**

Resources PDS Panel - :

It was **RESOLVED** that the following issues require further consideration and highlighting as part of the budget process for 2013/14:

1. Property Services
2. Democratic Services

Summary of Comments:

Property Services

- Concerns over potential risks of reducing levels of maintenance regarding property as this is an income generating service. Concerns over the large number of proposed job cuts.
- Concerns that a 'less responsive service' would lead to major damage of the Council's assets and that the proposed savings would prove a false economy.
- There was a suggestion that the savings be split up into (1) a staging plan for development and (2) income maximisation.

Democratic Services

- Concerns that proposed cuts would reduce the accountability of the administration and cut back on democracy. View that reducing scrutiny meetings would mean that when panels do meet, they would cease to be productive due to over long agendas.
- View that the present call in process has significant value and that the budget proposals could be destroyed by the call in process.
- Views that the scrutiny function helps the Cabinet to run effectively and that it is right that the Council's finances should be subject to detailed scrutiny.
- There were some suggestions to offset these proposed cuts: to reduce the Ward Councillor Initiative; reduce Councillors allowances by 10%; investigate aligning scrutiny panels with directorates and in the long term, looking at cutting the number of Councillors.

Wellbeing PDS Panel:

It was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Panel requested that the budget for Adult Social Services and Housing should be more protected and that savings should be considered within other areas of the Council;
2. The Panel requested that next year's budget be presented at a much earlier date to the Panel (latest at September 2013);
3. The Panel felt that it is essential that the Council protect frontline services for vulnerable people; and
4. The Panel felt that all Officers and every Member of the Council should be aware that they have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations – when making decisions and setting policies, as per the advice of Equalities Manager.

Planning, Transport and Environment PDS Panel:

The Panel didn't make any formal resolutions. As per minutes of that meeting (yet to be published) there was a statement from Councillor Eleanor Jackson (on behalf of the Labour Group), detailed introduction by all officers and few queries from the Panel. There was one set of recommendations put forward but those were not carried.

Minute extract on the set of recommendations that was not carried:

Councillor Geoff Ward proposed the following recommendation:

The Planning, Transport & Environment Panel have concerns over some of the proposals with the Medium Term Service & Resource Plan and it asks the relevant Cabinet Member(s) to look again at these particular areas;

- (i) Public Protection – What risk would there be to the public and the Council if the staffing levels were reduced as proposed?
- (ii) Public Conveniences – Would the number of available toilets be deemed adequate enough and in the most suitable locations to residents and visitors if the closure proposals were approved?
- (iii) Car Parks – Does the proposal to remove the free parking provision in some areas of the Council pose a significant risk to the viability of local businesses?

Councillor Brian Webber seconded the recommendation.

Three members of the Panel voted in favour of the recommendation, four voted against it and there were no abstentions. The recommendation therefore was not carried.

Economic and Community Development PDS Panel:

The Panel **RESOLVED** that:

1. The Panel felt that all Officers and every Member of the Council should be briefed that they have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations – when making decisions and setting policies. The Panel also asked Equalities Manager to circulate a briefing in relation to the latest on the statement from the Prime Minister.
2. The Panel requested a report on the discussions with the Bath Tourism Plus in terms of the consensual agreement on transition of funding;
3. The Panel requested a report on how Tourism Levy will come out in practice, including models of charging versus income.

Housing and Major Projects PDS Panel:

The Chair proposed the following recommendation;

The Panel asks the Cabinet to consider whether investment in the Public Realm and Affordable Housing should be shown within the Medium Term Service & Resource Plan for future years, following 2013 / 14.

All Panel Members agreed with this proposal.

Early Years, Children and Youth PDS Panel:

The Panel did not make formal recommendations/resolutions.

The Panel wished to show strong support for retaining services which have a high impact on budget implications. They added their intention to identify in years 2014 / 15 / 16 where this loss could be mitigated across other service areas.

The Panel's debate was mostly focused on the retention of frontline services and that proposed cuts will affect vulnerable. The Panel commented on Youth Service, Children Centres, Early Years Services and Safeguarding, Social Care and Family Support Services.

