

LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8th JANUARY 2008

**Report by the CORPORATE DIRECTOR LIFELONG
LEARNING AND FINANCIAL CONTROLLER**

BUDGET 2008/9 UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To advise members of progress with the budget setting exercise for 2008/9 with particular reference to the Lifelong Learning Directorate.
- 1.2 To seek members views on the proposals for cost saving and the directorate's prioritisation of the bids for additional resources for service pressures next financial year. The Committee's views will be made known to Cabinet at the next appropriate meeting.

2. Reason for Submission of Report

- 2.1 It is part of the normal budget setting process for Cabinet to seek the views of Scrutiny Committees on the detailed budget proposals for directorates for the following financial year.

3. Position to date

- 3.1 Cabinet has received reports on the provisional WAG funding settlement for 2008/9 to 2010/11, together with the likely impact of inflation in 2008/9 and the proposals from directorates on savings and bids for additional resources. Members are requested to refer to the relevant papers from the last two Cabinet meetings for the detail.
- 3.2 It is clear that the poor level of additional financial support from the Assembly will make it difficult for the Council to provide additional resources for services and keep Council Tax increases low, without identifying further spending savings. This work is continuing with CET looking to identify further savings in spending for the next 3 years.
- 3.3 The directorate's current proposals are detailed in appendix 1 & 2 to this report and members comments on the deliverability and reasonableness of these proposals will be passed on to Cabinet.

4. Directorate Commentary

- 4.1 It is recognised the proposed efficiency savings are low and it is a Directorate priority to carry out further work in this area.
- 4.2 The proposals include a significant increase in the funding for schools and the Education service, however, all workplans developed as a result of the Estyn report will be subject to rigorous scrutiny to ensure resources are being utilised in the most efficient and effective manner and outcomes are linked to attainment wherever possible.
- 4.3 The Business Change Manager post has created capacity to review and challenge functions, processes and procedures throughout the Directorate to ensure resources are used in the most efficient and effective manner.
- 4.4 All vacancies will continue to be subject to the Directorate vacancy control procedures and alternative options such as secondments from non essential posts will be investigated.
Offering reduced hours will also be considered and rolled out in areas subject to approval by the relevant Head of Service.

5. Consultation Carried Out

Two rounds of Directorate meetings with Lead Members have been held to review savings proposals and bids for additional resources. Cabinet have debated the position at two meetings to date. CET has considered the position on several occasions. A seminar for all members on the budget is planned for early January.

6. Implications on Other Policy Areas

The level of resources available and the cost effectiveness of service delivery, impacts upon all the services of the Council.

7. Background Papers

Cabinet budget setting reports to meetings on 27 November and 18 December 2007.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 That members review the directorate savings proposals and bids for additional resources in 2008/9 and comment accordingly to Cabinet.

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Saving proposals that fit the definition of Efficiency Savings

Details of proposals	£000	Potential impact on service
1. Schools Delegated budgets		
i) Additional procurement savings where schools do not use county suppliers.	30	Using Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation for curriculum materials and exercise books would save £30k.
2. Partnership & Inclusion & School Improvement		
i) Joint working re Mobility Officer	3	Efficiency, joint working with another Authority – shared information service Review sharing administrative support Income generating
ii) Review use of temporary administration staff and other office efficiencies	10	
iii) Education Officers to inspect once per year	5	
	18	
3. Countryside and Leisure		
i) Leisure Centre water efficiency measures.	5	A range of water saving initiatives including installation of water inverters/controllers to pool pumps to reduce flow during pre-determined times such as overnight. Savings will be generated by a reduction in water flow and electricity consumption with pumps working at a reduced rate. Further savings will be achieved with longer pump life.
ii) Reduced travel costs.	3	
	8	
4. Corporate Communication		
i) Reduction of staff costs	2	
5. Tourism, Heritage and Culture		
i) Historic houses reduced costs	5	Reduced on-going subsidy (dependent on successful bid into the efficiency fund.) Passporting of efficiency saving to Bodelwyddan Castle, Ectarc, N E Wales Dance amd Llangollen Eisteddfod.
ii) Reduced support to outside bodies	2	
iii) Staffing restructure	14	Potential increase in fines income – dependant on successful bid into efficiency fund. CADW to take over management of Denbigh Castle Deletion of Senior Assistant post at Rhyl Library.
iv) Library debtors system	20	
v) Denbigh Castle	2	
vi) Delete library post	30	
	73	
Total Efficiency Savings	131	

Other Savings proposals to be investigated further

Details of proposals	£000	Potential impact on service
Reduction in staff travel (10% target)		
Reduction in staff hours throughout the Directorate on a voluntary basis.	To be calculated	Heads of Service to agree and minimise impact
Reduction in hospitality/lunches	To be calculated	None
Efficiency savings from schools	To be decided	
Reduced energy consumption	To be calculated	Subject to capital bid.

APPENDIX 2

PRESSURES/GROWTH

Priority	Service	Details of proposals	£000	Impact on service if not agreed
Committed increases 2008/09				
	Workplans	Estyn related:-		Workplans will not be implemented
	3.4	Additional SEN & Behaviour Support.	70	
	1.2	Increase in School Improvement Team.	120	
	1.4	LSA's & Behaviour Support Teachers.	100	
		PWC funding.	290	
	2.1	Policy and Performance posts.	120	
			700	
	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Scala operating grant (agreed during 07/08 budget round)	40	
Priorities				
1	Schools	Delegated budgets. Ysgol Clawdd Offa. Providing time for leadership and management.	51 280	
		Improving performance: ensuring competency in classroom teaching.	65	
		Review of mainstream funding formula.	198	
			594	

		Demographic and statutory pressures:- Reducing cover by secondary teachers, Providing time for lesson planning, preparation and pupil assessment, Changes to the primary curriculum, Changes to the secondary curriculum, New assessment requirements.	261 199 150 133 98 841	
2	Estyn related	Additional bids to meet the action plan	528	Workplans will not be implemented
3	Education Transport	Increase of 12 operating days.	302	Statutory service.
4	Youth Service	Actions to meet previous Estyn Inspection.	183	Not able to implement action plan
5	Countryside and Leisure	i) Loss of PAG funding. ii) Drift Park Pool, Play Area and Amphitheatre. iii) Park Attendants. iv) Leisure Centre Booking System.	71 37 20 25 153	Three areas currently receiving PAG's grant will stop or be substantially reduced. Reduction in service at the park – pool opening hours, repairs and maintenance, events etc. Complaints about cleanliness and anti social behaviour and vandalism. Failure to engage with e-gov agenda. Inefficient management information systems.
6	Tourism, Heritage and Culture	Additional grant to Bodelwyddan Trust	60	
		Total	3401	Includes 700k previously agreed in response to Estyn inspection.