

Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

23 November 2017

Time 6.00 pm **Public Meeting?** YES **Type of meeting** Scrutiny
Venue Training Room, Ground Floor, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton
WV1 1SH

Membership

Chair Cllr Ian Angus (Lab)
Vice-chair Cllr Christopher Haynes (Con)

Labour

Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Val Evans
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Keith Inston
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz
Cllr Mak Singh

Conservative

Cllr Arun Photay

Quorum for this meeting is three Councillors.

Information for the Public

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[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Agenda

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1 **Apologies**
- 2 **Declarations of interest**
- 3 **Minutes of the previous meeting** (Pages 5 - 12)
[To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as a correct record]
- 4 **Matters arising**
[To consider any matter arising from the minutes]

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 5 **Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-19 to 2019-20** (Pages 13 - 20)
[To consider a report on the draft budget and medium term financial strategy 2018-2019 to 2019-2020]

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Attendance

Members of the Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Ian Angus (Chair)
Cllr Christopher Haynes (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Philip Bateman MBE
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal
Cllr Keith Inston
Cllr John Rowley
Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz
Cllr Arun Photay
Cllr Greg Brackenridge
Cllr Mak Singh

Witnesses

- Tracey Packham, Outer Sector Inspector, Wolverhampton NPU
- Karen Till, Senior School Crossing Patrol Officer, City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC)
- Sarah Roden, School Crossing Patrol Warden, CWC
- Tom Richards, Project Coordinator West Midlands (Schools), Living Streets
- Julia Crear, Regional Director South, Living Streets
- Jo Phillips, Director of Finance and Services, the Royal School
- Tricia Scott, Headteacher, Loxdale Primary School
- Emma Wright-Jones, Deputy Headteacher, Loxdale Primary School
- Simon Sutton - resident

Employees

- Nick Broomhall, Service Lead - Traffic & Road Safety, City of Wolverhampton Council
- Paul Lever, Professional Lead - Road Safety Training and Promotion, City of Wolverhampton Council
- Donna Cope – Democratic Services Officer
- Earl Piggott-Smith – Scrutiny Officer

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

1 **Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of interest

Councillor Phil Bateman declared an interest in item 5 as he is Chair of Governors at Ashmore Park School.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting (29 June 2017)

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Matters arising

Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, has spoken to Ravi Phull to check progress on actions agreed following the panel meeting 29.7.17. A summary of progress is outlined below.

Overall progress made to date:

(A) The rent with confidence scheme provides an enhanced rent guarantee scheme, including covering rent in advance, and/or off-setting rent loss as well as training, support and vetting processes for landlords and tenants, to be drawn up in conjunction with the Private Sector Housing Forum referred to in (B) below;

The Private Sector Housing Forum (detailed below) will be the platform to relaunch the rent deposit scheme with new terms. The terms to be agreed by members of the forum.

(B) engagement with the sector to include the setting up of a Private Sector Housing Forum. The forum will have representatives of councillors, representatives of estate agents, landlords, tenants, client side representatives and community/charity groups such as Citizens Advice. The aim of the forum will be to work together to improve standards in the private rented housing sector.

The first forum meeting is planned to be held in November 2017. At the time of drafting expressions of interest have been received from 40 landlords and managing agents in the City. The plan is to invite everyone to the first event and agree a memorandum of understanding which will set out how the forum will be set up, membership and a code of conduct.

(C) publicity about the rent with confidence scheme to include a communications and marketing process and plan that enhances the scheme in a way that covers all parts of the city. The plan will be drawn up in conjunction with members of the Private Sector Housing Forum referred to in (B) above.

- Rent with Confidence officers are conducting a proactive inspection regime of all managing/letting agents in Wolverhampton with our Trading Standards team to inform agents about:
 - The rent with confidence scheme – including making appointments for officers to go out and inspect their portfolio and register them onto the scheme
 - Any legal updates
 - Trading Standards are taking the opportunity to advise agents on their consumer obligations

- [Rent with Confidence](#) (RwC) now has its own Facebook page, this will be followed up shortly with twitter. These pages will be used as an interactive forum to engage with tenants and landlords and to positively advertise the scheme and our starred landlords/agents.
- City Housing has a new enforcement policy which is going to Cabinet on 18 October. This policy underpins the principles of engagement with the RwC scheme as a preferable alternative to a robust enforcement regime that will be used to tackle unscrupulous landlords.
The policy once agreed at Cabinet will be communicated City wide through as many channels as possible.

5 **Parking near Schools**

The Chair introduced the meeting and welcomed everyone. He discussed the recent public consultation that had taken place and the high number of responses received in response to the press release

Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, introduced the report.

Nick Broomhall, Service Lead, Traffic Safety, discussed the report further and explained how and why the issue of illegal and inconsiderate parking outside and near schools is a national problem and number of different approaches had been used to alleviate the problem, as detailed in the main report.

The Chair referred to the importance of working in partnership with parents and schools to find sustainable solutions to the problem and invited the witnesses to give their evidence in four separate sessions.

Session One: **Living Streets** - Tom Richards and Julia Crear.

Living Streets Walk to School campaign is a UK charity aimed at achieving the goal of getting every child that can to walk to school by working with parents, children and schools to make walking safer, more pleasant and the easiest option for short journeys. The witnesses introduced themselves and summarised the aim of Living Streets scheme - which is to encourage and support everyday walking through a range of national schemes and events including Walk to School Week, and WOW – the year-round walk to school challenge.

Julia Crear outlined the work done with schools in Wolverhampton to promote walking as a safe option for children.

In response to questions from the Panel the witnesses stated the following:

- The initiative involved joint working with schools, local authorities, parents and local businesses.
- Several schools in Birmingham have been taking part in the initiative for the past 5 years.
- A variety of campaigns including radio broadcasts were used to promote the scheme.
- Incentives were given to schools that take part.
- Letters were sent to parents encouraging them to participate.

- Schools must meet certain criteria to join.
- Staff would interact with parents at various stages of the scheme including launch day; parents' evenings; at the school gates and via newsletters.

The Chair asked the witnesses for a recommendation they would like the panel to consider that would help the local authority to alleviate the problem of illegal and inconsiderate parking near schools. The witnesses stated it was crucial that the local authority and partners worked together. They stressed Transport Services, Road Safety, Highways, schools, land owners, law enforcement and parents needed to work together to solve the problem and enforcement should focus on persistent parking offenders.

The witnesses were thanked for attending the meeting and participating in the session.

Session Two: **Schools**

- Jo Phillips, Director of Finance and Services, the Royal School
- Mrs Tricia Scott, Headteacher, Loxdale Primary School
- Emma Wright- Jones, Deputy Headteacher, Loxdale Primary School

The witnesses introduced themselves. They outlined the main parking issues at their schools and the measures they had taken to address them. They believed that educating parents was crucial and enforcement was needed to tackle persistent offenders. A number of different ideas had been introduced to help reduce congestion during the school run periods – for example, staggered start times, with limited success. The issue is complicated by new pupil intake each year where new carers and parents need to be educated about the need to look for alternative ways of getting children to school and awareness of parking restrictions aimed at making it safer and the problems caused by driving to school, in some situations when travelling a very short distance from home.

In response to questions from the Panel the witnesses stated the following:

- Officers with authority to issue fines and move offending vehicles must be present at schools to tackle persistent offenders.
- Although it's early days the Living Streets scheme appears to be helping.
- Members of school staff have had difficult situations with some parents refusing to follow traffic restrictions and parking inappropriately causing problems for neighbours around the school. There was concern about the amount of staff time taken to try and manage traffic congestion during the school run.

During the discussion witnesses admitted they hadn't contacted their local Councillor about the issue and the Panel strongly advised them to do so.

The witnesses felt that schools didn't get enough support from the local authority to alleviate the problem. In response to this Nick Broomhall, Service Lead, Traffic Safety, acknowledged there were issues that needed addressing but explained the restrictions faced by his service due to current level of resources available.

The Panel discussed the idea of introducing 'Drop and Go' schemes but felt that due to space restrictions it wasn't practical solution for schools and there was also concern that introduction of parking restrictions would move the problem elsewhere.

The Chair asked the witnesses how the local authority could help alleviate the problem to which they responded:

- Educate those parents and carers who will listen about the impact of inconsiderate or illegal parking and need to support the school in creating a safer environment
- Use enforcement action against offenders
- Install appropriate measure outside the schools to help reduce parking congestion and create a safer environment for children.

The witnesses were thanked for attending the meeting and participating in the session.

Session Three: **Residents** - Simon Sutton (Oak Meadow Primary School area)

The witness introduced himself and in response to questions from the Panel he stated the following:

- The parking problem was worst during the morning and after school.
- Residents were cautious about approaching offenders due to past altercations
- The school have tried to help with the issue but support from the police has been poor.

The Chair asked the witness how the local authority could help alleviate the problem to which he responded:

- Implement more double yellow lines in problem areas
- Utilise unused garage sites for school parking to reduce congestion around the school
- Organise more enforcement presence outside schools

The Panel supported the idea of the local authority exploring alternative parking sites and the Traffic Safety Service Lead advised this was already in place at nearby sites.

Councillor Phil Bateman acknowledged that the problem in this area was particularly bad and despite him contacting several partners, nothing had been done to address the issue. He stated that residents in the area try hard to alleviate the problem but enforcement action is needed. He mentioned an incident involving an ice cream van and believed that lack of enforcement action was heightening the problem.

He believed the issue needed addressing from the start when the school is first created. In response to this, the Traffic Safety Service Lead confirmed that when a new school opens within the city a traffic impact assessment is carried out by the local authority to identify potential parking issues.

The Traffic Safety Service Lead assured those present that alternative unused sites were being considered and his Service were currently talking to Education Services about creating parking provisions for new schools.

Councillor Phil Bateman discussed an incident where a road in that area was kept clear due to communications on social media. He stressed that if this was achieved for one day, it can be achieved every day.

The witness was thanked for attending the meeting and participating in the session.

Session Four - **Police and School Crossing Patrol**

- Tracey Packham, Outer Sector Inspector, Wolverhampton NPU
- Karen Till, Senior School Crossing Patrol Officer
- Sarah Roden, School Crossing Patrol Warden

The witnesses introduced themselves and explained their respective responsibilities for parking enforcement and control around schools. Chief Inspector Packham explained that police resources are limited and the use must be prioritised and balanced against demand for resources needed elsewhere. Chief Inspector Packham explained that the local authority had assumed control of parking enforcement from the police in the area, following a change in legislation. Parking offences on the public highway are treated as civil matter and not a criminal matter.

The local authority can issue fixed penalty notices in specific circumstances. Chief Inspector Packham explained that the police can deal with issues of obstruction on highway but would require a witness who is willing to testify in court to prosecute an offender – the police could not rely on photo as evidence alone.

Following questions from the Panel the Traffic Safety Service Lead discussed the limited powers held by local authorities to control parking.

These included:

- Civil enforcement powers
- Double, single yellow lines and zig zags
- CCTV vehicles

He stressed however, that resources were very limited and city centre and main arterial routes were priority.

The Panel acknowledged that Police and Local Authority resources were stretched but asked whether more could be done to tackle the problem if more resources were in place. Both Police and Traffic Safety believed that more resources would help but stated when these resources were removed the problem would start again.

The School Crossing Patrol Officers added that parents would also 'text' other parents to warn them of enforcement presence.

The Traffic Safety Service Lead stated that despite having the biggest traffic order in place at Upper Villiers, people still offended.

The Panel discussed the CCTV vehicle and monies generated from fixed penalties. The Traffic Safety Service Lead stated that expanding this scheme would not be

easy and he would find out where the money from fixed penalties went to in the authority.

The Panel also discussed installing CCTV cameras outside schools but agreed that it would not be cost effective.

The Police explained that to act against repeat offenders there must be sufficient evidence and it was agreed that incidents should be reported to the Council.

The Chair asked the witnesses how the local authority could help alleviate the problem to which they responded more enforcement presence outside schools on various days.

The witnesses were thanked for attending the meeting and participating in the session.

Panel Recommendations

Members of the Panel considered the evidence heard and discussed how it may wish to answer the question what can the Council do to alleviate car parking near schools?

The following suggestions were noted:

- Newsletters to motorists and pedestrians to explain restrictions on parking
- Physical amendments to the roads
- Enforcement action for repeat offenders
- Cabinet to contact the government requesting more LA powers to deal with the issue illegal or inconsiderate parking outside schools
- Take papers from this group to Planning and Education regarding parking provisions at new schools.
- Promote the work of 'Living Streets' in more Wolverhampton schools and encourage them to participate.
- Stronger enforcement and ringfenced money from fixed penalties to be used make it safer for children to walk to school.
- More support from Licensing enforcement
- Better communication to the public
- Briefing note for Councillors explaining powers and responsibilities of the local authority and police for dealing with parking enforcement issues outside schools.
- Promote Beat the Streets and similar schemes aimed at making it safer for children to walk to school
- Provide more car parks near schools to help reduce congestion
- Install CCTV outside schools.

Chair suggested a sub group from the Panel meet again to discuss these suggestions to agree final recommendations based on the all the evidence presented.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and their contributions.

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Vibrant and Sustainable City Scrutiny Panel

23 November 2017

Report title	Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-2019 to 2019-2020	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Steve Evans City Environment	
	Councillor Peter Bilson City Assets and Housing	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Keith Ireland, Managing Director	
Originating service	Strategic Finance	
Accountable employee(s)	Claire Nye	Director of Finance
	Tel	01902 550478
	Email	Claire.Nye@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by		

Recommendations for decision:

The Panel is recommended to:

1. Provide feedback to Scrutiny Board for consolidation and onward response to Cabinet on the Draft Budget 2018-2019.
2. Provide feedback to Scrutiny Board for consolidation and onward response to Cabinet on the approach to Budget Consultation for 2018-2019.
3. Provide feedback to Scrutiny Board for consolidation and onward response to Cabinet on progress on key budget reduction targets as detailed in the report.

4. Approve that the Scrutiny Panel response be finalised by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Panel and forwarded to Scrutiny Board for consideration.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Panel's feedback on the Draft Budget 2018-2019 that was approved by Cabinet to proceed for formal consultation and scrutiny stages of the budget process, as appropriate, on 18 October 2017. Furthermore, the Panel's feedback is also sought on the approach to budget consultation and key budget reduction proposals that are built into the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In March 2017, Full Council approved that work started immediately to identify £14.8 million of budget reductions and income generation proposals to address the projected deficit in 2018-2019.
- 2.2 An update was presented to Cabinet on 19 July 2017. The Council had identified a total of £12.5 million budget reduction opportunities towards the strategy of identifying £14.8 million for 2018-2019. Of the £12.5 million budget reductions proposals identified for 2018-2019, £5 million are ongoing budget reductions whilst £7.5 million are one-off budget reductions. The projected budget deficit was reported as £2.3 million for 2018-19.
- 2.3 Over the summer period, detailed work continued to take place and a further update was provided to Cabinet on 18 October 2017. At this meeting, Cabinet approval was sought to reprofile the previously approved Waste and Recycling budget reduction targets totalling a cumulative £2.1 million to 2019-2020, to reflect the anticipated implementation date. As a result of this, the remaining budget deficit to be identified for 2018-2019 increased from £2.3 million to £4.4 million. However, Cabinet approval was also sought to implement a further three financial transaction proposals in 2018-2019 totalling £4.4 million, which it is projected will enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2018-2019.
- 2.4 As in previous years, the budget consultation process for the 2018-2019 budget will include four evening meetings at various venues in Wolverhampton, as well as a breakfast meeting with business representatives and other meetings with community groups. Furthermore, an online and paper survey will be used to support the consultation process. The 2018-2019 budget consultation focus is on how the Council and the community can Work Smarter Together. Details of the Council's budget consultation and the online survey can be found on the Council's website at: <http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/budgetconsultation>
- 2.5 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. Panel members are instead requested to bring their copy of the Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial

Strategy (MTFS) 2018-2019 – 2019-2020 report, which was circulated with the 18 October 2017 Cabinet agenda. Detail of all the Council's individual proposals, including the latest to be considered by Cabinet on 18 October 2017, can be found on the Council's website at:

<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/financialstrategy>

- 2.6 It is important to note that any budget reduction and income generation proposals approved as part of prior year budget setting processes have already been scrutinised and approved by Cabinet and are therefore, already included in the MTFS.
- 2.7 As detailed in the Cabinet report, the 2018-2019 Draft Budget will be considered by Scrutiny Panels during the November/December round of meetings and the feedback from those meetings will be reported to Scrutiny Board on 5 December 2017, which will consolidate that feedback in a formal response to Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 16 January 2018. The feedback provided to Scrutiny Board will include questions asked by Panel members, alongside the responses received. Cabinet will take into account the feedback from Scrutiny Board when considering the final budget setting report in February 2018, for approval by Full Council in March 2018.

3.0 Existing Budget Reduction Targets

- 3.1 In addition to significant budget reductions already achieved in prior years across Corporate Landlord, City Environment and City Housing, the MTFS for the period to 2017-2020 includes budget reduction proposals relating to the remit of this Panel. These are detailed in the table below:

Table 1 - Approved Budget Reduction Targets by Division

Division	2017-2018 £000	2018-2019 £000	2019-2020 £000
Corporate Landlord	1,206	1,813	158
City Environment	3,802	784	2,000
City Housing	100	100	-

- 3.2 As detailed in paragraph 2.6, these targets have already been scrutinised by the relevant Scrutiny Panel. The sections below provide a progress update for Corporate landlord, City Environment and City Housing.

4.0 Corporate Landlord

- 4.1 Corporate Landlord is responsible for ensuring the Council's portfolio of operational and commercial land and property assets are effectively managed in the context of

the Corporate Plan priorities for Place: Stronger Economy and Confident, Capable Council: Future Space. It is specifically responsible for administering land and property transactions, delivering facilities management activities, delivery of capital projects, repairs, cyclical maintenance and statutory compliance to ensure all assets are safe and operational. In addition, it is responsible for the Council's Strategic Asset Planning and associated disposals and acquisitions programme and investment portfolio.

- 4.2 For 2017-2018, Corporate Landlord is projecting that it will achieve £1.2 million of previously approved budget reduction targets by way of service transformation and increased estates income; a review of leases and strategies to maximise rental income are in place and continuing. The service is, however, managing pressures and the related financial risk in several key budgets, in particular schools catering income, primarily due to a more competitive market provision for this service.
- 4.3 The Corporate Landlord forecast outturn position for 2017-2018, as reported to Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 25 July 2017, showed a projected underspend of £65,000. This was primarily due to an Estates and Valuations underspend totalling £500,000 due to additional rental income and a Corporate Asset Management underspend totalling £257,000 as a result of reduced anticipated expenditure on utilities.
- 4.4 These underspends were forecast to be offset by a projected overspend within the Catering service totalling £590,000 due to slippage in the delivery of budget reduction proposals and reduced schools catering income of £590,000. The Capital Programmes service forecast an overspend due to the budget reflecting budget reduction proposals to be achieved across the Corporate Landlord directorate of £103,000.
- 4.5 Further budget reductions and income generation targets of £2.0 million over the period 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 are assumed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for Corporate Landlord. On-going work focussing on asset and estate management and facilities management efficiencies is taking place to ensure that future years' budget reductions and income generation opportunities are maximised and secured. CIPFA are supporting the Council in the production of a Strategic Asset Plan. This will provide information and the strategic governance and direction for the future management of the estate. This will inform the development of an appropriate asset challenge / rationalisation programme leading to the robust future management of the estate and surplus sites coming forward for alternative use, for example housing, the financial impact of this will be both revenue efficiencies and capital receipts for the Council.

5.0 City Environment Update

- 5.1 City Environment are responsible for two of the Corporate Priorities – Keeping the City Clean and Keeping the City Moving. They also focus on “Keeping the City safe”

through the work of the Public Protection team, in particular the Food Safety, Trading Standards and Health and Safety teams. One of the main priorities is the Waste Transformation Programme as well as Lighting up the City and the review of the Passenger Transport service.

- 5.2 For the 2017-2018 financial year City Environment have already achieved £2.0 million of previously approved budget reduction targets by way of service reconfigurations, transformation and contract efficiencies.
- 5.3 The City Environment forecast outturn position for 2017-2018 as reported to Cabinet (Resources) Panel on 25 July 2017 identified a potential overspend of £1.8 million. Of this, £1.7 million is because of budget pressures relating to the delayed transformation of the Waste & Recycling Service and due to an ongoing contractual dispute with Amey which the Council has not been able to resolve by negotiation and therefore legal proceedings have been issued by the Council in the High Court.
- 5.4 Considering this, Cabinet (Resources) Panel approved the reprofiling of previously approved Waste and Recycling Service budget reduction targets totalling a cumulative £2.1 million in 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 to reflect the anticipated implementation date of service changes.
- 5.5 Further budget reductions and income generation targets of £1.2 million over the period 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 are assumed for City Environment. Options to achieve these targets continue to be developed with work focussing on the Transformation of the Waste & Recycling Service and generation of service efficiencies. The strategy to deliver these efficiencies was agreed as part of the 2017-2018 budget setting and involves change to fortnightly residual waste collection, the stopping of food waste collections and the introduction of a paid for garden waste collection.

6.0 City Housing Update

- 6.1 City Housing have achieved £100,000 in savings in 2017-2018 through the review of Homelessness and Housing Options services and the decision to transfer the services to Wolverhampton Homes. The management fee payable to Wolverhampton Homes for delivering the service will be equivalent to the current budget but with a reduction of £100,000 applied. A further reduction to this management fee will be applied in 2018-2019 to reduce the budget by a further £100,000.
- 6.2 Further budget reductions and income generation targets of £100,000 over the period 2018-2019 to 2019-2020 are assumed for City Housing. Options to ensure that these targets will be achieved are being developed.

7.0 Scrutiny Panel Recommendations

- 7.1 The Panel are recommended to provide feedback to Scrutiny Board for consolidation and onward response to Cabinet on:
- the Draft Budget 2018-2019;
 - the approach to Budget Consultation for 2018-2019;
 - the progress on key budget reduction targets as detailed in the report;
 - any other comments.

- 7.2 The Panel are also recommended to approve that the Scrutiny Panel response be finalised by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Panel and forwarded to Scrutiny Board for consideration.

8.0 Financial implications

- 8.1 The financial implications are discussed in the body of the report, and in the report to Cabinet.
[HM/15112017/F]

9.0 Legal implications

- 9.1.1 The legal implications are discussed in the report to Cabinet.
[TS/15112017/Q]

10.0 Equalities implications

- 10.1 The equalities implications are discussed in the report to Cabinet.

11.0 Environmental implications

- 11.1 The environmental implications are discussed in the report to Cabinet.

12.0 Human resources implications

- 12.1 The human resources implications are discussed in the report to Cabinet.

13.0 Schedule of background papers

Draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018-19 - 2019-2020, report to Cabinet, 18 October 2017.

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