



Cabinet Meeting

22 January 2013

Report title	Comments from Scrutiny on the Five Year Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2018/19	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Roger Lawrence Leader of the Council	
	Councillor Andrew Johnson Resources	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Simon Warren, Chief Executive	
Originating service	Strategic Finance	
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Report to be/has been considered by	Adults and Community Scrutiny Panel	5 November
	Health Scrutiny Panel	7 November
	Enterprise and Business Scrutiny Panel	19 November
	Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel	20 November
	Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel	21 November
	Vibrant Safe and Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel	28 November
	Scrutiny Board	17 December

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Consider the comments from Scrutiny Board and Panels in relation to the draft five year budget and medium term financial strategy 2014/15 to 2018/19.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny's feedback on the draft five year budget and medium term financial strategy that was approved as the basis of consultation by the Cabinet on 23 October 2013.

2. Background

- 2.1. At its meeting on 23 October 2013, the Cabinet considered a draft five year budget and medium term financial strategy for the period 2014/15 to 2018/19. Cabinet approved the draft budget strategy as the basis of budget consultation and scrutiny over forthcoming months.
- 2.2. The five year budget and medium term financial strategy has been considered by all Scrutiny Panels and Scrutiny Board during November and December 2013. The feedback from those meetings is included in Appendix A.
- 2.3. Scrutiny Board will consider the budget again in February 2014, following an update to Cabinet (Resources) Panel on the draft five year budget and medium term financial strategy and the Local Government finance settlement, which is scheduled for December 2013. The purpose of this meeting will be to consider the response of Cabinet to the comments made by Scrutiny Board during the November/December round of meetings, together with any new savings proposals that may emerge. The outcome of this Board meeting will be incorporated into the final Cabinet budget report, scheduled for February 2014, ahead of Full Council considering the budget in March 2014.
- 2.4. In order to limit the volume of paper used as part of the budget reporting process, the Cabinet report has not been appended to this covering report. Detail of individual savings proposals can be found on the council's website at: <http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/budgetsavings>.

3. Budget Proposals

- 3.1. All comments from Scrutiny Board and Panels are included at Appendix A.
- 3.2. More detailed information on each of the savings proposals is included in the document 'The Cuts – Facing Reality: Your Guide to Wolverhampton City Council's five year budget proposals for the period 2014-2019' which can be found on the council's [website](#).

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. The financial implications are discussed in the body of the report, and in the report to Cabinet. Should any of these proposals and options not be delivered the projected budget deficit will increase by an equivalent sum and alternative savings will have to be identified.

[NA/14012014/M]

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Statutory requirements will be taken into account when making final recommendations on the budget and council tax requirement for 2014/15. Further legal implications are discussed in the report to Cabinet.

[RB/14012014/A]

6. Equalities implications

- 6.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a statutory duty to pay due regard to the impact of how it carries out its business on different groups of people. This is designed to help the council identify the particular needs of different groups and reduce the likelihood of discrimination. An equality analysis screening has been conducted on each proposal, and fuller equality analysis will be conducted where appropriate. Further equalities implications are discussed in the report to Cabinet.

7. Environmental implications

- 7.1 Individual proposals include details of potential environmental implications.

8. Human resources implications

- 8.1 Individual proposals include details of the potential human resources implications.

9. Schedule of background papers

- 9.1 Cabinet, 23 October 2013 - Five Year Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2018/19

Appendix A - Summary of Scrutiny Panel Discussions

Key

VSSC	Vibrant Safe and Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel
CCC	Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel
E&B	Enterprise and Business Scrutiny Panel
CYP	Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel
A&C	Adults and Community Scrutiny Panel
Health	Health Scrutiny Panel

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
Summary of Savings Proposals by Scrutiny Panel					
0031	Community	Restructure of safeguarding service	Efficiency	Board	The Invest to Save funding option did not provide an alternative source of funding.
0098	E&E	Phase 2 – Service Review and Reduction – Regulatory Services	Cut in Service	Board	Board sought reassurance from the Cabinet Member that the public would be put at the foremost of the service, and that it was responsive to their need. Public safety was the only priority for the service, and this needed to be tailor made to serve the Wolverhampton public.
0150	E&E	Alternative service model – Bantock House museum	Cut in Service	Board	Further information sought form discussion at panels.
0169	Delivery	Move Shopmobility to be more commercially supported	Cut in Service	Board	Councillors expressed serious concern about the cuts to shopmobility, and felt it needed to be looked at as a priority. The Board enquired what efforts were being undertaken to lessen the risk of a cut to shopmobility, and also asked for clarification on the level of cut outlined in the proposal. It was explained the proposal

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
					was to cut the service in its entirety, however the intention was to find alternative funds and delivery methods to try and keep the service. The shopping centre and key businesses in the centre had been approached to help fund the service.
0166	Delivery	Optimise the use of Winter Service Gritting Fleet	Efficiency	Board	There was concern from Councillors that a reduction in the number of gritters would reduce service, and collaboration with other authorities opened up potential risks to Wolverhampton's service. The Board was advised that the gritter service would be optimised to continue gritting the same proportion of the network. It was acknowledged that in the rare occurrence that both Wolverhampton and a partner authority experienced an issue with the gritters at the same time, the service would be affected.
0173	Delivery	Review and rationalise the number of play areas in the City	Cut in Service	Board	Board expressed reservations that it would create a two tiered structure of play areas, with some being well maintained while others were left to fall into disrepair. They expressed a desire to maintain safety at all times. In response, the Board was advised that there would be a reduction in the number of play areas, but the ones kept open would be maintained at a higher level. It was also noted that inspectors had been retrained in order to be able to carry out routine maintenance on site, in a bid to save money and improve efficiency.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0182	Delivery	Parking services and charges review	Income generation	Board	<p>Board discussed car parking opening times, availability and costs. Board were advised that work would be undertaken to make sure that the car park catered for the demands of the Civic Hall and city alike. Ticket barriers provided detailed demand evidence and alternative car parks were being investigated for the Grand Theatre. The car park would be kept open during Christmas periods, due to the increased demand, and the car park would mirror the expected closing times of the Civic Hall.</p> <p>It was suggested a policy of free parking in the city would help improve footfall and therefore business in the city centre. Board were advised that to offer free parking, the Council would need to find a further £1 million in savings proposals.</p>
0186	Community	Reduction in Children in Need/Child protection costs in line with projected reductions in LAC number	Under Dev	Board	<p>Board raised concerns in regard to the Looked After Children (LAC) budget, and enquired about the numbers of LAC's in the city. Councillors suggested the need to reduce the demand, and noted that LAC age bracket would be raised to 21 which would create extra expenditure for the Council. The Board were advised that the numbers had increased by 20 in a month, and that the Government would provide extra funds to compensate for the increased age limit. This could turn into an additional budgetary pressure.</p>

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0193	Delivery	Reduction in the Christmas Decoration installation-maintenance budget	Cut in Service	Board	Some concern was expressed in regard to the reduction in the number of Christmas decorations. He asked for further information about the geographical spread of the Christmas lights and Councillors suggested costs could be addressed by leaving them up all year. The Board were advised that work had been undertaken to review the costs of LED lights and a more cost effective way to store and supply the decorations.
009	Community	Reduction in library opening hours and introduce charging for internet use	Cut in Service	AC	The panel were concerned about the impact of the reduction in library opening hours and the impact of charges on people who have to claim universal credit online. The panel was further advised that, with regard to welfare reform changes, people would be given one hour free use of computer equipment in order to claim benefits. The impact of this, and whether one hour is long enough, would be closely monitored by the council in conjunction with the Citizen's Advice Bureau.
0018	Delivery	Reduction of the current level of subsidy to Leisure Facilities	Income generation	AC	The panel were concerned about the impact of increased charges on efforts to reduce levels of obesity in Wolverhampton. There was concern that the changes would make it difficult to meet these targets

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0029	Community	Reduction in Voluntary Sector Grant Funding	Cut in Service	AC	A comment was made about the impact of reduction in the voluntary sector grant and the lack of alternative funding of services
0031	Community	Restructure of safeguarding service	Efficiency	AC	More detail was requested and an assurance that the council's legal obligations would continue to be met.
0039	Community	Reduction in Training Funding in line with historical spend	Efficiency	AC	More detailed information was requested. The panel was advised that this represented an historical underspend and would have no impact on current service provision.
0045	Community	Reduce Staffing in Carers Support Team	Efficiency	AC	There was concern that there should be no reduction in the quality of care as we are reliant on the work of carers. The panel was advised that the proposal would have some impact on support provided and would require some smarter working arrangements, but the council would still meet its statutory obligations and provide a good service.
0049	Community	Implement reduced cost delivery models for neighbourhood support and Carelink services	Efficiency	AC	More information was requested on this proposal. The panel was advised that neighbourhood support was included in a group of services due for option appraisal. The services would still be provided but at a reduced cost. Services were regularly statutorily monitored.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0061	Community	Review high cost care packages	Efficiency	AC	A comment was made that this item and references 0063, 0070 and 0071 were all reviews and it was questioned how the council was able to project the budget savings. The individual circumstances would be considered and the learning gained over time in order to review the service.
0063	Community	Review of direct payments	Efficiency	AC	It is the intention for more people to move towards direct payments.
0070	Community	Review care packages using occupational therapists	Efficiency	AC	See 0061
0074	Community	Learning disabilities Assessment and Care management – Care packages	Efficiency	AC	More detail was requested in respect of this proposal. Consideration would be given to the skill mix of the team, that the changes would be small scale and would not affect the timescale for completion of assessments.
0081	Community	Reducing costs within in-house services for older people	Efficiency	AC	More detail was requested in respect of this proposal. The panel was advised that this did represent a significant saving as it represented a large proportion of the budget. Option appraisals would be considered.
0083	Community	Explore options to reduce costs of mental health in-house provision	0083	AC	A question was raised as to whether the council would still have the capacity to respond to a crisis. The panel was advised that the level of service would not reduce, but cheaper options were being investigated.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0084	Community	Transfer and de-commission a number of in-house services for older people	Cut in Service	AC	More detail was requested in regard to this proposal.
0088	Community	Deletion of posts in the welfare rights and financial assessments services	Efficiency	AC	A question was raised as to the level of impact of the welfare reform changes would have on the Council responding to the impact as a result of this proposal.
0090	Delivery	Risk Management and Insurance – Revision to workflow, process and procedures	Efficiency	AC	The panel was advised that it was not anticipated that there would be a reduction in the level of service provision. The staff reductions would involve back office staff and not welfare rights team. It was further noted that finance was available to carry out some joint work with the Citizen's Advice Bureau.
0092	Community	Restructure of Physical Disabilities Assessment and Care management – Social Work Teams	Efficiency	AC	The panel was advised that it would not, that consideration would be given to the skill mix and that the council would still meet its statutory obligations.
0147	Community	Restructure of Assistant Directors, Heads of Service and Commissioning	Efficiency	AC	More detail was required in regard to this proposal. The panel was advised that these proposals would be implemented later in the programme as a large amount of rationalisation had already taken place
0183	Community	Management of demographic growth through NHS partnership for Adult Services	Growth avoidance	AC	More detail was requested in regard to this proposal. A comment was made that the issue was not going to go away and should be considered by the health scrutiny panel.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0019	Delivery	Removal of the Historical Contract Growth Costs for Grounds Maintenance and Street Scene Contracts	Growth avoidance	CCC	Consultation is planned to consider proposals for new Council Tax collection schemes and this will be considered by full Council.
0015	Delivery	Internal Audit Services income generation	Income generation	CCC	Income generation is due to Audit Services doing more work for other organisations and making the work more commercial.
0022	Delivery	Removal of growth – increase in pension costs of former employees	Growth avoidance	CCC	The saving is as a result of the rate of deaths off setting how long people draw pension.
0025	Delivery	Removal of growth – carbon reduction commitment	Growth avoidance	CCC	Energy efficiency will reduce the number of carbon credits we buy. WCC will have fewer buildings and smaller satellite offices. There is a move to make all other buildings efficient, if we do not do this we would pay more for carbon credits and that it is a balancing act.
0040	OCE	Research activity reduction	Cut in Service	CCC	Efficiencies can be made by reducing the sample size and frequency of activity such as the Residents' Opinion Survey.
0077	Delivery	Restructures and re-negotiation of commercial contracts across the Delivery Directorate	Efficiency	CCC	The contracts would be renegotiated when coming up for renewal to ensure savings going forward.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0091	Delivery	Fees and Charges review – Bereavement services	Income generation	CCC	The increase will be 10% in the first year and a minimum of 2% in following years; this is comparable to neighbouring authorities and keeps WCC competitive.
0104	Delivery	Revenues and benefits reconfiguration of Mail services	Efficiency	CCC	More information revealed that an external company can reduce postage costs in revenues and benefits and that WCC is looking to make similar efficiency savings across the whole Council in the future.
0106	Delivery	Rationalise the Contract Terms for School Bus Drivers	Efficiency	CCC	Discussions should take place with trade unions in relation to the reduction of eight weeks out of school term payments for the drivers.
0107	Delivery	Health and Safety team employee reduction	Efficiency	CCC	Concerns about the potential impact on the number of health and safety audits carried out with the reduction of one post.
0119	Delivery	Improve collection rate for Council Tax	Income generation	CCC	There is a consultation planned to consider proposals for new Council Tax collection schemes and that this would be considered by full Council.
0125	Delivery	Restructure of facilities management function	Efficiency	CCC	Reduction relates to supervisory posts and should not impact service delivery.
0126	Delivery	Reduction in corporate provision for bad debts	Efficiency	CCC	More investigation needed relating to placing deposits for services.
0135	Delivery	Democratic Services Electoral Services Employee Reduction	Efficiency	CCC	The post deletion was part of a restructure and capacity will not be adversely affected due to online voter registration which will give additional capacity.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0138	Delivery	Review the function and extent of the Mayoral Office	Cut in Service	CCC	Panel suggested investigating new ways of working and income generation through better use of the Mayoral Suite. This included modernising the mayoral functions and making it fit the business of the Local Authority rather than just a ceremonial function. Mayoral function gets involved in selling Wolverhampton and attracting inward investment and suggested this should start from the premise of communications team, economic development team and mayoral team working together to question the function and how it could be part and parcel of Wolverhampton's outward face. The Mayoral function can look to bring resource and investment to the City especially when linked to the corporate priorities and alternative uses for the Mayoral Suite.
0139	Delivery	Reduce the number of Councillors	Cut in Service	CCC	Panel suggested that Cabinet should seriously look at reducing numbers in light of the previous discussion and the importance of the Mayoral role.
0161	OCE	Policy Team Restructure	Efficiency	CCC	This links to savings proposal 0187 which is the centralisation of policy. The function would not lose service specialism when co-located.
0187	OCE	Centralisation and rationalisation of service provision	Efficiency	CCC	This links to savings proposal 0161 which is the centralisation of policy. The function would not lose service specialism when co-located.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0192	Delivery	Efficiencies in service delivery across the Delivery Directorate	Efficiency	CCC	Efficiency savings will be achieved through major programmes such as FutureWorks and FutureSpace which will develop and eventually produce these savings.
0199	Delivery	Centralisation and rationalisation of services – Central Services	Efficiency	CCC	Efficiency savings have been made already and as more services are brought into one place, such as ICT services and Health and Safety, the Council is using less resource to do the same work.
PD-Com01	Community	Looked after children: continued increase in numbers combined with previous inflationary pressures relating to Foster Carers.	Pressure	CYP	Panel acknowledged the on-going preventative work to reduce the rates of children becoming looked after. Panel appreciated the variety of factors which has caused the increase in looked after children numbers.
0021	Community	Re-configuration of Youth Services Centred on Youth Zone and Targeted Youth Support	Cut in service	CYP	The Youth Council expressed concerns about reduced youth provision in neighbourhoods and potential issues arising in a centralised Youth Zone, including territorial group mentality and transport to the centre. 'Epic' (the youth cafe) would still be available to use until the lease ends in 2019. There was emphasis on a managed transition to centralisation and further consultation with users. The Cabinet Member expressed a desire to maintain certain parts of the youth service on a more limited basis e.g. Duke of Edinburgh awards and youth council. The panel asked for more information regarding the possibility of OnSide providing a minibus to transport young people to the Youth Zone for the first year it is open, which had been discussed before the contract was signed.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0042	Community	Restructure of Children with Disabilities Assessment and Care Management Team – Social Work	Efficiency	CYP	More information was requested regarding the restructure and its implications, and emphasised that they were not offering their approval of the proposal until they received further detail. This would be a gradual process and was part of a wider piece of work to bring together adult and children care management.
0048	Community	Introduce individual budgets for Short Residential Breaks for Children with Disabilities	Efficiency	CYP	The current residential break provision was outdated and under-utilised, and that this proposal would provide a more modern facility. The introduction of a personal budget for families meant that a more flexible service was needed. The benefits of the proposed changes, but highlighted the need to ensure the service was closely monitored to ensure value for money and quality provision.
0011	Community	Implement Reduced Cost Delivery Models for the Council's Residential Children's Homes	Efficiency	CYP	The panel asked for more information regarding the staffing restructure, and expressed a desire to scrutinise the proposal again when more detail had been provided. The panel was informed that the deletion of 38 posts meant the whole team would be disbanded.
0067	E&E	Reorganisation of Schools Skills and Learning (SSL) for a structure fit for the purpose of discharging WCC's statutory duties	Cut in Service	CYP	Further details needed when the restructure would be drawn up in the New Year. This proposal would result in the SSL fulfilling only their statutory duties (school improvement, school places and protecting vulnerable children). Other discretionary services would be provided by external groups such as WSIP. Concerns were raised regarding support for schools during the transition period.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0136	Delivery	Increase school meals charge	Income generation	CYP	The cost of school meals would increase by 5p per meal for the next two years and by a further 10p per meal for the following three years. It is the school's decision whether to pass this increase in price on to students. Concerns were raised regarding the comparative cost of external lunch provision, for example take away restaurants. The cabinet member assured the panel that he did not think the nominal rise in cost would deter take-up of school meals, especially considering that the rate of inflation is higher than the proposed price increase.
0137	Community	Commissioning of Early years and Childrens Services using Public Health funding	Efficiency	CYP	The panel emphasised the need for stringent monitoring of commissioned services. They were advised that commissioned children's services were subject to a number of checks including internal Council inspections and Ofsted visits.
0142	Community	Delete Posts from the family and support team	Efficiency	CYP	This team had undergone a number of previous reviews and that its effectiveness was declining. Officers described a new, evidence based work programme which would replace the team. A number of family support worker posts would be advertised for members of the current team to apply for.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0144	Community	Re-configure and rationalise Social Inclusion and Play Service, and eliminate subsidy to schools	Cut in Service	CYP	<p>The service is currently subject of a review, incorporating a value for money exercise, led by Commissioning. The aim of the review is to clarify core priorities for this service going forward which will inform how it will be structured, what the statutory responsibilities and duties are and what statutory responsibilities do we share with schools. This will then inform what services will be provided for schools which links to the specific issue regarding eliminating subsidy to schools.</p> <p>The outcome will be a reconfigured, more efficient and effective service that focusses much more clearly on the needs of children, young people and their families, prioritising early help, together with support to partner agencies including directly to schools.</p>
0145	Community	Reduction in staffing budget in youth offending Service	Efficiency	CYP	<p>The panel expressed concern that the nationally recognised service was being reduced. They were assured that the post being deleted was a long standing vacancy, and that the current workload could be managed without it being filled.</p>
0146	Community	Re-commissioning of early intervention services including reduction in Connexions Service	Cut in Service	CYP	<p>Concerns were raised regarding the effect of reducing Connexions services in a climate of high youth unemployment.</p> <p>It is the duty of the school to provide careers advice, and that most other authorities stopped funding Connexions years ago. Schools will be prompted to fulfil this obligation.</p>

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0163	Delivery	Review lunchtime crossing patrols	Cut in Service	CYP	There was concern that the removal of crossing patrols could endanger children, particularly on certain roads such as Stafford Road. The panel requested more detail, including the numbers of children using the crossing at lunchtimes and costs of the service. The Cabinet Member advised that there had been no opposition from schools regarding this proposal and that numbers using the service at lunchtime was minimal. There was discussion about the potential to prevent children leaving school during lunchtime, but the panel was told it is the school's decision.
Corp02	Corporate	West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority Levy	Pressure	E&B	They levy figure is still in force, however there is likely to be a reduction next year.
PD-E&E01	E&E	Projected shortfall in income against target for Development Control Planning Fee income. (This is an update to the removal of the growth bid included in the 2012/13 MTFs reference E&E01)	Pressure	E&B	Panel were advised that there is a reduction in the number of planning applications and that the income shortfall is being addressed by reduction in resources.
0017	Delivery	Removal of the Historical Contract Growth Costs for the Highways Maintenance Contract	Growth avoidance	E&B	Growth avoidance will be achieved; increases have not been incorporated into the budget.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0037	Delivery	Review of highways maintenance	Cut in Service	E&B	Concerns were raised in relation to the amount of cut in service and the potential reduction to frontline services.
0079	E&E	Phase 1 – Planned removal of vacant posts – Physical regeneration	Cut in Service	E&B	Some concern about the impact of reducing staffing in the team and the team's ability to attract new businesses.
0141	Delivery	Electoral Services Project Manager post deletion	Efficiency	E&B	The post deletion was part of a restructure and capacity will not be adversely affected due to online voter registration which will give additional capacity.
0151	E&E	Alternative Service Model – Bilston Craft gallery	Cut in Service	E&B	A fundamental review would be undertaken in the course of the next two years but highlighted the need to look at alternate sites and to look to third sector and other organisations to work with for external funding. There was suggestion that it would be an opportunity for JLR to invest in the future.
0152	E&E	Reduction in funding for the City Events Programme	Cut in Service	E&B	Concerns were raised about the 40% cut to the funding for the City Events Programme.
0160	E&E	Income generation and Review of Supplies and Services budgets across E&E.	Income generation	E&B	Officers were asked to clarify how officers calculated the figures for this proposal as schools, in particular academies, can use any supplier.
0167	Delivery	Rationalisation of the Highways Maintenance Operation	Efficiency	E&B	The panel discussed how this proposal might impact on the City.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0166	Delivery	Optimise the use of Winter Service Gritting Fleet	Efficiency	E&B	The saving will be made by optimising the use of nine gritting machines in the fleet, eight working and one back up. The standard of gritting and road network covered by the gritting operation in Wolverhampton will not be adversely affected.
0169	Delivery	Move Shopmobility to be more commercially supported	Cut in Service	E&B	Wolverhampton currently provides the Shopmobility service. There were concerns that cuts to this service would have an adverse effect on business in the shopping centre and to the wider City. Cabinet Member re-assured Panel that the intention was not to close the Shopmobility service and indicated the importance of private sector involvement and publicity of the Shopmobility service.
0172	Delivery	Optimise Street Lighting Maintenance	Efficiency	E&B	The planned service restructure would reduce administrative employees by four FTE posts. There are plans to revise the frequency of replacing lights, to prolong from three years to six years as part of the preventative maintenance programme and that this would save on one operative.
0175	Delivery	Optimise the number of Highway Technicians	Efficiency	E&B	There are plans to revise the frequency of replacing lights, to prolong from three years to six years as part of the preventative maintenance programme and that this would save on one operative.
0176	Delivery	Ranger Service Review	Cut in Service	E&B	Concerns that the cuts to three park rangers posts and parks remaining open at night would result in an increase in anti-social behaviour and crime in parks. Concerns that there will be a reduction in numbers of staff to carry out increased duties including security.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0177	Delivery	Review Bedding planting across the City	Cut in Service	E&B	The Panel had concerns around the level of reduction in bedding plants, the image of the City and the effect on the Councils 'Britain in Bloom' entry.
0182	Delivery	Parking services and charges review	Income generation	E&B	All car parking should be free in the City to encourage growth. Councillors should be paying for car parking on the Civic rear car park. Other car parks are available and closer to venues for visitors to the Grand Theatre and Civic Halls. There should be a cost analysis carried out to ascertain if increasing or decreasing parking charges will deter or encourage shopping in the City.
0193	Delivery	Reduction in the Christmas Decoration installation-maintenance budget	Cut in Service	E&B	Other ways of providing funding for Christmas decorations should be considered including Christmas improvement funding bid and approaching local businesses to contribute with a mind to attracting business to the centres. Some concerns about the level and regional spread of the Christmas decoration reductions.
0196	OCE	Communication service review	Efficiency	E&B	A review of corporate communications, including mobile phones, Public Relations Team and marketing. The senior post in Communications Team recently advertised will bring someone with a particular set of skills to rationalise and restructure the communication function.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0010	Community	Renegotiation of funding for Independent Living Service	Efficiency	Health	The panel was advised that there was a national push on prevention to reduce pressure on the health care system.
0027	Community	Subsume the Sports Development team into the public health workforce	Efficiency	Health	The proposal will bring a new skills mix into team.
0031	Community	Restructure of safeguarding service	Efficiency	Health	The panel was advised that the Viv Griffin was looking at alternative funding options such as a bid to the Invest to Save.
0045	Community	Reduce Staffing in Carers Support Team	Efficiency	Health	The panel was advised that the proposed changes would reduce staffing numbers from 13.5 to 11.5 FTE.
0068	Community	Review the Care packages of People Leaving Hospitals more quickly	Growth avoidance	Health	The panel was advised that work had been to manage demand on the service – for example in terms of provision of step down beds and spot purchases – to ensure that people are discharged in the most appropriate and timely way.
0071	Community	Review of Jointly-Funded Services (Council and NHS)	Efficiency	Health	A question was raised regarding the effect of this proposal on service users and staff. The panel was advised that there are issues about the dividing line between the medical care and social care and who is responsible for meeting the cost.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0080	Community	Restructure of mental health care management – Social work teams	Efficiency	Health	The panel was briefed about the purpose of the Integrated Transformation Fund advised that the proposal would not be implemented until 2016/17 and would follow from a review of care packages. The panel requested further information on the Integrated Transformation Fund.
0083	Community	Explore options to reduce costs of mental health in-house provision	0083	Health	The panel was advised that there cheaper alternatives to delivering the service were being considered.
0087	Community	Mental health care assessment and care management – Packages of Care	Efficiency	Health	The panel was advised that this proposal related to a review of care packages especially a renegotiation of contracts with external providers. In addition, there has already been some work done on this area. The aim would be to provide more supported living packages rather than residential care which could deliver the savings. The saving proposal was a starting point and additional savings were anticipated and would involve a review of individual care packages.
0137	Community	Commissioning of Early years and Childrens Services using Public Health funding	0137	Health	A question was raised about the use of the budget for this service. The panel was advised that there are robust rules about ring fenced allocations and also that nationally funding for early years has been reduced.
0183	Community	Management of demographic growth through NHS partnership for Adult Services	Growth avoidance	Health	The panel were advised and that the Council contribution of £2 million annually. There was a need for clarity about how the fund can be used. The panel were advised that new national guidance on the use of the integrated transformation fund had recently been issued.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0012	Community	Education Library Service – Charge Schools for the Full Cost of the Service	Efficiency	VSSC	Councillors were concerned about the possible relocation of the Education Library Service from the Parkfields site and if this were the case how the costs of relocation would be met and by whom.
0013	Delivery	Removal of Council Subsidy for Central Baths	Cut in Service	VSSC	Central baths was being used at 60% of capacity. Discussions were underway with the Amateur Swimming Association and with Sport England to identify additional funding streams including grant aid to extend the gym facilities.
0016	Delivery	Remove Council subsidy for the operation of the bar at Aldersley Leisure Village	Cut in Service	VSSC	The bar was not making money and not in a prominent position. It would be closed and alternative catering would be provided for larger events.
0027	Community	Subsume the Sports Development team into the public health workforce	Efficiency	VSSC	The costs of the Sports Development Team would be covered by Public Health with no loss of service.
0029	Community	Reduction in Voluntary Sector Grant Funding	Cut in Service	VSSC	Details were requested of which organisations would have their funding reduced. Concern was expressed that smaller organisations would be disproportionately affected. Engagement was already underway with the voluntary sector.
0047	Delivery	Waste Collection Services – Review of bank Holiday Collections	Efficiency	VSSC	Councillors wished to ensure affected residents would be informed of changes to collection days.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0062	E&E	Phase 1 – Planned removal of vacant posts – regulatory services	Cut in Service	VSSC	Restructuring across all teams is likely to lead to fewer staff and therefore affect service levels. It will be for employees to decide which areas of work will have the highest priority. Public safety will be a high priority.
0151	E&E	Alternative Service Model – Bilston Craft gallery	Cut in Service	VSSC	Alternative models of service delivery were being explored including co-location and the identification of sources of additional income. Other savings options, including making the building more energy efficient were being explored.
0153	E&E	Reduction in funding to Creative Industries – 3 rd sector managed venues	Cut in Service	VSSC	The grant to the Grand Theatre was being reduced whilst work was being undertaken to regenerate the area around the theatre so it could generate more income.
0154	E&E	Reduction to overall cultural service (including art gallery)	Cut in Service	VSSC	By 2016-17 changes would be expected to the opening hours of the art gallery. Additional funding sources were being identified.
0156	E&E	Reduction of Neighbourhood Warden Service	Cut in Service	VSSC	The warden service would be cut by 50%. Concern was expressed at how the priority areas had been identified. This would be revisited through the Police and Crime Board. In principle the savings proposals were supported subject to a review of how priority areas were identified/allocated.
0157	E&E	Transitioning from Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to Community led economic development – stage 1	Invest to Save	VSSC	Noted that a review of the staffing structure would lead to a loss of existing posts. Funding would be provided for each of the LNPs to enable community led economic development.

Ref.	Directorate	Investment in Service	Type	Panel	Comments
0098	E&E	Phase 2 – Service Review and Reduction – Regulatory Services	Cut in Service	VSSC	Restructuring across all teams is likely to lead to fewer staff and therefore affect service levels. It will be for employees to decide which areas of work will have the highest priority. Public safety will be a high priority.
0173	Delivery	Review and rationalise the number of play areas in the City	Cut in Service	VSSC	A review of play areas would be undertaken and those in need of most repair would be closed. It was not clear at present which play areas would be affected. Levels of inspection and repairs and maintenance would be reduced.
0174	Delivery	Review of Fitness, Trim Trails and Skate parks (Inspect and Repair Contract)	Efficiency	VSSC	The proposal related to changes to the inspection regime.
0178	Delivery	Community Management of West Park Conservatory	Cut in Service	VSSC	Community groups would be encouraged to take on the management of facilities such as The Conservatory. This may mean that opening hours may be reduced.
0200	E&E	Transitioning from Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to Community led economic development – Stage 2	Income generation	VSSC	Alternative funding sources would be identified to enable further budget reductions in future years.
0173	Delivery	Review and rationalise the number of play areas in the City	Cut in Service	VSSC	A review of play areas would be undertaken and those in need of most repair would be closed. It was not clear at present which play areas would be affected. Levels of inspection and repairs and maintenance would be reduced.

Additional comments from the Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel and Board

	Other proposal	Councillor suggestion	Panel	Comment
1	Use of facilities by people who are not residents of Wolverhampton	The shared rubbish disposal site with Dudley Council in particular is something we may have to look at more closely in future.	Board	Board were advised that Council is looking at combining the two sites and centralising the service to be more cost effective.
2	Wolverhampton leisure card	Visitors pay the full rate and residents could benefit from a discount rate when using facilities.		
3	Community facilities room hire charges	Importance of charging appropriate rates when hiring rooms and facilities to local groups and business enterprises. The room hire rates should be revisited to generate income where possible.		
4	Maximise the impact of the Town Centre; the Grand Theatre; the Art Gallery and the Civic Halls and encourage them to be self-sustaining.	Encourage Grand Theatre to invest in a restaurant next to the theatre it would increase its income and the Council could reduce subsidy and likewise the Art Gallery could start to charge for special exhibitions. Encourage attractions to find a commercial way to raise funds, using capital resource to bring inward investment to the City. WV One should be doing more to encourage this approach.	Board	Councillors suggested the need for greater co-operation between leisure and restaurant facilities in the city.