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APPROVAL TO CONSULT ST05: 2012/13 Saving Proposals **Savings and Transformation Programme**

Cabinet – 8 November 2011

Report by: Cllr Jagdish Sharma, Leader of the Council

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. To agree to start consultation with affected parties and their representatives on the second package of measures that is proposed to contribute to achieving the required £18m saving for 2012/13, as set out in section 4.

2. Summary

- 2.1. The council needs to make a total saving of £60m from its projected spend for 2011/12 to 2014/15. As a result an £18m cut in expenditure is needed in 2012/13 in addition to the £18m saved from the 2011/12 budget which was agreed at Borough Council on 1 March 2011.
- 2.2. A number of the cuts in expenditure under consideration for 2012/13 could have an impact on service users, businesses, the council's partners as well as council and partners' staff.
- 2.3. This paper summarises the second package of proposed expenditure cuts that require consultation with affected parties and their representatives. The first package of proposals was approved for consultation at the 13 September meeting of the Cabinet.
- 2.4. The proposals are listed in section 4 together with the parties likely to be affected by these proposals.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Cabinet report on 02 August outlined the Council's approach to consultation with regard to expenditure cuts and noted the Council's Guide to Consultation and Equalities Impact Assessment, which set out the required standards.
- 3.2. It remains the Cabinet's intention to achieve the required £18m saving for 2012/13 with the minimum possible impact on front-line services, although this is going to be very challenging to achieve.
- 3.3. The Cabinet report on 13 September set out the first set of savings proposals that required consultation. This is the second in a series of papers that will be

considered at Cabinet meetings, setting out proposed measures to achieve the required £18m saving for 2012/13. The Cabinet is committed to begin consultation on proposals, where consultation is required, as soon as proposals are sufficiently formulated.

- 3.4 Consultation on the proposals set out in section 4 is expected to begin from January 2012 with the exception of the proposal on the Transport to Clubs budget, which is expected to begin after 16 November 2011. The length of each consultation will be determined in line with the relevant consultation guidance as set out in the Council's Guide to Consultation & Equalities Impact Assessment. An overview of the consultation activities and the associated timetable will be provided after Cabinet has approved the proposals for consultation contained in this paper.
- 3.5 All the proposals are set out in section 4 of this report. Several of the proposals will affect a range of groups including service users and partners as well as council and partners' staff groups. The proposals are grouped by affected party, and a description of service impacts are noted against each proposal.
- 3.6 All consultation and the available channels to respond to consultation will be on the council's website. Specific consultation material will explain how to respond to consultations.
- 3.7 Consultation with staff will be undertaken in line with the council's Appointments following Reorganisation policy and Redundancy and Redeployment policy.

4 Savings proposals

- 4.1 **The following proposals would have an impact on services as well as users, specific staff groups and some of the council's partners.**
- 4.2 End the current Transport to Clubs budget: The proposal is to end the current funding of transport provided and paid for by the council which enables residents to attend six local community groups.
- 4.3 The aim is to bring these groups in line with similar local organisations and ensure the equitable treatment of people with the same transport needs. This will impact on existing residents who use this service to attend the activities offered by the community groups. The proposal may also impact on the community groups that the residents attend which include Bedfont Derby and Joan Club; Evorglens Blind Club; Heston Senior Citizens Club; Hounslow Stroke Club; Disabled Drivers Association (Thames Valley Group); Hounslow and District Social Club for the partially sighted. The consultation will seek to establish the specific impact on all parties affected by the proposal.
- 4.4 Reduce our expenditure on school uniform grants: The proposal is to bring spend on uniform grants in line with that of our neighbouring boroughs. This will impact on families whose child/children meet the eligibility criteria.

- 4.5 Savings to the council's spend on transport: The proposal is to make a range of savings related to the council's overall spend on transport costs. This will specifically examine the following transport costs: taxis and minicab services; eligibility criteria for those accessing council transport services and concessionary travel. There is likely to be an impact on some service users and it may also potentially affect some staff. The consultation will seek to identify the specific impact on all parties affected by the proposal.
- 4.6 **The following proposal would have an impact on specific staff groups as affected parties.**
- 4.7 Reduction in the number of posts providing the first point of contact to access adult social care: The proposal is to redesign the first contact, duty and assessment services in adult social care. These proposals are being developed. There is no anticipated impact on the quality of service provided to adult social care users.
- 4.8 Reduction in Housing Expenditure: The proposal is to review options for further savings in the council's Housing function. This is likely to impact on staff within the department.
- 4.9 Opportunities for Co-location to improve Joint Working with Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare: If agreement were reached, this would have an impact on staff who may be required to work from different locations. Any impact on service users is captured as part of the proposal to close locality offices (as approved for consultation by Cabinet in September).

5.0 Consultation with Councillors

- 5.1 All councillors will be able to respond to all the consultations on the savings proposals, either in their capacity as individual ward councillors or as members of council committees representing affected groups or interested parties.

6. COMMENTS OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

- 6.1 The Assistant Director Corporate Governance supports the recommendations.

7. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 7.1 This report seeks approval to start consultation on a series of possible savings options that will need to be considered for inclusion in the Council's 2012-13 revenue budget. More work will be required before the specific proposals mentioned can be presented to members for formal consideration. This work will include an evaluation of the responses to consultation. Further reports on these savings will therefore be presented to members in due course.
- 7.2 At present the only financial commitment required is the cost of consultation. The Head of Communications considers that the overall cost will not exceed

£10,000. The costs concerned will need to be met from within the approved 2011-12 departmental budgets.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 'The Council has to give due regard to the Equality Act 2010, in particular with respect to the General duty to:
- a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and eliminate any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
 - b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and person who do not share it
 - c) Foster good relations between equalities groups.
- 8.2 The Consultation and EIA Guide requires all savings proposals to broadly identify all affected and interested parties at the earliest opportunity. This report groups savings proposals against affected parties to ensure that the arrangements for consultation can now prioritise and focus attention on proposals which are likely to impact on users and staff.
- 8.3 Relevance tests and Initial Equality Impact Assessments will be undertaken to determine what duties are owed to equalities groups and how their interests may be affected by the savings proposal. Where relevant, the issues identified by the Initial Equality Impact Assessment will inform the scope, content and manner of consultation to give due regard to Equality duties above.

<p>Background Papers: Consultation Approach ST01 including Consultation and Equality Impact Assessment Guide – 02 August Cabinet Approval to Consult (ST02): 2012/13 Savings Proposals – 13 September Cabinet</p>
<p>This report has been or is due to be considered by: Corporate Leadership Team 12 October 2011 Corporate Leadership Team 19 October 2011 Cabinet 8 November 2011</p>
<p>This report is relevant to the following wards/areas: All wards</p>

REPORT ENDS