

21 November 2012		ITEM: 7
Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee		
BUDGET 2013/14 – GROWTH AND SAVINGS PROPOSALS		
Report of: Martin Hone, Director of Finance & Corporate Governance		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: No	
Accountable Head of Service: Sean Clark, Head of Corporate Finance		
Accountable Director: Martin Hone, Director of Finance & Corporate Governance		
This report is public		
<i>If the report, or a part of this, has been classified as being either confidential or exempt by reference to the descriptions in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, it is hereby marked as being not for publication. The press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any confidential or exempt items of business to which the report relates.</i>		
Date of notice given of exempt or confidential report: N/A		
Purpose of Report: To invite the Committee to note and review proposals for budget growth and savings in 2012/13 and future years.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Attached at Appendix 1 to this report is the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) report that was considered at Cabinet on 17 October 2012.

Overview and Scrutiny are asked to review and comment on the proposals relevant to this committee's remit and these are set out in Appendix 2.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.1 That the Committee notes and reviews the proposals for budget growth and savings in 2013/14 and future years set out in the appendices to this report.**

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 The Council's MTFS has been reported throughout the year and was recently considered by Cabinet on 17 October 2012 where Cabinet agreed all of the recommendations as written.
- 2.2 This report is attached at Appendix 1 and sets out all material changes to the current base budget and, those specific to this Overview and Scrutiny, are included at Appendix 2 in more detail.
- 2.3 The report also lists out a number of assumptions, including those on government grant levels, council tax, pay and prudential borrowing and these will be considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are now asked to consider those proposals relevant to the committee and any comment will be reported back to the December 2012 Cabinet meeting.

3. ISSUES, OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The growth and savings for 2013/14 are set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 Members should note that officers continue to work with their Portfolio Holders and Cabinet to balance the budget for 2013/14 and future years and that any further proposals will be reported back to this committee at an appropriate time.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

- 4.1 The scrutiny of proposals for growth and savings ahead of the formal budget setting next February is an integral part of the Council's overall approach to financial planning.

5. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 Regular meetings of Directors' Board, the Leadership Group and the wider Council management group have been held since the budget exercise commenced in July.
- 5.2 Public consultation is currently being planned and will be launched in November.

6. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 6.1 The growth and savings options set out in the appendices will impact on a wide variety of policies, priorities, performance and sections of the community.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Sean Clark**
Telephone and email: **01375 652010**
sclark@thurrock.gov.uk

The financial implications have been clearly set out throughout the body of the report and the implications of savings options set out in the appendices.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**
Telephone and email: **01375 652087**
dlawson@thurrock.gov.uk

Local authorities are under an explicit duty to ensure that their financial management is adequate and effective and that they have a sound system of internal control and management of financial risk. This budget report contributes to that requirement although specific legal advice may be required on the detailed implementation of any agreed savings options.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
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sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

This is a set of wide ranging and far reaching proposals, a significant number of which may have an impact on staff and residents. Each of these savings proposals will need to undergo an Equality Impact Assessment to identify potential adverse impacts on any groups.

As these proposals are going through the formal approval and scrutiny process, they will need the Equality Impact Assessment evidence to be presented for each item.

The Equality Act has raised the bar in terms of public sector equality duties for example a proposed requirement to consider socio-economic impact before implementing any policy. Whilst this requirement is subject to implementation at a later stage the Council needs to ensure

that appropriate consideration is given to all new equality requirements in the policy and decision making process.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Various budget working papers held in Finance & Corporate Governance Directorate

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

Appendix 1 – 17 October 2012 MTFS Cabinet Report.

Appendix 2 – Individual Growth and Savings templates for this Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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