

Budget Consultation 2014/17

feedback report

8th January 2014

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1.Statement from South West Transport Network for Bristol City Council Special Resources Committee (27 November), West of England Partnership Scrutiny Committee, West of England Partnership Transport Committee and Board, Bristol City Cabinet and Full Council, South Gloucestershire Full Council and BANES Cabinet

Greater Bristol Supported Bus Network

We are extremely concerned about proposals to take £700K out of the Greater Bristol Bus Network funding. This 33% cut is a very serious threat to the survival of the network as a coherent set of routes. We would also insist that the Bristol Mayor and Council acknowledge the cross-boundary nature of the network and accept that cuts in Bristol will inevitably entail severe disruption to services in South Gloucestershire, BANES and North Somerset. In particular there will be knock-on service-reduction (potentially largescale withdrawal) of services through Filton, Patchway, Cribbs Causeway, Bradley Stoke, Emerson's Green, Staple Hill, Kingswood, Longwell Green, Keynsham, Bath, Nailsea, Clevedon and Portishead. This will also likely kill off the Mayor's and BANES newly established and very well received 6-days-a-week Night Bus Network. This project was originally funded by central government to the tune of £70m from the DfT and £20m from First Group to improve the bus network including investment in new vehicles which is ongoing. Whilst we understand that cuts have to fall somewhere, it seems extremely short-sighted to jeopardise one of the most successful and high-profile developments in local public transport in recent years (including the investment in new vehicles by First and Wessex, the dropping of fares by both companies and the campaign by the WEP to get more people onto the bus and rail network).

It might be possible to look for significant savings in renegotiating or commercialising the Park and Ride network, especially as MetroWest Buses are supposed to run subsidy-free (including the Park and Ride services). We remain somewhat sceptical of the subsidy-free plans as no other city in Europe manages this feat at the moment. It must also be said that there is a strange lack of coherence in making the currently proposed cuts whilst pushing ahead with plans for the Metro Bus Network across the city region which is likely to leave the public with a confused and unconvincing feeling about the region's transport planning.

We are also concerned at the proposals to slash £470K from the Community Transport budget, particularly as there are still more than twenty buses providing services across the city which are non-low-floor and disability-unfriendly, thus making the Community Transport service all the more necessary. It is essential that we have a clear policy on access for all to public transport in the Greater Bristol area and this will necessitate the commitment of WEP to a clear date and planned program for the removal of the remaining non-low-floor vehicles from the network in Bristol, Bath, Wells and Weston-super-Mare. The Bristol and Bath city region is lagging well behind comparable urban centres across the UK and Europe in modernising its bus and rail fleets to achieve proper access for all. This issue also has clear implications for the modernisation of the region's rail stations, many of which have limited, partial or absolutely no disabled access. With the forthcoming Intercity Electrification Program, this is the perfect opportunity for WEP to bid with FGW for Access for All grants from the DfT. The proposals for wholesale closure of public (and disabled) toilet facilities across the region should be approached quite differently by "translating" standalone facilities into shared units within cafes, shopping centres and transport interchanges. This requires a coherent policy and a structured plan (similar to the Bath model) to ensure that these facilities do not simply disappear to the detriment of the travelling public. (Notwithstanding the fact that the Bath Bus Station toilets and café are presently closed due to a flood!)

David Redgewell. **South West Transport Network** – Tel 07814 794953

2. Bristol Older People's Forum

The forum for the over 55s

Canningford House, 38 Victoria Street, Bristol BS1 6BY

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bopf@ageukbristol.org.uk



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Budget proposals 2014/15.

At its Open Forum meeting today, 21st November 2013, members of the Bristol Older People's Forum voted to voice our concern at the Budget proposals - as presented by Mayor George Ferguson - which appear to directly conflict with his stated aim at the 2013 Celebration of Age Festival, namely "*to value older people in the community*". We believe the proposals also conflict with his "*Vision for Bristol*", in which he says he wants to "*enable older people to play an active role in the community*". We would like to offer the following comments for his consideration.

1) R-PP-016

Reduction in the Supported Housing Budget for physically and sensory impaired people. Halving this budget will impact on the lives of already vulnerable people.

2) R-PP-012

Review the use of School Road. BOPF members have already contacted me regarding the proposed loss of respite facilities and the effect on families .

3) R-PL-023.

Library Services. Libraries are community centres which enhance community cohesion, used by parent and baby/toddler groups; reading groups; writing groups. The computers are always in use by the unemployed, by students, by people who cannot afford computers, and of course by older readers. Libraries provide a lifeline to many. Access to information for non-internet users – including searching for 'best buys'

4) R-PP-023.

Cease funding for daily warden service to independent sheltered housing schemes. The last time wardens were withdrawn BOPF did a survey which established the anguish of people who felt their little communities had been ruined by the withdrawal of wardens. Loneliness and more isolation can only be the result of warden withdrawal. (impact on health - increased likelihood of emergency admissions etc)

5) R-PL-003.

Savings from reshaping Domestic and Sexual Violence Services. Women and children who suffer domestic violence should not undergo any cut in the service provided to them.

6) R-PL-027.

Review Community Transport Grants. Community Transport is largely used by people with mobility problems, older people, people without cars a cut in this grant can only disadvantage this group of vulnerable people and could result in them being trapped at home with subsequent loneliness and isolation.

7) R-PL-006.

Reduce Community Investment Grants. This section deals with the Voluntary Sector among which are the Equality Forums e.g. Bristol Older People's Forum. Bristol is currently engaged in bidding for Lottery money to enter the City in order to reduce loneliness and isolation amongst older people, thus improving the health of the city, reducing costs to social

care and the NHS, in line with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. BOPF has been a prime partner in this bid from the start. We are now down to the last 32 out of 102 cities. It hardly looks like Bristol values older people if the largest organisation run by and for older people has its grant so reduced it is unable to function and has to withdraw from the Lottery Partnership. The Lottery is currently considering which 15 cities should receive a grant of between 2 and 6 million pounds.

We, at Bristol Older People's Forum:

- recognise that the Government failed to supply the extra funding which was supposed to follow the election of a Mayor;
- appreciate the difficult choices before Cabinet;
- understand the need for a 2% raise in community charge.

Nevertheless, we would also expect Cabinet and the elected Mayor to ensure that the lives of vulnerable people are not made even more difficult by cuts in services, which are supposedly there to support them, and we would ask that the lives of vulnerable people continue to be protected.

Yours Faithfully.

Judith Brown

Judith Brown , Chair BOPF

3. Bristol City Council Disabled Employees group (DEG)

At the DEG meeting on 20 November – the group discussed the budget and the following comments were made

- A) There was an equalities impact assessment for the loss of 400 support staff – are these in addition to the approx 800 that the City Director has said need to be reduced?
- B) As support staff are included in the budget cuts and probably are part of a transformational programme somewhere, the DEG would like to set up a work group with HR, OH and ICT and anyone else who is relevant to share how Lloyds banks organise their reasonable adjustments. As a group we feel this just makes sense and would work really well in the council and we would like any changes and reorganisations being proposed (such as those for support staff as we presume these staff are the ones who organise the reasonable adjustments) to include changing the end to end processes for reasonable adjustments
- C) The DEG invited the DEF to our last meeting on 19 Nov when we discussed the budget and we would like any cumulative impact to make it very clear about the level of cuts which directly affect disabled people namely:
 - £300k cut in physical and sensory support accommodation services will affect disabled customers and probably disabled staff who are likely to be working in the team
 - 100% of community transport customers are disabled (only older disabled customers need door to door transport) and the budget is being reduced by 50% £410k
 - Ditto for free travel on community transport – saving not defined in eqia 029
 - Any changes to concessionary travel will affect 100% disabled people (as older people are protected by statute)
 - Home to school transport reductions have been going for years so by now the obvious duplications and abuses will have surfaced and be handled. Therefore by now most of the cuts will be made by asking parents to take more responsibility. Welfare reform is cutting household incomes for people on benefits so parents who choose to run a car now might not in the near future which should be considered when assuming parents can drive disabled children to school. Don't make the cuts before new local special schools are in place. The Eqia says 89% of the users are disabled children - Total cut £1.7m
 - Disabled people are the lowest users of leisure centres, hence the positive action and subsidies for sports attendance. Increasing uptake by disabled people is an equalities plan target because usage is so low. Therefore removing the subsidy will disproportionately affect disabled people who aren't benefitting from the council's leisure services – Total cost £1.1m
 - Reduce expenditure on stair lifts – this only affects disabled people as non-disabled elderly people don't need stair lifts - £75k
 - Cutting health and social care prevention fund means £340k which would have been spent on disabled people or for the benefit of disabled people won't be spent on disabled people
 - The disabled children's team gave a talk to the DEG on the changes to services for 0-25 year old disabled young people. We liked the plans but the cut of £343k is what could have been invested in better services for disabled young people

All of the above cuts affect only disabled people and this should be clear in the budget statements and it needs to be brought to the Mayor's attention that £4,268k of budget cuts directly disadvantage disabled people

On top of this are the cuts which indirectly affect disabled people

- All of the cuts to health and social care services
- Community investment grants – this grants is one of the few commissioning pots which fund disabled people run organisations like DEF, People First etc. The importance of user led organisations should be taken into account when deciding which projects need to be cut – Total cut is £300k but advice services are protected so there is a greater than 15% chance that disabled people's organisations will be cut
- Reduce the equalities Team by 40% - In the Mayor's presentation of the budget, disabled people were referred to as 'the cared for' which shows that the council still has a long way to go in understanding disability equality issues
- Cuts to WRAMAS as most of their service users are disabled people.

4. Southmead Community Association

Bristol's Budget Consultation an opportunity

The document 'Bristol's Budget consultation – How can we balance the budget and close the gap? The sub paragraph 'How are we doing it' includes goals that we believe our vision for the redevelopment of the Greystoke Strip directly addresses.

Our vision meets two of the requirements.

1. Making better use of our many buildings

2. Reducing spending whilst maintaining services.

1. Making better use of our many buildings

a. Asset transfer of Southmead House to the local community

By relocating the Southmead Community Centre as a purpose built extension to Southmead House, our vision is to keep this building as an asset for the local community but remove it as a liability to the City Council.

By such a change of use we believe essential services such as the Service Point can be kept on site but responsibility for maintenance no longer a cost to the Council.

By a new build extension there would be an opportunity to include modern energy saving designs and technology eg solar panels to reduce the running costs.

B. Relocation of Southmead library

Moving Southmead Library into the extended Southmead House releases the existing library for disposal (though we would hope that some of the money from the sale would go into the new build). By having the library within a larger complex it will be possible to react to the changing way people read books without the mill stone of a building hampering innovation.

We could sell the present library and use the money to move the library into the new building. It may then be possible to have increased opening hours for the library because staff would be shared with the rest of the facility. This move would provide a permanent tenant for the Hub and give a guaranteed income to help ensure its future viability.

C. Development of the meeting rooms

The new build 'community hub' would incorporate all the present activities. This would release the space for what we hope will be community housing.

Some land where the present "Meeting Rooms" are situated could be used for housing and the money raised used in the new building. If this was linked to the establishing of a new venture called for example "Southmead Community Housing" then not only the value of the land but also rental income from the housing could go to make new facility self-sustaining.

2. Reducing spending whilst maintaining services.

a. Southmead House

Essential activities in Southmead House could be continued with the City Council as a tenant thus giving much needed flexibility.

b. Southmead Library

By relocating it ought to be possible to reduce the number of staff whilst at the same time increasing opening hours. The extra staff time to be filled by either Hub staff or by volunteers.

Our Vision for Redevelopment also address a number of council aspirations.

1. Building more homes.

Our vision is to establish "Southmead Community Housing" (or equivalent structure) who in partnership with others would take a lead in finding parcels of land on which to build homes and to see the income from such ploughed back into the local community.

There are ideal opportunities created by the development of the Greystoke strip eg Where the Meeting Rooms now stand, and a parcel of land by Fonthill Park.

There is small parcel of land in the Fonthill area of Southmead which the Neighbourhood Partnership was prepared to sell for housing. Unfortunately the proposed amount of money coming back into Southmead from such a sale was very small. This was because of the City Council sliding scale scheme. Our proposal is that 90% of the money from the sale of that land should come into Southmead and pay for infrastructure improvements particularly the building of the Hub. Or the land could be gifted to 'Southmead Community Housing' so that in the long term income would benefit Southmead.

Bristol Together have expressed an interest in building the homes if we own the land.

Triodos are very interested in financing this work with a consortium of Bristol Together, Southmead Development Trust, Southmead Community Association and Southmead Community Housing.

2 Community Development.

a. Merge Southmead Community Association and the Southmead Development Trust

Our vision is to see the Southmead community Association and the Southmead Development Trust brought together to form an umbrella organisation for the development of Southmead.

b. Fund a community/development worker.

At present both organisations are only just sustainable, but we believe that by merging we will be able to build on our strengths. We believe that together we will have the capability to fund a community/development worker.

By having a community Hub rather than a traditional Community Centre we believe we will be able to address one of the major deficits in the area viz: personal confidence. With new development there will be an opportunity to address this issue which was poorly understood when the Community Centre was built in the 1950s

c. Providing a permanent purpose built home for 'Southmead Project'

Quite some time ago Southmead Project indicated that they were interested in having premises more suitable for their services. They have a shop in Greystoke Avenue which could be sold and then they would have a permanent place in the new build.

d. Providing a permanent location and greater opening hours and accessibility for the Advice centre known as the SCART Shop

Funding for this much valued and needed facility is always at a premium and a move into the Hub would provide a sustainable future

5. Governors of Filton Avenue Nursery School & Children's Centre, Blakeney Road, Lockleaze



Response to the Budget proposals, 2014-17

What is wrong with cutting Children's Centre budgets?

Children's Centres seem to have been targeted as an easy option for cuts; maybe because they provide a wide variety of services for the most vulnerable and voiceless: very young children and their parents. They are also receiving the biggest cut of all the areas affected in the budget: £1.5 million is more than any other service is due to lose. It does not exactly square with George Ferguson's claim that Bristol is '...becoming what I describe as a child- friendly city.'¹

Presenting these cuts as 'Changing how we fund and provide services'² rather than a cut seems to be rather misleading. We the governors of Filton Avenue Nursery School & Children's Centre anticipate that the money saved through the cuts will be disproportionate to the value lost through restriction of services delivered by children's centres. These are services which support the well-being, education and development of young children, and help parents experiencing difficulties, financially and emotionally.

For example: A one-hour free drop in session can be the only thing which gives an outlet for a child and meaning to a parent's otherwise empty week. It can also be the way family support officers identify someone in need, and stop a situation getting worse.

Our centre supports families in understanding the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. The most recent data shows 88.6% of mothers initiating breastfeeding, a consistent increase year on year, proving outstanding work against the national average of 73.8%. Immunisation rates also run above the Bristol average e.g. MMR at 87%. This can only be achieved by continuing to have the resources to work in partnership with Health colleagues.

In addition a recent report³ to the Horfield and Lockleaze Partnership highlighted the huge health inequalities that impact the Lockleaze area. Early intervention is essential if we are to tackle problems like these and cuts to funding will undermine these efforts.

The Equalities Impact Assessment⁴ for these proposed cuts ignores the fact that any loss of service, or job, will disproportionately affect women, as they are the main users and providers of Children's centre services. This is potentially discriminatory and it is highly problematic that it is not even acknowledged.

Further, targeting funding through making services only available in certain geographic areas is at best imprecise. There are elements of extreme deprivation in the wealthiest of areas, and by making services even harder to access for these people, inequality and isolation are compounded. Further, issues such as domestic violence and post-natal depression do not only occur in poorer neighbourhoods.

¹ <http://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2013/nov/19/mayor-bristol-george-ferguson-first-year>

² <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/council-and-democracy/mayors-proposals-further-savings-changing-how-we-fund-and-provide>

³ https://www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2013/ne/ne011/1210_14.pdf

⁴

We the governors of the centre are of the view that any further reductions in funding will directly affect service delivery. In order to balance our budget for 2013 we have already cut back on valued, but non statutory activities. Any further cuts will severely affect the quality of our core offering.

We reject the idea that you can provide the same quality of service by focussing solely on severe deprivation. This is very likely to isolate families in need and stigmatise those identified as requiring our services. Instead of building a network of support across the community we will be creating solitary institutions for the families who benefit from inclusion the most. To provide effective services a children's centre needs to be active and inclusive at the heart of a community not sat on its outer limits.

In summary, the budget proposal lessens the life chances of children and their families, especially those from less stable homes and is disproportionately damaging to some of the most vulnerable people in Bristol. Our services are already targeted to benefit those most in need so the cuts will inevitably leave families without the fundamental education and support necessary to help them out of deprivation and reach economic independence.

We hereby call on the Mayor to reconsider cuts in funding to children's centres and extend an invitation to George personally to come and see our centre in action.

On behalf of the governors

Daniel Steel

Chair of Governors

Filton Avenue Nursery School & Children's Centre, Blakeney Road, Lockleaze

6. Bristol Savages



The Red Lodge Park Row Bristol BS1 5LJ TEL 0117 927 3807

12th December 2013

Julie Finch
Bristol Museums and Art Gallery
Queens Road
Bristol

Dear Ms Finch

Re:- R-PL-007 - Review arrangements for Blaise Castle, The Red Lodge, Georgian House , Roman Villa

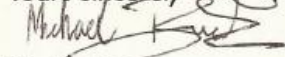
We write regarding the Consultation Process in respect of Bristol's Budget 2014/15 - 2016/17.

In particular, we note your proposals concerning the future running of the Red Lodge and write to draw your attention to the following:-

1. There is no reference to Bristol Savages who have occupied the Wigwam, which forms part of the Red Lodge, since 1920 and currently under a Lease dated 15th September 1981 for a term of 99 years with Bristol City Council. That Lease provides a number of rights over the Red Lodge for Bristol Savages.
2. In the event that the Red Lodge is to be closed, how does Bristol City Council propose to deal with access, services and associated operational issues, relating to the Wigwam?
3. Clearly there are financial implications in addition to the more practical issues and Bristol Savages would welcome the opportunity to discuss the whole subject with Bristol City Council to the mutual benefit of both parties.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Michael Burmester
Honorary Secretary

7.SHINE Health Integration Team

BRISTOL'S BUDGET CONSULTATION 2014-2017

Submitted by Dr Suzanne Audrey and Marcus Grant, SHINE health integration team

Bristol Health Partners is a collaboration of six NHS organisations, the city's two universities and its local authority, and has established a number of health integration teams (HITs) to address public health imperatives and disease areas in the city. The Supporting Healthy Inclusive Neighbourhood Environments (SHINE) HIT is led by Suzanne Audrey, Research Fellow at the University of Bristol, and Marcus Grant, Deputy Director of the World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre for Healthy Urban Environments at the University of the West of England.

As co-leads of SHINE we wish to comment on the closure of public toilets. In acknowledging the serious situation with regard to public funding, we end this document with some 'possible solutions'.

PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM THE CLOSURE OF PUBLIC TOILETS

While closing public toilets may be seen as reducing costs to the local authority, it must be considered in the wider context including public health, quality of life, inclusion and economic wellbeing.

Visitors and tourism

Good quality public toilet facilities contribute to a range of amenities that help to attract visitors, encouraging them to stay longer, and to visit again. The UK visitor economy is worth billions of pounds and a significant proportion of tourists, particularly from other countries, enjoy 'city breaks'. Being able to access a toilet is a fundamental need for any visitor.

Sustainable Transport

People are more likely to use public transport, or to walk or cycle, if they are confident that they will be able to use accessible and clean toilets throughout their journey.

Elderly people

In the UK, between 3 and 6 million people suffer from urinary incontinence, which affects more women than men and becomes more common with age. For many older people, the lack of toilet facilities stops them going out which has the potential to increase physical and mental health problems. The cost of health and social care falls on local authorities as well as the national health services. Physical activity, especially in later life, reduces the demands on local health services and helps older people maintain their independence. The issue of toilet provision is so important for the health and wellbeing of the global ageing population that the WHO has cited it as a major factor in their Age Friendly Cities Guide.

Health

Many activities that support health and wellbeing take place outside of the home. Public toilets in places such as parks, public squares and promenades help to support people who need regular toilet access to take exercise and stay physically active. Whilst urinary function reduces with age, it can also be diminished by medication taken for the management of chronic health conditions such as heart failure, some forms of cancer, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease.

Women

Urinary incontinence affects more women than men. Women who are pregnant or at the menopause need to use the toilet more often, as do those with other conditions such as diabetes. At any one time, about a quarter of all women of childbearing age will be menstruating and require access to clean toilets. Women often take on the role of carer, whether of older people or children. In these situations they need toilets in accessible locations with facilities to accommodate the needs of those for whom they are caring as well as their own. At night, while additional urinals are strategically provided for men, there is no equivalent provision for women.

Children and young people

The closure of a public toilet means that those with babies to change have to find alternative, less sanitary means e.g. on a park bench. Some people in this situation leave the soiled nappy behind incurring additional cleaning costs for the local authority. Small children have less control over their bladders and outings can be abruptly curtailed if a child needs to use a toilet. If there is no public toilet available, the choice for the carer is either to go home or find a less hygienic place. Older children and young people can suffer from embarrassment and anxiety about toilet related issues and their need for publicly available toilets should also be recognized, for example, young women learning to manage menstruation.

Disability and chronic illness

There are over 11 million people with a limiting long term illness, impairment or disability in Great Britain. These conditions often include problems with mobility or stamina which require consideration with regard to accessing public toilets. Conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome, ulcerative colitis, and Crohn's disease cause many people to reduce their outdoor activities and stay at home because of concerns about toilet facilities.

Hygiene

A lack of available and appropriate facilities at the right time during the day and night encourages street fouling. Cleaning up the mess is a significant and costly task for local authorities. In some areas at the weekends there are temporary urinals for use at night time. While this may reduce street fouling, public urinating can be offensive and cause some people to avoid these areas. The needs of the homeless are seldom mentioned in connection with public toilets, but their toileting requirements do need to be addressed if street fouling is to be reduced.

Mobile workers

Delivery personnel, taxi drivers, lorry drivers, police officers and other mobile workers need access to public toilets as they carry out their duties.

Summary

The closure of public toilets has the potential to: reduce independence; cause embarrassment, indignity and distress; cause particular problems for children, women, disabled people and people with chronic illnesses; contribute to physical and mental health problems; cause problems for mobile workers; reduce opportunities for physical activity; incur additional costs related to medical and social services; affect the perception of visitors and tourists; encourage street fouling and unhygienic practices.

SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- Priority should be given to retaining public toilets in areas where no other provision is available.
- Consideration should be given to establishing a 'working party', supported with funds through savings from public toilet closures, to develop and promote a public toilet strategy in Bristol. This should include representatives from a range of stakeholders including policy makers, specific interest groups (including the elderly, disabled, carers and women), public health researchers and practitioners. SHINE would be willing to contribute expertise to such a group.
- Community toilet schemes should be strengthened and publicised. These schemes provide a means by which local authorities, working in partnership with local businesses, enhance public access to toilets. The schemes allow the public to use toilet facilities in private premises such as pubs, cafes, shops and offices without having to make a purchase. The Local Authority supports or pays the owner of the premises for providing the facility. The following measures can enhance such schemes:
 - Signs announcing the community toilet scheme placed at 'entrance points' to an area, such as car parks, town centres and transport hubs, so that visitors know what to look out for
 - Premises displaying stickers prominently in their window, to inform passers-by that their toilets are available, and the types of facilities they provide
 - Directional signs and paper maps indicating community toilets with details of available toilet facilities, the distance, and the opening hours

- Council buildings, such as libraries and leisure centres, are included
- Consideration should be given to mobile phone apps and texting facilities that supply details of the nearest toilet facilities and opening times. It may be possible to work with the city's universities to develop a 'Bristol public toilet app'
- Bristol City Council should review and, if appropriate, improve its contribution to online The Great British Public Toilet Map. <http://greatbritishpublictoiletmap.rca.ac.uk/>

USEFUL REFERENCES AND WEBSITES

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NHS choices <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Incontinence-urinary/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

Office for Disability Issues, Department of Work and Pensions. <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-facts-and-figures.php#gd>

8. BME Voice and Influence (V&I) response to the Mayor's budget proposals

This report is submitted following, conversations with VCS BME groups and individuals; feedback from budget consultation events, input from Bristol BME V&I staff and reps on the Bristol BME V&I Advisory group.

We welcome the Mayor's stance to address inequalities in the city. As a BME collective we want to consider how our voice and influence is represented in this. Since 2001 the proportion of the population that is not white has nearly doubled to 22% The BME population make up 16% of the city's population. However the BME population is not evenly spread across the city, as the Mayor makes clear in the preamble to his Vision statement Bristol is still a heavily segregated city. In some areas BME concentration is close to 80% and in others no higher than 1.5%. It is no coincidence that these areas also coincide with the areas of high deprivation where life expectancy can be as much as 10 years lower than more affluent areas of the city and education attainment is also significantly less.

There are some overarching questions that highlight our concerns on the budget and the process used to determine which areas of the council's spend will be cut.

Where does equality sit as a city priority? The European Green capital 2015 award combined with the vibrant arts and cultural life can bring positive impacts to the city (i.e. St Pauls' Carnival, and the thriving music and arts scene driven from the inner city and BME communities). Also it is clear the health and congestion consequences of our high dependency on the carbon fuel economy is extremely damaging to BME communities both in Bristol where pollution levels are high in areas of BME concentration and the wider consequences for the BME diaspora in relation to the international consequences of climate change. Yet we are concerned that the strong principles outlined in the Fairness Commission which commit the city to tackle the extent, causes and impact of Bristol's inequalities are undermined by a number of the proposals contained within the budget consultation.

However if we want to live in the type of world class city that the Mayor strives to achieve in his Vision statement it is imperative that poverty, unfairness and inequality are eradicated.

In terms of Neighbourhood Partnerships while we agree with the need for democratic accountability at neighbourhood level some of the partnerships are not representative or relevant to BME communities. We believe local VCS and BME led organisations can enable the engagement and accountability that they exist to provide with greater autonomy than the current system and at a lower cost to the city.

This budget is a challenge for us all and should be put in context to help us decide whether or not it is relevant to our future. It is vital the budget underlines and supports the laudable principles outlined in the Mayor's vision for the city in particular his references to eradicating racism and allowing diversity to thrive rather than set this process back.

General questions linked to the above:

What is the overarching strategy to tackle inequality? The Mayor's Fairness Commission clearly states a commitment to understand the nature, extent causes and impact of inequality in the city. We are concerned that the published Equality Impact Assessment exercises (EqIA) have not clearly articulated what the consequences of the proposed cuts mean for the communities that the Mayor has committed to protect and want to ensure they are brought into the mainstream of the city's commercial, voluntary and political life.

Challenges and concerns:

Inequality indicators: health, employment, income, housing, education: where do these fit within city priorities? How will the budget cuts ensure that outcomes for these priorities can still be achieved?

Has there been any work undertaken to assess the cost of the cuts i.e. when cuts take effect will this create demand elsewhere in the city's system of services? E.g. Impact of cuts in community transport services increases isolation or reduces community cohesion – placing more demands on health / mental health / criminal justice services. What are the externalities?

Have there been any baseline exercises to anticipate any potential disproportionate impact on equalities (BME) communities (and within the council's staff)?

Are we taking future need into account? Are we building something that will build a base for the needs of a future, more diverse, more equal Bristol population?

We believe that failure to take race fully into account in the designing and shaping of the council's services, and in the face of a changing population is not just about social justice; the result will turn up as a future demand on services – both inside and outside the council.

Summary of issues

Key points raised from consultations and discussions in reference to the budget proposals are:

General

The inconsistency in the quality of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) carried out to inform some of the proposals outlined.

Children and young people

- The need to take into account changing demographics.
- Concern about the impact on families
- Maintaining a representative BME workforce in relation to Children Centres staff.

Health and Social Care

- Protecting preventative services to prevent increase of vulnerable BME elders
- Maintaining specialist knowledge and cultural sensitivities
- Preventing risks to staff
- Need for greater analysis of the cumulative impact on BME service users.

Housing

- Over representation of BME communities in receipt of Welfare Rights and Money Advice services
- Need for greater analysis of the cumulative impact on BME service users.

Libraries

- Withdrawal of subsidy to St Paul's Family and Learning Centre: willingness of BME VCS and local groups in St Paul's to work collaboratively to secure the centre as a community hub.

Older People

- Loss of specialist services
- Impact of proposals on BME elders on low income.

Parks

- Lack of EqIAs in relation to Race
- Higher fear of crime and feeling less safe, particularly among BME women, older people and families.

Pollution control

- Over-representation of BME communities experiencing noise pollution
- Work with service providers and Avon and Somerset Police to consider mitigation.

Public Toilets

- Use of other public places, particularly pubs, not suitable for some BME / Faith communities.

Safer Bristol

- Over-representation of BME women experiencing domestic violence
- Over-representation of BME communities experiencing hate crime.

Sports

- Removal of subsidy deters the aims to decrease health inequalities among BME communities.

Traffic and transport

- Community transport: High use of BME service users; the proposals could impact, among other issues, on social isolation
- Local bus service subsidy: need for more integrated approach to Bristol transport systems.

Voluntary and Community

- Neighbourhood Partnerships not being representative of BME communities
- Recommendation that budgets for Neighbourhood Partnerships be reviewed and considered alongside the proposals for community investment grants.

The Change programme

- Under-representation of BME staff
- Diminished support for internal and external equalities practice.

Comments on specific proposals

Children and young people

Changes in the commissioning of Speech, Language and Communication Therapy services

‘There is the potential for adverse impacts on BME children and Disabled children because of the nature of the service and the vulnerability of the children needing these services.’

Issue: An assumption has been made here that because the service is currently of ‘excellent quality’ (it would be useful to have sight of the evidence of this), the service will remain excellent under re-commissioning. We would like evidence that re-commissioned services will take into account the changing demographics on Race over the next 5 years.

Changes in funding for Children’s Centre services

Full EqIA not yet undertaken.

Issue: Reduction to these services will create an adverse impact on BME families. We know Children Centres are based in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the city, and that a higher ratio of families from BME communities (than that of the Bristol population) benefit from them. Single and lone parents (mainly women) rely on Children’s Centres for improved parenting skills and support and confidence building. Where services are no longer local, or levels of service reduced, the cuts will have a direct impact on parents having to travel, not receiving specific support they require. Indirect impacts will be on mental health, family budgets, and employability. How are these factors being recognised and / or mitigated in the budget proposals?

Workforce

Issue: In the Children Centre’s workforce there is a good representative staff level (16%) and a high level of those (33%) taking up training bursaries from BME Communities. How will the service maintain representative levels of BME staff if support with training bursaries disappears? There will be a potential impact on sustaining a representative workforce.

Health and Social Care

Home Care Services

Issue: We are concerned about the loss of specialist expertise in the move to a generic service provided by independent providers. Awareness of cultural sensitivities and language issues need to be considered with a guarantee that the service is appropriate. While there is under-representation (5.1% of Home Care services users are BME), the majority of users are over the age of 65; these percentages will increase for BME Elders accessing this service in Bristol's changing demographics. The proposed cuts will diminish preventative measures and services could end up as fire-fighting support for older people. Where there is an aim to consider better value does this take into account the high cost of support services e.g. sign interpreters, etc and skilled support?

Has there been consideration of the long term impact and analysis on NHS and other statutory services? The savings proposed are not true savings as the medium / long term impact will be shifted onto other agencies to pick up the costs.

Idea: Specialist knowledge must be protected and embedded in the training of staff providing generic services.

Idea: Redesigning services into zones could be a good opportunity for the service to consider local need and for independent Providers to work with local VCS groups that have knowledge of BME groups and their needs.

We appreciate that, in terms of floating services for older people, any new provider would be asked to address the issue of under-representation and increase the proportion of BME service users accessing these services. Assurance should be given that any new provider will have appropriate knowledge and expertise to meet needs.

Provide Equipment to enable one carer to work alone.

Issue: We know there is a high number of BME staff working in this sector, many of whom are women. Similarly to the views of Bristol Women's Voice and the implications of them working alone, there is no mention of the increased risks to staff or patients of violence or threats, but only of physical harm from lifting. These are risks which need to be addressed.

Issue: We can only envisage this working in the context of payment of a living wage being binding for all concerned. Otherwise we are impacting on lowest paid, overwhelmingly women, BME groups. A Living wage should be adopted through these proposals.

Issue: If proposals go ahead this could put vulnerable service users at risk. While BME families tend to be closely involved in the care of their elders, this could create greater impact on individuals' partners / families having to step in and help with use of equipment, or replacing the second carer where two individuals are required to meet the user's support needs. Therefore a family member may have to support the sole paid carer in their work, increasing pressure on the family carer. There is not enough detail provided in terms of EqIA.

Housing

Welfare Rights and Money Advice Training

Issue: 19% of BME people accessing WRAMAS is a higher ratio than the BME population in Bristol. Research demonstrates that BME people are over-represented – possibly a higher proportion of BME men? Communities have already been affected by the cuts in other advice services such as legal aid services.

Issue: Training is essential to the delivery of these services which should include training on Equalities / cultural awareness. Reduction of training budget could impact on the type of appropriate advice given to support the disproportionate number of BME people who use the service – including those who are refugees, in prison, victims of domestic violence. Reduction in

the helpline could result in reduced confidence in the service and decreased access among those most vulnerable people.

Idea: We recognise that on-line training resources would be welcomed among some VCS groups involved in the delivery of similar services. Could this be a shared resource; it would also be beneficial to tap into VCS knowledge in the development of the resources.

Reduction in preventing homelessness commissioned services

Issue: 'Young people with disabilities, women and BME groups are over-represented in these services. These proposals will impact on BME service users as they are over represented both in mental health and homelessness.'

(Direct comment from the consultation document)

Issue: More consideration should be given in terms of the cumulative impact on BME young people / BME mental health users and a fall out that could increase these figures even more if services are reduced.

Issue: Consideration should also be given to the impact on the communities affected by people who become homeless (impact on families having to manage mental health of the individual) and the case that in some areas of the city people's fears of visible and vulnerable individuals who are experiencing mental health and homelessness.

Idea: Support collaborative working with organisations (health, welfare and faith groups) that provides services (e.g. in areas such as Stokes Croft) to support homeless young people / adults.

Housing Register – streamlining the processes

'In terms of the Housing Register there is over representation from BME households, 28% compared with 16% (census 2011)'

(Direct comment from the consultation document)

Given the above there is concern that the EqlA does not cover enough detail in terms of Race.

Issue: Delays in decisions to prioritise housing will affect BME women, particularly those needing to be re-housed due to domestic abuse, and even greater if they require swift exit from tight community links and networks. It is acutely essential that victims are quickly re-housed, often from their communities. If there are delays in this process it could deter women from reporting or taking action to escape domestic abuse situations.

Libraries

Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's learning centre and explore other options

Issue: We are concerned that no EqlA was undertaken; no consultation carried out with users or tenants; scant on-going regular equalities monitoring.

Issue: This Community hub needs to be supported as a local community resource, not eliminated. Has the best use been made of the centre? The café, whilst not fully utilised, drew people to the centre.

Idea: Establish ongoing conversations with the communities that live and work in the area. There is a need to change the image of what / who the centre is for. Develop a business case for the future of centre. Collaborate with local people and groups about most appropriate use and determine its unique role as a community hub.

Idea: If centre is to continue as a community hub remove 9pm closing time: Bookings have been limited as the building shuts at 9pm so currently not appropriate for some evening events.

Idea: Consider community asset transfer to a Community partnership, or consortium that includes a number of VCS organisations (for example St Paul's Learning Centre, Ujima, St Paul's Advice Centre) that could manage the centre and increase its use.

Older People

- **Ceasing operation of warden and Alarm services in non council housing**
- **Reduce Older people Extra Care Housing Service**
- **Charges for Older peoples' housing alarms in sheltered schemes**

Issue: While the number of BME people that use this service is small, numbers are likely to increase with an aging BME population, and as more BME individuals become less reliant on direct family network support there will be an increased reliance on statutory services.

There is a concern that people will not see the value in paying for alarms and therefore have no emergency support whatsoever. Has research been carried out on percentages of BME elders that actually use mobile phones to assist them in emergencies whether inside or outside their homes?

Idea: Keep charges to a minimal although as the overwhelming majority of users are over 65 years of age many may be on a low income.

Idea: Work with housing schemes and VCS support groups to promote accessible information about where people can get help with fees.

Idea: Train staff appropriately so they are able to instruct individuals on how to use technology / new equipment.

Idea: If proposal does go ahead, introduce a pilot period to monitor the service and any increased risks once wardens and alarms are removed.

- **Cease Funding specific floating support service for older people**
- **Review of housing related support in independent sector sheltered housing schemes for older people**

Issue: There will be a loss of a specific service here and this will be replaced by a generic service. What consultation has taken place with BME organisations about the loss of the service? There is nothing in the EqIA as to the impact on other BME health / housing services regarding the closure of this specific service. This proposal will have an impact on other statutory and VCS services by creating additional demands.

Replacing people with technology may be a direct saving but indirectly, if BME people are not confident in using the technology, the indirect impact of their feeling unwell and not accessing help through alarm systems could result in more accidents (for example falls, or hypoglycaemia).

Idea: Train staff appropriately so they are able to instruct individuals on how to use technology / new equipment.

Parks

Parks, Grounds Maintenance. Reduce work specified in parks contracts

Nothing stated in EQIA related to Race.

Issue: The Mayor's vision includes Bristol as a safe city and a green city. There are places in some parts of the city where families do not have access to green space – flats in Lawrence Hill for example or parts of Redcliffe. In other areas with higher percentages of BME communities such as St Paul's / St Agnes reduction of parks maintenance can have an impact on families, C&YP, elders – access to open space is already limited. Where parks / green spaces are not maintained, people feel less safe and have a higher fear of crime; they are less likely to utilise these areas. This issue needs to be linked with cumulative impacts, e.g. health, community safety.

Pollution control

Reduce Nuisance Response Team

'A high proportion of BME tenants live in flats which are more prone to noise nuisance.'

(Direct comment from the consultation document)

Issue: What are the figures for nuisance incidents taking place out of hours? We believe that they are higher than 'in hours' incidents. Given the above, the result will be slower response rates and could impact on whether BME people report incidents, and or decide to deal with issues themselves which could escalate situations.

If reporting decreases this could give a false impression that there is a reduction in nuisance incidents experienced by BME individuals and families. What collaborative approaches have been considered, for instance with A&S police, to ensure that the impact will be mitigated?

Idea: Work with organisations such as SARI and A&S police to agree how negative impacts will be mitigated. Can additional services be provided by other agencies? Ensure relevant promotion of where else people can get help other than BCC services.

Public Toilets

Issue: The proposal is to close 22 of 23 public toilets, is this high percentage relevant? We feel more consultation is required. Women, particularly some BME women, older and disabled people, and those from some faith groups are less likely to feel comfortable using toilets in licensed premises as an alternative, such as pubs, or some city centre restaurants.

Safer Bristol

Reduce spending on crime reduction projects

'Hate crime particularly affects Black and minority ethnic (BME) people, disabled people, lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people (LGBT), older people and women.'

(Direct comment from the consultation document)

Issue: There is not enough in the proposal about the impact in the reduction of PCSOs – what is the BME representation? Community confidence could be diminished if representation is reduced. Have links been identified between PCSOs progression to applying for police recruitment? Therefore a reduction in PCSOs will mean a reduction in BME PCSOs with implications for BME police officer recruitment.

Issue: These cuts include the commissioning of domestic and sexual violence and hate crime services. These cuts will have an adverse impact on BME communities that require the support and on VCS organisations commissioned to deliver projects.

Ideas: Research the positive benefits / outcomes of the current projects and work with service providers / sexual support organisations to ensure there are resources to build on outcomes already achieved in this field.

Sports

Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts

Issue: The proportion of BME service users to leisure centres is 18.8% and there is a need to avoid this decreasing. For example: much progress has been made on women only swimming; this will be a backward slide if women do not have the financial means to take up leisure activities.

‘There is evidence to suggest that BME communities suffer from health inequalities.’

(Direct comment from the consultation document)

Issue: Charging for sports activities may deter people from participation and this will ultimately have a direct impact on tackling health inequalities and will increase demands on health services.

Ideas: Embed educational ideas that promote the benefits of being active, more information at GP surgeries, work with GPs to encourage people to continue to keep active / take up active leisure opportunities. If charges are introduced have a leisure card that offers reductions i.e., every 5th visit to the leisure centre = one free entry.

Traffic and transport

Community Transport

Issue: £410,000 cut. This service is used by people often on a low income, a high percentage from BME / Faith communities, including elders, to get them to support services. Community transport has been made available to young people giving them opportunities to come out of their communities to widen their experiences, and for getting elders to and from activities that reduce their social isolation. The impacts will include increased social isolation and reduced community cohesion.

Idea: Discussions need to be had with agencies such as Community health and AWP to look at the wider impact on these proposals, how to mitigate the potential increase on mental health and social isolation.

Idea: in year one (2014-15) before the cuts are due to take place evaluate the monetary value of Bristol's community transport services and how its use impacts on savings to health / criminal justice services.

Idea: Community transport cannot be delivered without a coordinated approach to transport initiatives across the city. We would like to see a wider discussion with transport providers for a more integrated approach to Bristol transport, and include initiatives to encourage more cycling in this discussion too; we urge a 6 - 12 months period of grace to continue discussions before decisions are made.

Reduce local bus service subsidy

People in some service industries use bus services to get to and from work in the early hours of the day. The need for this service is likely to increase even more with the full introduction of RPZ.

While the impact could be minimal on some communities where people can afford to rely on taxis for others this will not be the case, the disadvantage will be increased social isolation. For example, some people from some faith groups use buses on Sundays to attend their place of worship.

Idea: There is a need to work with and urge First Bus to assess where cover is most needed to reduce the impact on vulnerable communities and to step in and provide appropriate bus services.

Voluntary and Community

Reduction in Voluntary and Community Sector Budget

Issue: A high number of BME organisations or generalist organisations that provide services to BME communities will be impacted by these cuts, not only in terms of reduced resources but the potential loss of VCS organisations that may be at risk of closure. This will come at a time when support needs are even greater given that the impact of the cuts will increase the numbers vulnerable people seeking support from the VCS.

Issue: There is an overwhelming view that other areas of council spend should be looked at instead of reducing spending in VCS services that offer the council a high return on their investment. There is concern about how BCC views the values of the VCS and that we are not fully appreciated in the same way as say arts and culture. One BME organisation wanted to stress the amount of resources they provide to individuals throughout what could be a lengthy stage of support that ultimately results in saving a life.

Issue: There is no reference to cuts in Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs) – which is not a statutory service. While we agree with the democratic processes it provides, the partnerships are not representative, meetings are not well attended, or felt relevant, for BME communities. Monies to administer NPs are being spent in areas of the city that do not necessarily require this type of investment to engage people in democratic processes.

Idea: In view of the above; we recommend the budgets for NPs to be reviewed and considered alongside the proposals to community investment grants.

BCC Internal

The Change programme

800 staff leaving, equivalent of 1,000 jobs. How will this impact on BME staffing numbers at the council, under-representation in management tiers at BCC, and its general workforce? We are concerned about how the cuts will impact on BME staff representation. There is a low number of BME staff in middle management positions; this proposal goes against the council's commitment to increase BME representation throughout all levels of the organisation. How will initiatives to address BME representation be achieved if jobs are going?

The Equalities team could be nearly halved by the cuts: BCC has a statutory duty to monitor, scrutinise, ensure inclusion and challenge discrimination. Our understanding is that the Equalities team guides the council in this. If the team is to be reduced by 40%, and while the main function of the team will be to ensure statutory duties are met under the Equality Act 2010, there is a concern about how this function can be fulfilled with such reduced capacity. The team also supports external projects including VCS activity that provide benefits for BME Communities, with a 40% reduction we are concerned that this element of the work will disappear.

More than ever there is a need to increase equalities advice to schools, or we will see increased cost in terms of higher number of equalities related complaints / tribunals. Specialist equalities and cohesion advice to schools is needed.

Comment on the Mayor's budget proposals (BME V&I)

'Tackling inequality and the social divide are critical to the city's future. We must apply this to every aspect of public life: economic (the opportunity to share in and contribute to the city's wealth today and into the future), social (representation in the city's story) and political (voice in and influence over city vision, strategy and policy). This is not just about social justice, it is good business because among other things, the consequences of inequality and social division creates demands for public services. If we want to live in the type of world class city the Mayor strives to achieve it is imperative that poverty, unfairness and inequality are eradicated.' – Comment from BME V&I group December 2013

The commentary below has been produced by those members of Bristol BME Voice advisory group who were present at a meeting about the budget proposals which took place on Thursday 19th December 2013.

The meeting was a consultation with members of BME organisations and a number of Bristol City Council service managers. The commentary is an overview of opinions expressed by BME representatives at the meeting.

Overarching Questions

There are some overarching questions we believe are critical to understanding this budget and assessing its potential impact on our present and future ability to tackle inequality and division.

1. What is the overarching city strategy to tackle inequality and social division?

This is the context within which these decisions will be being made. We must ensure all officers are making decisions with a common frame of equalities reference if we are to avoid the piecemeal approach that has undermined the effectiveness of past efforts. This is the frame through which we will be able to make judgements as to the significance of a cut or spend, threat or opportunity.

2. Where does equality sit as a city priority?

We are concerned to ensure the strong principles outlined by the Fairness Commission are understood as city priorities. The danger is that equality becomes a value to be considered in the pursuit of greater ends. Tackling inequality must be seen as an end.

3. Have we agreed a common set of indicators to assess our performance against tackling inequality?

Health? Employment? Income? Poverty? Home ownership? Educational attainment? Arrests? Again, we need a common understanding/language for what we (public, voluntary community and private sectors) are pointing our strategy and policy toward.

4. Have we developed a framework to record the anticipated impact of specific cuts, cross reference them with cuts in another part of the system and given early warning on unintended negative consequences that fall disproportionately on BME (and other vulnerable) communities?

This, in essence, is one of the features of institutional discrimination. Fragmented decision making must be avoided. The ability to do so is a core competence.

5. Has there been any work undertaken to assess the potential cost of the cuts?

Cuts in one part of the city system will create demand elsewhere in the city's system of services – whether those are City Council services or some other area of the public sector. What are the externalities?

7. Have we undertaken a forward projection of future need/demand and to what extent are the conclusions being used to ensure that what is left post cuts offers the foundations of a cultural intelligent service able to deliver tackle inequality across a population that is increasingly diverse and complex?

Any failure to take race and inequality fully into account in the designing and shaping of the council's services, in the face of a changing population, will leave us unable to meet the needs of the Bristol population as it will, in turn, have financial consequences for the city's economy.

8. Have there been any baseline exercises to gauge the measure of the relative levels of vulnerability to different communities that will be impacted by the cuts?

Such an awareness would guide us in our thinking about the different city communities and whether they need particular consideration and whether we need to take extra measures to hear and understand their voice.

9. What measures are being taken to ensure?:

- the cuts do not result in disproportionately high job losses among BME BCC staff?
- the cuts do not result in disproportionately high job losses among BME staff working in organisations that have relied on BCC finance?
- the cuts do not result in disproportionate blockage to the opportunity for BME BCC staff to progress to senior tiers?

A diverse workforce (at all levels) is critical to the ability of any organisation to deliver excellence to its clients. This is only more so when the client base is diverse. We might also call the ability to achieve a diverse workforce as "Cultural Intelligence." As a public sector and a city leadership institution, it is incumbent on BCC to ensure it takes care to protect and develop its own workforce. But more than this, it must take a position and lead on diversity in a whole city workforce across the voluntary and private sectors.

10. How do we ensure meaningful BME voice and influence is an integral part of decision making?

There is a wider question that must be taken into account. For the purposes of this exercise, voice only means something when it is combined with influence. Influence is the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something. Consultations can be good but on such an important issue as a three year budget, if it's the only means of having BME voice heard and influence felt, it exposes the marginality of the communities to real city power. As a city:

- we must use this occasion to reflect on the fact that BME people are too often commenting after the fact rather than being at the decision making table.
- we must reflect on the low levels of voter registration and political representation in BME communities (and among other lower socio-economic groups) taking full account of what that might tell us about people's "buy in" to Bristol institutions, the social instability it might signal, and the measures we will take to remedy the situation.
- we must look at community governance structures such as Neighbourhood Partnerships which can remain representative or irrelevant to BME communities. If Neighbourhood Partnerships were vibrant and effective issues relating to situations like the loss of subsidy to St Paul's Learning Centre may not have arisen.

Other Concerns

Issue: There is not enough clear detail contained in the proposals and no explanation of the rationale behind some of the decisions – beyond the need to make a cut.

There is no clear sense of consultation / negotiation with BME groups/communities about some of the proposals that we feel will impact on BME communities.

We would welcome more evidence of Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA): people / groups / communities consulted with and if these have taken in to account the near 100% increase in BME between the 2001 – 2011 census, and the on-going projections for Bristol's BME population over the next 5 years. i.e. immigration to Bristol, possible increase in Eastern European communities (Bulgaria / Romania), increase in mixed race / dual heritage population (currently over one third of primary school age children).

Intersectionality

Issue: We would value recognition that BME people do not merely fit in to one category, that they have at multi-dimensional identities that cross boundaries i.e., sex, age, faith/no religion. The EqIAs need to be viewed with this in mind and avoid viewing BME communities as a homogenous group of the 'other'. EqIAs need to consider the diversity and complexity of groups that fall under the heading of Race.

We would like to see a clearer reflection of cumulative impacts: e.g., if there is a reduction in home care provision and also in the management of parks then what would be the cumulative impact under these proposals on a black, elderly, disabled person or a black elderly carer. Where is the evidence of this being discussed with groups such as Bristol Black Carers, Malcolm X Elders, Golden Agers, Avon and Bristol Chinese Women's Group, Dhek Bhal?

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA)

Issue: How have these been determined? Evidence of which communities have been consulted should be published, and where decisions were made by service managers / directors that there is no equalities impact then we need to aware of how this decision was arrived at. For instance, where are the full details of the EqIA that determined the proposal to withdraw the subsidy from St Paul's Leaning Centre?

It is important to understand the importance of the role of EqIAs. They are there to inform policy, not asses the consequences of decisions made without evidence based regard for the impact on equalities communities. In his ruling against *Ealing Council R (Shah and Kaur) v London Borough of Ealing* the Lord Justice Moses stated that Ealing Council had made fundamental errors when deciding to cut funding to Southall Black Sisters (SBS) in favour of one generic service on domestic violence for the borough. He stated that the Council had acted unlawfully in a number of critical ways:

- It failed to carry out a full racial equality impact assessment before fixing on the policy of a generic service on domestic violence;
- it failed to consider measures to avoid the adverse impact that its policy would have on black and minority women as pointed out by SBS;
- it failed to appreciate that there is serious under-reporting of domestic violence amongst black and minority women;
- it misconstrued the (then) Race Relations Act – in particular the need for positive action and the right to retain a name which announces the specialist nature of the organisation;
- it misconstrued the principle of cohesion by assuming that funding specialist projects will undercut cohesion.

9. Voscur response

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Voscur welcomes this opportunity to comment on the City Council's budget proposals and Vision for the future.

We are mindful that the Budget consultation process should be considered in the context of the Mayor's recently published "Vision for Bristol" strategy

There are a number of important statements and key principles contained within the Mayor's Vision that have significant merit and should be safeguarded and strengthened as part of the budget consultation process.

Key themes are the recognition that there is a ten year gap both in life expectancy, and a considerable gap in educational attainment between residents in the poorest and wealthiest neighbourhoods of the city. The historic underinvestment in public transport also disadvantages those people living in the most precarious communities in the city, which Voscur and its members support and champion.

All of these Vision statements reference the cross cutting themes of respect, care, equality, diversity, environmental concern and community empowerment as essential elements for a sustainable, vibrant and successful City where equality of opportunity is available to all, regardless of background, class, race, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

These powerful statements of intent are further supported by the City's Fairness Commission which seeks to understand the nature of Bristol's inequalities, review and adopt good practice from across the UK and implement policies that ensure fairness is everyone's responsibility.

Voscur however, also recognises that with resources shrinking the City has to be more inventive in tackling the challenges facing it over the next decade.

We welcome the development of a three year budget cycle to ensure groups have more stability and are able to plan ahead. It is also important to allow time for the city and its service providers to consider new approaches, collaboration, and delivery.



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We do, however, have some concerns that the consequences of a number of the current proposals could seriously undermine the ambitious and progressive Vision articulated by the Mayor,

We therefore submit the following response.

Voscur response to the Mayor's budget proposals

During consultation meetings, at Voscur board meetings and Voluntary Sector advocates meetings a number of issues have been raised.

Below we have highlighted concerns and questions that have been raised consistently.

Impact on voluntary and community sector organisations

We have identified that the following proposals will impact Voluntary and Community Sector organisations in Bristol.

- R-CC-001 – Reduce the running costs of council building (update policy on concessionary occupation).
- R-PL-022 Reduce Equalities Team budget.
- R-PP-13 Reduce discretionary competitive grant fund that provides seed corn monies for preventative low level initiatives in social care.
- R-PP-008 Increase the use of direct payments for care services.
- R-PP-024 Housing related support.
- R-PL-16 Reduce discretionary spending on trading standards (reduce consumer advice work referred through Citizens' Advice Bureau).
- R-PP-003 Review of children's centres and early years' support.
- R-PP-014 Development of the 0-25 services within CYP and H & SC.
- R-PP-16 Reduction in supported housing budget.
- R-PL-002 Reduction in preventing homelessness commissioned services.
- R-PL-002 Reduction of Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service Training.
- R-PL-007 Review of funding arrangements for Blaise Castle etc.
- R-PL-003 Reduce spending on crime reduction.
- R-PL-27 Community Transport.
- R-PL-29 Community Transport.
- R-PL-006 Community Investment Fund.
- R-PP- 015 Reduce funding to H & SC funded VCS services.
- R-PP-007 Reduce cost of residential and nursing placements.
- R-PP-020 Reduction in funding for home improvement agency.
- R-PP-022 Cease funding for a specialist support service for older people.
- R-PP-019 Reduce older people extra care housing wardens.
- R-PL-09 Reduce the role of the Sport and Health Development Team including support for small sports clubs.
- R-PL-025 Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's Learning and Family Centre.

- R-PP-011 Provision of equipment to reduce need for multiple carers.
- R-PP-006 Expand community supported accommodation to reduce residential care.
- RP-PL-018 Cease older people's warden and alarm schemes
- R-PP-021 Introduce charges for older people's housing alarms.

General

These budget proposals do not include the £49 million of efficiency savings to be made over the next three years; it is important that there is an opportunity to comment on these, as these will also impact external partners. Additionally no consultation means that there is no opportunity for dialogue and excludes the possibility of inventive solutions emerging from open discussions.

It is a concern that as a response to the question 'has there been any cost benefit analysis?' asked at a recent consultation meeting, the council representative acknowledged that 'No detailed business case has been developed yet with regard to the budget.'

Limited information about and rationale for the proposals has been provided. We hope that those making the difficult decisions will be provided with more information than has been offered to date.

The quality of the Equality Impact Assessments is variable, and we are concerned that no comprehensive cumulative assessment has been carried out. Additionally, the status of the Equality Impact Assessment is not clear.

What difference will the equality impact assessments make to final proposals?

It is important that decisions made are evidence based.

Children and Young People

R-PP-003 Review of children's centres and early years support

Children's centres provide holistic services to vulnerable families and children's centres in areas of deprivation are essential.

How will savings of £1,528,000 be made through changing the way the Council funds and provides children centres and early years' services, whilst ensuring that funding is targeted on families with the greatest need?

What evidence is there that reducing these preventative services will not have a cost impact on other services in the long term?

R-PP-004 Relocation of Youth Offending Team

How will the proposed move save £374,000 over two years?

R-PP-002 Home to school transport

In order to make savings of £1,281,000 over three years, what are the proposed new eligibility criteria and how will they be applied?

Neighbourhoods

R-PL-006 Reduce Community Investment Grants

Many concerns have been expressed about the proposed cut to the Community Investment Fund. Voscur has submitted a separate response in relation to this proposal.

R-PL-022 Reduce Equalities and Inclusion Team

Equalities services have already been cut back. At this time particularly, more scrutiny of Bristol City Council activity is needed – not less. For example, there is a need to ensure governors' boards and other representative structures have a membership that reflects the city's diverse communities. It is a false economy to cut back vital services such as equalities advice to schools and risking incurring costs later on in terms of equalities related complaints/tribunals.

Recommendation

This is not the time to cut the Equalities budget.

R-PL-019 Public Toilets

Reducing the number of public toilets will affect the city's most vulnerable people – particularly women, disabled people and older people.

Recommendation

Leisure centres, cafes, restaurants and shops should make their facilities available for the general public incentivised through a small reduction in Unified Business Rate and supported to ensure all facilities are fully accessible.

Discretionary spend – supporting communities

There is £2 million discretionary budget for Neighbourhood Partnerships. This should be reviewed and consideration given to the implementation of a new model of local democratic engagement built around neighbourhood VCS organisations which would ensure both a more cost effective solution to the need to provide a strong and influential voice for neighbourhoods and residents and provide a more effective counterbalance to the councils own democratic systems.

Recommendation

Review the Council's spend on Neighbourhood Partnerships and consider alternative models of local engagement and accountability.

City and Transport

R-PL-027 and R-PL-029 Community Transport

The proposed reduction in funding of £500,000 to community transport services is a major concern. A reduction in this service will disproportionately impact women, older and disabled people.

Recommendation

There should be no cuts to Community Transport without a review of all transport within the city, including reviewing public transport provision, use of cycle lanes, and consider the use of a congestion charge with the potential to subsidise public and community transport provision. Support should be given to existing CT providers to ensure there is an opportunity to examine and implement a new collaborative model to support a comprehensive CT service is provided across the city. This will ensure the Council's considerable past and future investment is safeguarded

Culture and Leisure

R-PL-010 Hengrove play park

Adventure playgrounds are places where vulnerable children play. We need to work together to guarantee the upkeep of Hengrove play park and ensure that children are safe in the park.

R-PL-025 Libraries

There is potential for St. Paul's Learning Centre to be managed and run by a number of community organisations in order to make it a real asset to the community.

Recommendation

This decision should be deferred, so that local groups have the opportunity to come together and develop a realistic offer.

R-PL-004 Museums and galleries

Proposal to reduce admin support to museums and galleries.

Recommendation

Explore the potential for charging to visit museums and galleries – using the same model as for Colston Hall.

Recommendation - Discretionary spend – arts, culture and leisure

Review the sum of £7.1 million currently supporting arts, culture and leisure – and identify potential savings here.

Whilst we support the city's internationally renowned arts and culture offer and recognise the additional income generated for the city by sustaining and improving this offer, we would recommend the Council should consider alternative methods of financial support including securing sponsorship and Corporate Social Responsibility revenue alongside crowd sourcing models

Recommendation - Bristol Half Marathon

Bristol City Council to set aside a number of places for people to raise funds for local (not national) charities and groups to raise funds.

Health and Social Care

There are a number of budget proposals that will affect older people including: R-PP-18, R-PP-006, R-PP-019, R-PP-023, R-PP-002, R-PP-024 and R-PP-022.

Recommendation

Given the number of proposals that will impact older people, it is important that R-PP-022 – reduction in specialist floating support is reviewed. Retention of this service will mitigate the impact of other proposed savings.

At a recent consultation event, in response to the question

'this budget will have a disproportionate effect on older people. The impact has not been properly looked at. We request a 6 month moratorium on cuts for a strategy to be developed with partners to minimise the impact?'

The Council representative's view was

'No moratorium is possible but there is an opportunity for discussion to work the cuts through.'

When and how will that discussion take place?

R-PP-013 - Health and Social Care prevention services

Recommendation - We would advocate the retention of this fund.

This discretionary competitive grant fund was retained by Health and Social Care to provide seed funding to preventative solutions in order to counteract the shift from discretionary services to statutory services. This fund recognises the potential long term impact of the removal of a number of discretionary services, and is a strategic fit with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

10. Voscur response to Voluntary and Community Sector reduction in community investment grants (R-PL-006)

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Voscur's response to Budget proposal R-PL-006 Voluntary and Community Sector – reduce community investment grants

Voscur is opposed to the proposed reduction in this fund. We list our reasons below and suggest alternatives.

In addition to the Equality Impact Assessment of the Community Investment Fund (CIF) provided by the Council, we add the following background information.

The wards listed below not only contain Super Output Areas which fall within the most deprived 10% in England, but have also experienced a significant population increase during the past 10 years.

Ward	Percentage population increase
Ashley	21%
Bedminster	16%
Easton	11%
Lawrence Hill	43%
Lockleaze	8%
Southmead	7%
Hillfields	9%
Frome Vale	8%

Bristol's BME population increased from 8.2% to 16% (2001-11).

5% of households are occupied by people for whom English is not the main language (Polish and Somali are the most prevalent after English).

The number of people providing unpaid care has increased from 35,344 in 2001 to 40,138 in 2011.

Home ownership has decreased since 2001 (63% to 55%) and private rented housing increased from 12% to 22%, an increasing proportion of which are likely to short-term and insecure tenancies. (Social housing tenants have increased and council tenants decreased.)

Diversity is increasing: there are now 45 religions, 91 main languages and 50 countries of birth among residents in Bristol.

Bristol's Quality of Life survey tells us that:

- the number of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood fell in 2012 (60% from 64% in 2011). It is lowest in deprived areas (52%).
- the number of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together is lowest in deprived areas (52%).
- 83% of people are satisfied with their neighbourhood, but residents in deprived areas are more likely to think their area has got worse in the last two years (36% in Eastville, Hillfields and Frome Vale).

Additionally, the cost of living continues to increase faster than earnings, and household debt is increasing, exacerbated by welfare reform.

Community Investment Fund

All of the community organisations grant-funded through the Council's Community Investment Fund are based in Bristol's most deprived wards, others are articulating the voice of Equalities communities, or providing advice and support to Bristol's most disadvantaged people or groups. Despite population increases and increased demand on services, there has been no increase in local authority grant funding to these organisations for at least three years, and some have already experienced cuts in funding.

The proposed cut of £300,000 to the Council's Community Investment Fund, may, on the face of it, appear to be minimal in relation to the Council's total revenue

budget of £389,000,000, but the impact that this fund has on the city's most marginalised communities must not be underestimated at this time.

Cuts to VCS organisations will have disproportionately large effects on the poorest residents. Much of this funding is for preventative work and work to build communities and community strength, participation and engagement; cuts in this work will create greater costs elsewhere and longer term.

In total the 2012/13 CIF investment of £2,057,500 benefited over 42,000 individual service users (of casework, advice and information services) and enabled a recorded 179,130 visits to community centres and city farms over the year. That is nearly 3,500 visits per week. Of the 43,000 service users who completed equality forms for the funded organisations, 40% were Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and 22% were disabled. The investment also secured over £1m in terms of the value of volunteer time, over £3.3m in moneys raised for clients (benefits & debts written off) and £3.9m leverage of other funding (grants and income) for local VCS organisations.*

The Council is looking for help and solutions.

Arts funding

The budget proposals identify a discretionary spend of £14,604,000 on supporting arts, culture and leisure, of which £2,362,000 is categorised as Arts Grants and Support. A large proportion of this funding is directed to organisations considered by the Council to be Bristol's 'key arts organisations', and includes theatres and arts venues funded for their 'contribution to working with young people; contribution to promoting better neighbourhoods and contribution to working to promote equality of opportunity as defined in s149 of the Equalities Act 2010'

Recommendation

Voscur recognises and values the contribution that arts organisations make to our city. It has been stated that for every pound invested in an arts organisation £3 is generated and that successful cities invest in the arts.

However, a compassionate city must not cut its Community Investment Fund, nor ignore the Social Value that it brings to the city in terms of cohesion and well-being, skills and employment, or additional resource in terms of volunteer hours, charitable funds, business investment, other public sector funding and contracts, and additional benefits claimed and debts written off [through the provision of advice services].

It may be that arts organisations are in a better position [than community organisations serving Bristol's most disadvantaged communities] to look at alternative funding sources, such as crowd funding (note the recent Cube cinema success), or consider sharing back room services, such as booking facilities. As

such, they may be more resilient and sustainable than those smaller, community organisations funded through the Community Investment Fund.

We propose, therefore, that no savings are made to the Community Investment Fund until savings to discretionary grants to arts organisations have also been identified, and opportunities for efficiencies, income generation and joined up working explored. We propose a 12 month deferral so that a review can take place.

Supporting Communities

A sum of £2,000,000 is identified in the budget proposals as discretionary spend on 'increasing citizen influence on local service delivery through Neighbourhood Partnerships'. In addition to the Council's support for neighbourhood partnerships and forums, included in this sum there is a £350,000 well-being grants pot that is distributed across Neighbourhood Partnerships in order to support small local projects, at the discretion of local grants panels.

Recommendation

We propose that no savings are made to the Community Investment Fund until a review of this discretionary Neighbourhoods fund has been carried out, so that efficiencies and opportunities for joined up working can be identified. We propose a 12 month deferral so that a review can take place.

*collated by the Council's Investment & Grants Team in August 2013.

19 December 2013

11. Bristol Women's Voice

Response to 2014-2017 Budget Proposals

Introduction

The Mayor of Bristol has stated:

'The budget supports my Vision for Bristol. I believe it offers great opportunities for education, training and jobs; improved transport; a vibrant city; a healthy and caring city, and a place with better connected neighbourhoods with suitable housing options'.

Women's contribution is central to this vision and needs to be made explicit in order to be made to happen. Bristol remains a very unequal city and if the Mayor's Vision is to be realised then this needs to be addressed. For example nearly 27% of Bristol's children are living in poverty, with the highest rates in Lawrence Hill and Fatwood; over 40% of women in Bristol East and Bristol South are earning less than the living wage per week (£280).

While we recognise the considerable difficulties of having to cut such a large percentage of the Council's budget and acknowledge that this is impossible without affecting front line services and employment, **we have considerable concerns that some of the proposed cuts as they stand will have a disproportionate impact** on women, particularly the most disadvantaged women in Bristol. These women have already been disproportionately affected by government policies on reductions in public service funding and changes to welfare benefits.

We therefore call for

1. Systematic Gender Equality Impact Assessments on the effect of budget cuts across the Directorates with regard to safety, childcare, social care, transport, jobs, training, neighbourhoods, housing, health and well-being.
2. Clearly defined mitigating action when decisions are found to have an adverse impact on women.
3. A high level equality impact assessment that considers the cumulative impact of cuts on women's poverty and violence against women and that includes the inter-section between gender, ethnicity, disability, caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, age and belief.
4. Transparency of information and baseline statistics that will better inform decision-making and prevent the further deterioration of women's equality in the city. This includes disaggregated statistics on women service users, service providers and employees of the council in the different sectors affected by the cuts.
5. Services relating to violence against women and girls should be protected and enhanced to meet the rising demand. (see below for motion passed unanimously at BWV consultation meeting)
6. A much better analysis by the Council of data relating to women's position in the economy and a systemic analysis of the role of the Council in improving this, with especial regard to living wage levels, planning, transport and the LEP.
7. A strategic plan for the embedding of equality legislation and practice within the work responsibilities of service managers and directors in meeting the Council's legal duty to promote equality which is now further threatened by the major reduction in the Equalities Team.

Role of the Mayor

Given the commitment that the Mayor gave when he signed the Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, and the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, there is a need for

tangible evidence that the impacts on women across all service delivery and commissioning and employment have been **understood and addressed** in a transparent way.

We would like to be assured that the Mayor as the decision maker in the budget process is aware of the “Brown principles”,⁵ specifically, his responsibilities to be able to demonstrate that;

- he understands and has adopted a conscious approach and in relation to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), i.e. can demonstrate full awareness of the impact of his decision on women ;
- the PSED was considered before and at the time that any of these proposals were considered and when any final decision is taken;
- the PSED has been and will be exercised, with rigor and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision;
- the Mayor as the decision maker considers the information provided and whether that is sufficient to be able to give proper consideration of decisions in the light of the PSED
- information has been provided on the impact of previous budget decisions when they have been implemented not just as they are developed and decided upon and that any decisions taken in this budget round will be reviewed for their actual impact.

There is a strong feeling that the Mayor should argues more strongly with Government for additional resources for Bristol.

BWV raised these issues in relation to the budget last year and we received no response to date.

⁵ *R. (Brown) v. Secretary of State for Work and Pensions* [2008] EWHC 3158 at paras 90-96

What BWV did to inform this response.

We reviewed the published documentation on the BCC website including the Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) and produced a commentary the proposals which was published on the BWV website.

We invited responses to the budgets proposals from BWV members, organisations and BWV website and twitter users.

Three of us attended the VOSCOUR Equalities Consultation on 11th December.

We received responses and questions from our members and these were put to council officers along with questions and comments from those attending a budget consultation meeting specifically on women's issues organised at the request of the city council.

Our comments below are as a result of these activities.

General Points made in the consultation

- There is no evidence that the City Council is fully compliant with the requirements of the Equality Act with regard to gender
- Services are being asked to justify why single sex services are needed (e.g. for women with mental health problems) when there is evidence that for some client groups single sex services are necessary e.g. homelessness and that existing single sex provision e.g. Eden House are oversubscribed.
- Bristol is already an economically unequal city (see information above)

Context

The effects of the drastic reductions in funding for public services as well as the changes to various benefits have had the greatest impact on women.

Women are the greatest users of public services and make up the majority of the employees particularly at the lowest pay levels. The effects of the previous cuts have been detailed by Bristol Fawcett in their report⁶ of October 2011.

Since that report was completed the situation for women nationally has deteriorated further and will continue to do so.

The Women's Budget Group⁷ has identified the impact on women and this in turn will have an impact on Bristol's economic health as well as an impact on individual women and their families.

- Cumulatively women have paid over 75% of the cost to household income from net direct tax, benefit, pay and pension changes introduced since 2010;
- Women will pay for 81% of the money raised by the Treasury in 2014/2015;
- Women will pay about 66% of the money raised by pegging the uprating of working age benefits to 1% for 3 years to April 2016 and of these women lone parents lose the most⁸. Some parts of Bristol such as Lawrence Hill and Filwood have high levels of children living in poverty. 75% of these children live in lone parent families 92% of lone parents are women⁹

The Budget Consultation Process

There is general concern that it is very difficult to respond to the budget consultation due to a number of key issues:

a) The scope of the Consultation

⁶ <http://www.bristolfawcett.org.uk/Documents/Economy/BristolCuttingWomenOut.pdf>

⁷ <http://wbg.org.uk/pdfs/WBG-AFS-2012-FINAL-%5B2%5D%281%29.pdf>

⁸ http://wbg.org.uk/pdfs/Distributional_Impacts_Welfare_Uprating_Bill%5B1%5D.pdf

⁹ Bristol Child Poverty Strategy 2011-2020

We are expected only to comment on the £43M of cuts to the budget relating to services. However we have been told that there are another £50M of cuts being considered which relate to the Council's "internal processes" including reductions in staffing, buildings and changes to existing contracted services amongst other proposals. It is clear that these will have substantial impact on women who are 66% of the staff at BCC and on the services provided. There is no information on this.

b) Information

- It was difficult to understand how much is being proposed to be cut from budgets because there was no baseline budget provided
- There is little detail on the proposed cuts – at most a sentence or two and these seemed to refer mainly to the proposals for the next year. Indeed we were informed by several officers that the detail for subsequent years is as yet not clear and yet we are being asked to agree all the principles and areas for the cuts
- There was a strong feeling that the information was presented on the basis of 'accountancy' principles, not on the basis of a true assessment of the impact on Bristol residents of the measures proposed
- Cuts presented under different budget heads do not show the overall or cumulative impact on single Voluntary and Community (VCS) organisations, which provide significant front-line services to individuals and families most in need of support
- Use of service categories as the only way of presenting data and consulting effectively hides the collective impact on VCS staff and volunteers and the communities they serve
- The terms used are euphemistic, e.g. 'home improvement' actually includes essential repairs to substandard housing (health and safety issues) and adaptations for people with disabilities.

c) Timing- no regard for the Compact

- The Compact between the VCS sector and Bristol City Council states that consultation periods should last for a minimum of 12 weeks in order to give time for consultation and discussion with communities and service users. The consultation period in this case is 6 weeks effectively reduced to 4 weeks because of the Christmas and New Year holidays.
- We noted that this is not the first consultation on strategy or service provision by BCC which has had its statutory minimum period cut and so note expressed concerns that democratic processes are being trimmed.
- We welcomed the introduction of some evening meetings after complaints of daytime consultation meetings only.

One respondent expressed her concerns:

"The scene was set for what I saw as a rational, needs led strong challenge to something that is deep cutting and emotive in terms of strategy, policy formation and how services will fall within the city. I left feeling particularly perturbed that not only is the consultation shortened but most of the detail still remains outside the public domain - when the cuts over the 3 years are set to transform the delivery of services so drastically. How can there be any significant feedback, engagement, consultation or challenge within such a framework? We are dealing with legal duty for which the council, cuts excepted or accepted, still have to detail compliance! "

Cumulative Impact Assessment

We welcome the recognition that a cumulative impact assessment is needed however we did not find it helpful in its current form. A more useful approach would be to identify a particular group of people and see how the cuts as a whole affect them, not look at one cut and see how many groups are affected. We would expect to see this cumulative assessment to include the national welfare benefit changes and the previous BCC budget cuts.

The impact of any given cut will vary depending on the history of previous cuts, the need it's meeting, and availability of alternatives, not just its amount. E.g.

- Is it core funding?
- Is it essential for a service to be delivered in a partnership?
- Is there spare capacity or is the service already cut to the bone? – Womankind proposed 10% cut may lead to closure (impact on refugee women, deaf women, trafficked women).
- Is the need for a service increasing? For example, demand for sexual abuse counselling has increased by 20% in the last 12 months due to national media coverage; however, The Green House proposed cut is 10%

We appreciate the difficulty of measuring the impact of preventative work, and of its social value, and the impact of its loss. There is a need to develop adequate measures for this in the longer term and lack of them at the moment.

We understand that the Fairness Commission is looking at these areas and we want an assurance that the gender dimension of fairness will be considered by this body.

Equality Impact Assessments

We do not think that the information in the attached Equality Impact Assessments provides sufficient information about the impact on women in particular on BME, disabled, older or economically disadvantaged women. Indeed the concept that people can, and indeed do, belong to more than one protected group appears to be absent.

There is a consistent lack of understanding about what is meant by "people who share a particular protected characteristic". Many of the EIAs use people with a protected characteristic to mean traditional equality groups, thereby failing to understand that we all have protected characteristics – ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age and belief.

With few exceptions although women are identified as the major users of services and of staff members they are not considered as likely to suffer any disadvantage. Disabled, older and BME people have a gender too. In order to make a proper assessment of adverse impact, or indeed to address or mitigate the specific and cumulative affects of the proposals, it is necessary to address more than one protected characteristic at a time. Even if this information is not available some assumptions could be made.

For example the EIA on the Reduction of Community Safety Grants provides information from a user survey that almost 80% of users are women and then identifies the major impacts as on disability and age – there is no mention of gender. Presumably most of those older and disabled people are women so why is this not identified?

As we said last year we can only describe the tone of the EqlAs as "pollyannaesque" in that cutting large swathes from particular budget heads is presented as a benefit to equalities as the services will be "better targeted". Apart from what this says about the existing service provision it is hard to belief that such massive cuts will have a positive effect on all who share protected characteristics. Indeed in the case of the changes to Home Care we feel that women are going to be considerably disadvantaged.

There is little indication even where an adverse impact has been identified that any mitigating action has been considered let alone put in place.

Commissioning

Several points were raised in relation to commissioning of services both as it affects VCS organisations and in general.

- We would like to be assured that gender equality issues are considered at the drafting stage, when the bids are assessed and in monitoring delivery. We were unable to get any information on how this is currently done.
- Cost of commissioning- can cost £70k "per lot" and there may be 6-7 "lots" in the domestic abuse commissioning process

- Opportunity for new organisations/services whatever system is introduced must allow new organisations who are not currently providers to be able to offer services e.g. services to support street sex workers.
- Time and costs involved in commissioning process for Small and Medium Sized Organisations – the commissioning process is elaborate and lengthy and takes the focus away from service delivery to existing clients
- Fair treatment of staff- home care workers on minimum wage, zero hour contracts, lack of flexibility for women with children, no transport costs paid (unclear how 11-12 zones as proposed will really address this)

Employment

Women's unemployment has risen at a faster rate than that of men and in particular the unemployment rates of older women. The budget proposals will affect many women in this age group.

Although some of the EqlAs identify that women staff will be disproportionately affected, for example in Home Care, there is no information or even an estimate of how many women staff will be affected by the budget as a whole. There is also no indication of any alternatives which have been considered or any mitigating action put in place to address what we assume will be a disproportionate impact on women and in particular on women staff aged over 50.

In the absence of information on how the £50M budget reductions arising from the Change programme we are unable to comment on the impacts of this. Where there is information contained in the EqlAs, apart from ICT and Fleet management, all the areas identified employ a majority of women. Overall women hold 61.75% of the posts identified however the impact on women is not identified. Women's unemployment, particularly for women over 50 has increased at a faster rate than that of men therefore we would want to see some targeting of support for women to enter new employment.

Comments on specific proposals

Children's Centres and Early Years Support

The reduction of funding in this area will have a major adverse impact on women.

There will be less childcare delivered at children's centres and no additional hours over the free hours. The EIA suggests that there will be sufficient flexible and affordable provision in other settings but this is not evidenced and anecdotally we know that many women in different parts of the city have difficulty accessing suitable, affordable childcare at present.

Although there is still some availability of wrap around childcare at some children's centres, it has been reduced and with budget cuts will be further reduced at a time when increasing number of women are required to look for work and enter the labour market. From January 2014, single parents with children aged 3-4, over 90% of whom are women, will be subject to mandatory work related activities and will need childcare to fulfill this criteria.

Children's Centres were already particularly hard hit when Sure Start funding which was ring-fenced, changed to the Early Intervention Grant (EIG), which went into the Council's general budget. We need much greater transparency on how the EIG is being utilised and the extent to which it has cut back the the provision of childcare.

The reduction in the training budget will adversely affect BME women but there is no suggested mitigation.

The EIA suggests that the targeting of services to children in greatest need will benefit those from equality communities but this is not evidenced.

In Bristol the birth rate has increased by 22% from 2005 to 2012 (VOSCUR "Thrive" magazine, Oct-Dec 2013). We are concerned that insufficient regard has been given to planning primary

schools, health centres and Children's Centres that this large increase in the birth rate will necessitate.

Health and Social Care

Equalities Forums and representatives have struggled to work out how to feed into the Health and Wellbeing Boards. Much greater transparency is needed on how gender equality is being addressed given the high number of women both using and employed in the services, together with disaggregated statistics on minimum wage levels, zero hour contracts, terms and conditions of employment including training, transport, and shift work etc. Commissioning bodies should be embedding gender equality requirements into their commissioning processes.

Funding for VCS organisations

It is difficult to know the impacts of this proposal as no specific grants are identified. However the impact of any given cut will vary depending on the history of previous cuts, the need it's meeting, and availability of alternatives, not just its amount. E.g.

- Is it core funding?
- Is it essential for a service to be delivered in a partnership?
- Is there spare capacity or is the service already cut to the bone? – Womankind proposed 10% cut may lead to closure (impact on refugee women, deaf women, trafficked women).
- Is the need increasing, reducing (demand for sexual abuse counselling has increased by 20% in the last 12 months due to media coverage - The Green House proposed cut is 10%

Home Care Provision

66% of the service users are women, largely older and disabled women. They are also the vast majority of the staff although this is not identified.

The gender impact is identified as positive as more men may use the service and be employed it does not alter the adverse impact on women.

The reconfiguring of the service into zones may reduce travel time for staff. Where the work is already externally commissioned, workers who are overwhelmingly women, are on minimum wage, zero hour contracts, lack of flexibility for women with children, no transport costs paid. It is unclear how the move to 11-12 zones as proposed will really address these issues. Lesbians and transgendered people are not receiving a service suitable for their needs. How is this to be delivered in the new contract?

Public Toilets

The closure of 21 out of 22 public toilets impacts on women – women, both after childbirth and as older women are more likely to experience bladder problems. Women, as prime carers of young children also need to rush their infants to toilets, and have quick access to a nappy changing facilities. Women won't use the business public toilets as we don't know when /where they are available, they may not be open in the evenings and there are likely to be less of these outside of the city centre. The business, i.e. a pub, may not be suitable for BME women or children to use. Homeless women may feel particularly uncomfortable, or indeed be prevented from, using toilets in businesses. There will also be no oversight of the standard of cleanliness and hygiene.

Community Transport

Community Transport

Nearly 80% of users of this service are women from the users' survey conducted last year.

There will clearly be an impact on women who are disabled and/or older but no gender impact is identified.

This proposal will mean that many older and disabled women will not be able to go out at all and as women are generally poorer in old age than men their alternative options are much reduced.

The social impact of this issues, e.g. loneliness and social isolation, is not addressed.

Reduce local bus service subsidy

This funds late night and early morning bus services. Although the usage is almost equal 51% women 49% men women are less likely to have access to alternative transport.

Review Home to school transport

The EIA identifies an impact on carers of increased costs and time affecting working and social life. Single parents will be most affected, 90% of whom are women.

Safer Bristol – reduce spending on crime reduction projects

This budget includes the commissioning for services on domestic and sexual violence and hate crime. There may be an impact on women's ability to access these services and be supported by them.

The work with perpetrators may cease leaving no provision of this kind in Bristol.

COMPOSITE STATEMENT

"Chief Executives of organisations working with women and children in Bristol have documented a significant increase in domestic abuse and sexual violence in the last 2 years, at the same time as suffering cuts to the services they provide. Ninety percent of domestic and sexual abuse is still unreported, creating considerable overall need for services and support to abused women. Funding to domestic abuse and sexual violence services must not be reduced any further. If funding is reduced the cost to the city overall will increase. Effective support of abused women and children in the city requires an increase in funding".

Community Investment Grants

A reduction in the funding for Equality Voice and Influence may mean that there will be no specific representation of women's issues and concerns. Alternative delivery models may dilute this aspect – the lack of which is obvious in the attached EIAs.

Stronger Community grants fund organisations where 64% of the service users are women 59% of visitors to Centres for Community Action are women.

Funding for Neighbourhood Partnership (NP) budgets is being protected but the Voice and Influence budget is to be cut. Why? How inclusive are NPs? The answer given at the Wed event was that communities need to be on board to deal with these cuts in services. This does not make sense, particularly for women across the city. NP meetings are not accessible because of their timings. They are not regularly attended by parents in Easton and Lawrence Hill as meetings are at 6 pm/7pm. It should be a key directive for the Council to get women involved in politics. It often seems to be enough to have just 1 woman in the room. This is not enough. Lived experiences need to be represented. This is the responsibility of the local authority. Reducing the Equalities Team makes this harder. One BWV member stated that she is an Equalities Rep on a NP. This member felt that this is the most difficult meeting that she attends as they are "mono-cultural meetings with priorities being about cars and views that "domestic violence does not happen here". We believe that it is a complete failure to put all equalities influence there.

Reduction in Equality Unit

Concern was expressed at the proposal to cut 40% of this budget and to "mainstream" equalities throughout the council as an alternative. We see no evidence that the services who have completed EqlAs understand their legal duty to identify, address and mitigate impacts particularly in relation to gender and no evidence has been provided to support that the Council locally is able to sustain its ability to meet its legal duty to promote equality with the reductions proposed.

Conclusion

We appreciate the difficulty of making such large reductions in the BCC budget. However on the information we have been given, we do not believe that the Public Sector Equality Duty has been complied with as the impacts on women have not been assessed adequately. Any decisions taken on the budget will therefore be made without the Mayor and councillors having a full understanding of the impacts of the proposals on women in the city and without full transparency for Bristol's citizens.

The foreshortened time for consultation has reduced our ability to consult as widely as we would have wished and therefore to assess in more detail the likely impact of these proposals.

We will continue to represent our views and any subsequent meetings on the budget.

12. Bristol Junior Chamber of Commerce and shipping



Budget Consultation 2014 - 17 (G27)
Bristol City Council
Freepost (SWB535)
Bristol
BS1 5BR

30 December 2013

Dear Sirs

Bristol City Council Budget Consultation

The Bristol Junior Chamber (the **BJC**) is a membership organisation representing over 100 young professionals from across the city. Our membership is representative of each of the major Bristol business sectors – including aerospace, engineering, defence, professional services (legal, finance, consultancy and real estate), start-up / SMEs and creative and digital media – in addition to key charities, community groups and other stakeholders. With over 60 years of history as a Bristol institution the BJC is pleased to be able to contribute to the leadership of the City and, in this instance, in the consultation on the Bristol City Council draft three year budget.

Introduction

The BJC constituted a small working group (the **Working Group**) consisting of professionals from real estate, management consultancy, legal and finance to consider the budget consultation documents. The initial reflection of the Working Group was in respect of the inability to consider any of the proposals in sufficient detail. The Working Group was unable to fully analyse, understand and comment on the draft proposals given the lack of detailed information in the consultation documents. As a consequence this submission is therefore merely a high level assessment of the proposed budget, hence using this letter as the form of our submission and not the provided online form. The BJC would welcome the opportunity of considering the full detailed budget in the future in order to provide substantive feedback on the suggested budget.

Consultation Submissions

Following meetings of the Working Group the BJC submits the following comments to the consultation:

1. The proposed movement of £1m of current revenue spending to the capital budget was noted. The Working Group understands this movement to be in respect of staffing costs and therefore expresses concern about the potential for increased revenue-type spending within the capital budget. The BJC understands that the draft capital budget will be made available for public consultation in 2014 and, as such, it will reserve further comment until this information is made available;
2. The Working Group welcomed the focus on increased business efficiency but was unable to fully appraise the total anticipated saving due to the lack of detailed forecasting;
3. The Working Group questioned the impact of the Autumn Statement on the draft budget, specifically in respect of the cap on business rates

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Commerce and Shipping
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President
Tom Selway

Vice President
Karl Brown

Immediate Past President
Savita Custead

Treasurer (Director)
Robert Nye

Policy and Influence
Darren Jones

Education and Skills
Georgina Baxter

Business and Enterprise
Michael Holder

Social and Events
Mark Langmead

Marketing
Gemma-Jane Ogden

Membership
Rob Barnes

Company Secretary
Michael Pearce

Honorary Secretary
Alice Peacock

and the underlying assumptions in the draft budget of a £3,000,000 increase in Bristol business rates over the lifetime of the draft budget. The Working Group further questioned the potential for a referendum in respect of the proposed rise in council tax and the associated costs of such an exercise;

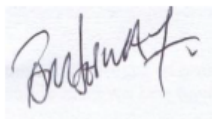
4. The Working Group welcomed recent announcements in respect of the management of the council property portfolio but noted the lack of information within the consultation documents in respect of the costs this programme (i.e. in closing or selling/leasing redundant offices, in negotiating with existing tenants and in the professional service costs of such a change in property management); and
5. The Working Group welcomed the council's recent move from being a provider of services to being a commissioner of services. The Working Group did however have reservations in respect of the quality of outsourcing contracts, the management and enforcement of service levels and the potential impact on front line services. The Working Group further discussed the council's desire to increase collaboration with the private sector, noting that such collaboration would be better placed with "corporate friendly" costs (such as the running of museums, art galleries and city events) over "non-corporate friendly" costs (such as front line youth or social services, for example). A consideration of the potential shifts in proposed budget cuts to reflect this reality would be welcomed. The Working Group would recommend investment in better corporate partnership management at the council.

Conclusions

The BJC welcomed the governing principals and their alignment with the vision of the Mayor and noted the consistency between the budget proposals, the principals and the Mayor's vision. The BJC recognises the significant challenge that the council faces – especially in respect of the split between statutory and discretionary revenue spending and the potential for future income streams – and we will continue to support the council, its leadership and other stakeholder groups (such as the Local Enterprise Partnership) in ensuring the best for Bristol.

The BJC looks forward to considering the next draft of the revenue budget further to the full meeting of the council and the proposed capital budget in due course.

Yours Faithfully



Tom Selway

President

For and on behalf of the Bristol Junior Chamber of Commerce and Shipping

CC: George Ferguson, Mayor of Bristol
Zoe Sear, Head of Mayoral Partnerships and Initiatives
Nicola Yates OBE, City Director
James Durie, Business West
Karl Brown, Vice President and President-Elect, Bristol Junior Chamber of Commerce and Shipping

13. Mina Road Park Group

R-PL-005

Reduce specification for parks , grounds maintenance contracts .

Mina Rd Park Group (MRPG) has been monitoring maintenance of all BCC green space in St.Werburghs since 1997 .Contract performance has , at best , been just adequate ,and limited to essential work as detailed in the proposal. We don't believe it's possible to reduce standards further ,but would point out that ,in our long experience , the specifications aren't worth the paper they're written on. It should therefore be possible to make considerable savings on drawing up and running maintenance contracts ,but not until contract renewal in 2015 . Emergency cuts to front - line services will have knock on effects which may never be reversed.

R-PL- 012 Trees

MRPG is in favour of tree planting ,but is concerned some of the implications of the PIPs project have not been thought through in this consultation. The majority of the 36000 trees will be whips ,which have a higher wastage rate than standard trees ; their contribution to doubling Bristol's tree canopy may prove lower than expected . Additionally ,planting trees in verges and parks will inevitably lead to a more complicated gras -cutting regime ,and no thought whatsoever seems to have been given to the costs of this.

R-PL-019 Public Toilets

MRPG objects strongly to the proposal to close the Grade 11 listed Urinal .There are no alternative public facilities at all in this area ; further ,the urinal was completely restored 6 years ago with a £25000 English Heritage grant . Closure will cause dereliction ,and MRPG has contacted English Heritage (SW office) and BCC Conservation Officer about this proposal .

14. Westbury on Trym Primary Care Centre



WESTBURY ON TRYM
Primary Care Centre

Dr Philip McCarthy – GP Partner
Dr Michael Cohen – GP Partner
Dr Luke Koupparis – GP Partner
Dr Samantha Morgan – GP Partner
Dr Amy Davies – GP Partner
Dr Jenny Eachus – GP Partner
Dr Lucinda Bench – GP Associate
Dr Claire Darley – GP Associate

RECEIVED

17 DEC 2013

NCD -

www.westburysurgery.com

Westbury Hill
Westbury on Trym
Bristol
BS9 3AA

Tel: 01179 623406
Fax: 01179 621404

Our ref: MC/dsb

05-Dec-2013

Mr George Ferguson
Mayor of Bristol
City Hall
College Green
Bristol
BS1 5TR

Dear Mr Ferguson

I am appalled to hear that there is a proposal to close several public toilets in Bristol. I am speaking as a local GP and someone who has a special interest in Gastroenterology. The patients that I see may well have problems with either continence or intractable diarrhoea and sometimes are taken short. I think that this is a very regrettable step for a civilised community and would strongly object to this proposal. *regrettable*

I hope you will take my views into consideration when you consider these closures and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Dr Michael Cohen

15. The Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust



THE CLIFTON SUSPENSION BRIDGE TRUST

Bridge Master
David Anderson
Clifton Suspension Bridge
Bridge Road, Leigh Woods, Bristol, BS8 3PA

Bridge Master: 0117 9731579
Fax: 0117 9734152
General enquiries and toll cards: 0117 9738008

Clerk to the Trustees
Tim Baines
Clifton Suspension Bridge
Bridge Road, Leigh Woods,
Bristol, BS8 3PA

Telephone: 01242 806949

Mr George Ferguson
The Mayor's Office
Bristol City Council
City Hall
College Green
Bristol
BS1 5TR

20 December 2013

Dear Mr Ferguson,

BUDGET CONSULTATION – PUBLIC TOILET CLOSURES

The Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust object to the closure of the Suspension Bridge Road public toilets. They are very important to a lot of people and are well used. Even when the Trust's new Heritage & Learning Centre is open in 12 months' time, it will only provide facilities for visitors who go into the new Centre. That will certainly not mean the Suspension Bridge Road toilets are no longer needed. We believe there are in excess of 500,000 visitors per year to the Bridge, and we predict that 80% of them will not go into the new Centre, and in many cases will not actually cross the bridge into North Somerset.

The existing toilets of course serve the general area of the Downs, the playground, etc, not just visitors to the bridge. The many local people who take their friends on walks around the Downs, across the bridge, through Ashton Court and Leigh Woods will, without public toilets en route, be less keen to do so. One must also not forget the regular assembly of people on the Downs in this area, often for several hours, to enjoy the balloon fiesta, fireworks, picnics or other events. Furthermore, the location is a regular stop-off for sponsored walks and cycle rides, both short and long distance including a surprising number of Land's End to John O' Groats journeys.

Many coaches – in some cases long distance – drop off their passengers in Observatory Road, and the City Council is proposing to improve provision for this by providing a coach drop-off bay. Toilets near to a coach drop-off are pretty essential – without them the destination, and ultimately Bristol as a visitor city, will be less attractive to trip organisers of all kinds. School visits to the Downs and the Bridge will also be less appealing to teachers, and our efforts to support learning about Brunel, bridge engineering and the Avon Gorge could be hampered.



The existing toilet building is probably not large enough to incorporate a café, bicycle repair shop or other commercial venture as well as toilets. Even if it were considered feasible, the marketing of such an opportunity, securing planning consent and commissioning building works would take many months or years, causing great difficulty if the toilets were closed in the meantime. And the biggest difficulty is that such businesses would have limited opening hours, and they would be tempted to restrict toilet use to those hours. What the public need is for the toilet's opening hours to be increased (ie open longer into the evening) not reduced.

In summary, the Trust request that the Suspension Bridge Road public toilets are kept open, and exempted from the proposed budget cuts.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Anderson', written in a cursive style.

David Anderson
Bridge Master

on behalf of the Trustees of the Clifton Suspension Bridge Trust

16. Bristol Parks Forum



Bristol Parks Forum

representing resident led
park groups and citywide organisations
involved in protecting and improving
Bristol's green spaces

Bristol 2013 Budget Consultation Response

R-PL-005 Parks

Reduce work specification for parks, ground maintenance contracts Re-letting contract in 2015 and reducing the specification of works in parks. This will enable essential functions such as, but not limited to, litter picking and grass cutting to take place in all parks and green spaces. Saving £500,000 in 2014

The BPF are seriously concerned by this proposal.

Bristol City has in the past been recognised for the high standards of its parks and green spaces.

In 2012 Bristol City was awarded Gold by Entente Florale Europe

In 2013 Bristol also achieved 12 Green Flag Awards for its Parks.

In addition Bristol has achieved numerous successes in the RHS Britain in Bloom competition, notably Achieving Gold in 2011 and Silver Gilt in 2010 and 2013 for the Large City Category and in 2013 31 entries in the RHS Its your Neighbourhood Category 12 of which achieved outstanding.

This has shown a clear commitment by both Bristol City Council and its residents to ensuring Bristol is a vibrant green city.

The BPF believes the proposals to reduce the maintenance budget by £500,000 poses a real threat to achieving the standards that have been hard won and achieved by Bristol City Council and its residents.

In 2008 with full participation of the BPF and friends of parks groups Bristol City adopted the Parks and Green Spaces Strategy. This sets out the minimum standards for parks and green spaces to include quality, quantity and distance standards that should be achieved.

With the proposed cuts being introduced in 2014 Bristol City Council may inadvertently put back the state of Bristol Parks 10 years when it was realised that the City's parks were in much need of regular programmed maintenance, investment and care.

Bristol rose to the challenge and we are almost at a point where we have turned the tide and with continued impetuous the parks and green spaces strategy could be realised. To remove essential maintenance funding would undoubtedly cause serious harm to our parks and green spaces.

Nature Conservation works could be seriously affected by the proposed cuts and the impacts have not been addressed in this proposal.

Without the current levels of maintenance parks and green spaces run the risk of becoming unkempt, unloved litter strewn areas that do not do justice to all the hard work that has gone before..A bleak picture.

We realise that in these times of austerity savings have to be made and with the help and involvement of the BPF and citizens of Bristol we are sure that savings could be made but not in the timescales proposed. The current grounds maintenance contracts run until 2015 and will be re-tendered during

2014. This is the ideal opportunity to look at how the parks and green spaces are maintained and explore options, but any savings would not be seen until 2015/16.

If the proposed cuts have to be realised in Bristol in 2014/15 then it would require short-term measures to be taken for that year. There would either be disproportionate cut in the areas of the City covered by the in-house teams (with associated job losses) or re-negotiations of the existing contracts, something which is likely to produce cuts to services out of proportion to the savings achieved.

We are, in any event, concerned that even with the opportunity to re-negotiate contracts a £500k cut would mean a fall in standards such that Bristol would have to withdraw from the Green Flag awards scheme, Britain in Bloom and other such initiatives and concentrate on providing basic maintenance to a much lower standard to all parks city-wide. Maintenance of benches and other park furniture would undoubtedly suffer. Commitments to fund maintenance for facilities funded by external grants such as the Lottery would not be met; meaning that some of this money might have to be returned. This would undo all the work done before to create parks of high standards for the citizens of Bristol and its many visitors that come to enjoy them.

R-PL-012 Trees

**Review tree planting and maintenance service All future tree planting will be absorbed into the PIPs (planting in primary schools) tree planting scheme (involving primary school children) which will introduce 36,000 new trees to the city over 3 years.
Saving £200,000 in 2014, £100,000 in 2015**

Tree maintenance is essential to the health of Bristol's Trees, This proposed cut of £300,000 over 2 years will result in the deterioration of Bristol Trees health, many of which provide an essential part of our street scene. Parks and estates already do the minimum amount of works required on trees within the parks so it is difficult to see how budget savings can be made without causing neglect. We are also concerned that all future planting is proposed to be absorbed into the PIPs project, thus resulting in no street trees or trees of any adequate size being planted using revenue funding due to the costs of planting such trees, the only such option in this case will be developer or sponsor funding. With the proposed savings and tree planting being absorbed into the PIPs project, there is also real concern that at the end of the PIPs project Bristol City will be left with no adequate tree planting and maintenance service.

R-PL-019 Public

Toilets

Review public toilet provision

Closure of 22 of the 23 public toilets across the city, except the weekend temporary toilets in the city centre and keeping one city centre toilet open. Increased promotion of the toilet scheme where cafes and other business allow customers to use their toilets and use of other public buildings in those areas.

Saving £500,000 in 2014

Public toilets are essential for many people, including children, vulnerable adults such as those with learning disabilities and the elderly who regularly use our parks and the provision of toilets is much needed. Without public toilets in the parks there is the potential for an increased public health risk and reduction of service user enjoyment.

Bristol also welcomes and promotes its parks and green spaces to the thousands of visitors each year who will require these essential facilities whilst enjoying our parks and green spaces.

We welcome initiatives that can take the responsibility of running public toilets and link these to cafe concessions where appropriate but must strongly object to their closure in parks. We are also concerned that toilets seem to have been shortlisted just because of their aspect towards a street, which shows no consideration for their need within the park itself.

R-PL-014 Parks

Review Environment and Leisure project team This team works with the Park groups and Environmental sub groups in delivering improvements and schemes that maintain and improve parks. This proposal will offset costs within the revenue budget and recharge them to capital schemes or development projects.

Saving £278,000 in 2014

This proposal is unclear and as such the BPF has some serious concerns. Section 106 monies have already been devolved for parks improvements to the local community. These funds are much needed to pay for the improvements and any attempt to use these funds for management purposes will ultimately mean very few if any projects are realised by the community. However we do welcome that all future capital projects should be fully costed to include BCC project management. We would also welcome competitive tendering for all projects above minimum threshold. It must also be noted that a team needs to be in place to enable this process of tendering and bidding for monies and no mention in the proposals of such a team has been made.

R-PL-010

Stop supervision of Hengrove play area (plus other Estates savings)

Updated proposal: Stop supervision at Hengrove play area so that it is the same as other play areas across the city (£120k); raise income through efficient running of kiosks across all estates (£80k). Review all Estates operation to identify further £100k in year two, not anticipated to affect Hengrove play area and subject to consultation next year.

The BPF cannot support any proposals that would adversely affect the provision of current play facilities of children. The lack of detail and in this proposal and how the play facilities will be maintained to enable the continued safe play of children who use the site needs to be addressed.

Bristol Parks Forum Committee
December 2013
info@bristolparksforum.org.uk

Bristol Parks Forum

Bristol Parks Forum was established by Bristol Parks as an umbrella organisation for community park groups and organisations in the city with an interest in their local parks and green spaces.

The forum is supported by Bristol City Council but acts independently and is the only 'community voice' that is dedicated to all of Bristol's green spaces. The forum's three main roles are to:

- offer an opportunity to share ideas and experience
- act as a consultation body for the Bristol Parks service and other agencies
- influence decision-making, including the allocation of resources

17. Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Management

Response to 'The Mayors proposed budget 2014 – 2017 ' from Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Management

About us

Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Management is a resident-led voluntary organisation working to improve the quality of life for people living in the most deprived areas of Lawrence Hill and Easton electoral wards. We are the legacy organisation of the New Deal for Communities and Neighbourhood Renewal regeneration programmes.

We understand the difficulties facing Bristol and specifically The Mayor in presenting a balanced budget which meets both Government and local expectations. As an organisation we are always keen to take a solution focused approach. We appreciate that some change is necessary and is not always easy. We are not opposed to change nor are we opposed in principle to finding savings particularly where this can be achieved by working more effectively and efficiently.

Geography matters

We want to see that decisions are made having carefully considered the immediate and cumulative impact on the most deprived and socially excluded communities of which our area is one. We believe the need for this approach is compelling:

- Lawrence Hill ward has experienced a very rapid (and much higher than average) increase in birth rate/population growth – 43% increase in population. Of the 5,194 additional children in Bristol since 2001, 40% of them are in Lawrence Hill.
- Lawrence Hill has double the number of people of other wards in the city.
- Over 50% of people are from Black and Minority Ethnic communities, many of whom have English as a second language.
- The diversity of the area is a great asset and brings many benefits but it also brings challenges mainly due to the additional barriers and discrimination BME communities face.
- We have double the city average of children with Special Educational Needs.
- We have the highest number of Disability Living Allowance claimants.
- Over crowding is a significant problem with large families living in unsuitable accommodation.
- In 2006, Bristol City Council's own research concluded there is not the green space needed to support the population and yet since then there has been a 43% increase in Lawrence Hill's population alone.
- Much of Lawrence Hill ward is an air quality management area.
- There are low levels of digital connectivity in our area which puts people at an immediate disadvantage. We understand that for many people digital interaction is easy and is more efficient but others will become more isolated, unable to access the services they need and further alienated from civic life.
- The impact of Government changes such as welfare reform will have a significant and disproportionate impact on this area.

Cuts to services such as libraries, children's centres, youth services and green spaces will have a disproportionate impact on our neighbourhood. Changes in the way services are

provided will also have a greater impact on our area unless this is planned for. For example, to report fly tipping and litter (real problems in our area) you have to speak to an automated message and select from a menu which puts you through to another automated message. This will, inevitably, be a barrier for people who have strong accents, are not confident communicators in English and for people who can't afford the call.

The national context and policy change such as welfare reform are also impacting most severely in Lawrence Hill and neighbourhoods like it. This must be considered alongside local decisions.

Through the Neighbourhood Partnership we have been raising our concerns about the level of demographic change. We therefore welcome (and would be pleased to hear about) the work the Health and Wellbeing Board is doing to understand the impact and implications in the inner city. It is difficult to understand why this work is being published after the budget decisions have been made, when surely it should be informing the decisions.

Making informed decisions

We welcome the opportunity to comment but there is inadequate information to really understand the impact of what is being proposed and specifically the impact on inequality and deprivation.

- There are significant 'efficiency savings' but with no information about what this means.
- It is unfortunate that none of the 'alternative' options have Equality Impact Assessment's.
- We believe two out of 68 Equality Impact Assessments make the link between deprived communities and geographic communities – children's centres and noise nuisance. Of course all of the decisions made by the council impact on neighbourhoods. We have already outlined why we think geography matters and the implications for our area.
- Changes to the Youth Offending Team, reduction in parks grounds maintenance and commercial waste enforcement are obvious examples of cuts that will impact disproportionately on our area unless there is a clear strategy to mitigate the immediate and cumulative impact. If BME communities are less likely to take up direct payments for social care this too will have a particular neighbourhood impact.
- The quality of information provided varies enormously - in too many instances it gives the impression of being a 'tick box exercise'.

Serving the city equally means levelling the playing field

With a focus on saving money and services organised in traditional 'silos', Bristol will become an even more divided city unless positive action is taken to prevent it. We are making the case for a more careful approach where geography is an integral part of decision making.

We believe the cumulative impact of Government changes, for example welfare reform, the cuts to services proposed by Bristol City Council and the significant demographic changes

are having a significant and disproportionate impact on much of Easton and Lawrence Hill wards. We would like to see evidence that this is informing decisions about the cuts and about how the budget is allocated over the next three years.

The budget consultation focuses on the proposed cuts rather than how resources will be used over the next three years. We would like to see a practical framework or strategic plan which clearly sets out how the budget will support the delivery of 'The Vision for Bristol'. We would like to continue to work with Bristol City Council to achieve the vision of a more equal and thriving city.

In conclusion

1. We want reassurance that The Mayor understands and has taken account of the immediate and cumulative impact of the proposed cuts on neighbourhoods as well as equality communities.
2. We want to see resources follow the need and deliberate, strategic intervention to tackle persistent geographic inequality as well as inequality between different groups of people.
3. We want future consultations of this nature to be based on quality information.

Please respond to Sally Caseley, Chair c/o Officemanager@eastonandlawrencehill.org.uk

Easton and Lawrence Hill Neighbourhood Management
The Old Bank, 108 Church Road, Redfield, Bristol, BS5 9LJ
Tel. 0117 903 9975
www.eastonandlawrencehill.org.uk

18. Bristol Disability Equality Forum

Analysis of Budget Proposals 2014-17

Introduction

Firstly, we¹⁰ welcome the development of a three year budget cycle, along with an opportunity to comment on some of it. We hope it will lead to some stability in the organisation and administration of the Council which, for several years, has been going around in circles 're-inventing' its structure and service delivery – usually ending up, or passing through, previously abandoned configurations.

We also welcome the Mayor's vision for a city that makes a clear commitment to those of its residents who are significantly disadvantaged:

["my mission is to make sure the world sees a Bristol where every citizen is participating in our city's success; and not a Bristol held back by the price of inequality." \[A Vision For Bristol; BCC 2013, Pg 5\]](#)

and the creation of a Fairness Commission.

Although we are not clear where that leaves the Women's Commission, we trust that the Fairness Commission membership will prioritise the expertise of, and within, equalities-led organisations and professionals from those communities about which they are deemed to be expert, wherever possible.

We further welcome:

- the use of EqlAs,
- the opportunity for individual Equalities fora to engage directly with service managers regarding the proposals relating to their area of responsibility, and
- that the Mayor's Cabinet and Strategic Directors have sought to minimise the impact upon some services.

Unfortunately, this has not always been to the benefit of Disabled people.

Whilst we have already written in this regard, we wish to formally reiterate our opinion that the consultation period was inadequate. Please see Appendix 1 for details of why.

Given that the Christmas break effectively took two weeks off the 6 week period, and that the Council has had a year to work on the proposals, people have not been able to justify why the proposals couldn't be available 6 weeks earlier, and thereby comply with the Compact.

We also alerted you to the fact that those Disabled people who needed alternative formats were excluded from accessing this already-short consultation period by the failure to provide: an adequate range of formats, a contact person from whom to request alternative formats, and the Easy Read document being more of a Plain English document and therefore not accessible to a significant number of people with Learning Difficulties.

We are therefore very disappointed that you declined to extend the consultation period so that you were not further disadvantaging Disabled people and believe you have risked being in breach of your PSED by your decision.

¹⁰ Please note that wherever the word "we" is used, it refers to all of our members who have given their opinion to us.

We also have some concerns about the budget and the Vision for Bristol, which we provide in overview, and in detail, below.

1. Overview - Vision

1.1. We welcome the creation of a three year budget but would like reassurance that the voluntary sector funded by the Council also gets the stability this offers – rather than the alleged 3yr funding agreements (SLAs) we currently have and the Neighbourhood and Communities Scrutiny Commission were informed do nothing to prevent an organisation's funding being cut.

This is significantly different to what we were given to believe i.e. that funding may vary within the duration of an SLA, but not be cut substantially.

It makes a mockery of SLAs as the expression of the Council's commitment to 3yrs funding cycles if it can, in practice, change its mind whenever it chooses.

1.2 We also welcome the proposal to increase Council Tax.

1.3 We welcome the wording of the priorities “at a glance” [[A Vision For Bristol; BCC 2013, Page 11](#)] and are therefore perplexed as to why Disabled people are not mentioned in any of the detail of vision, priorities or themes, beyond a single piece of data –

“Approximately 5% of children and young people in Bristol have a disabling condition and 7.5% suffer from chronic illness. Bristol has 10,000 children with Special Educational Needs – one-fifth of the total school population.” [[A Vision for Bristol; BCC 2013, Page 23](#)]

There is no mention of Disabled people as:

- workers,
- learners,
- beneficiaries of a 'healthy and caring' city,
- among those disadvantaged by the current transport situation in the city,
- contributors to and beneficiaries of 'building successful places' or prosperity,
- among those to be given greater access to arts and culture,
- or being given a voice or place in empowered communities or active citizenship¹¹.

We are not suggesting this omission is intentional, and don't expect Disabled people to be specifically mentioned in every section. However, no mention of them at all is causes great concern as it implies Disabled people's needs and contributions were, and remain, largely invisible to the Mayor.

Furthermore, it sends a message to all who read it that:

- it's only our older population that we should be caring for;
- despite having the highest rates of unemployment, we have no place in the future prosperity of the city; and
- ensuring Disabled people's access to transport, learning, arts and culture, etc are not part of the vision.

1.4 We are also concerned that the Vision for Bristol speaks only of communities in terms of geographical ones and therefore omits any reference to empowering 'communities of interest', such as equalities communities.

¹¹ The focus solely on geographical communities means our issues and the barriers to our inclusion will always be marginalised – as has been amply demonstrated by the current system.

2. Overview – Budget

2.1 One of the most disappointing aspects of the proposed budget is the lack of imagination or enterprising spirit applied to the difficult financial situation the city is facing, and the absence of any business plans or ‘cost-benefit’ analyses to evidence that the proposals will actually achieve their proposed outcomes.

We would like to have seen ideas as to how services could generate income instead of cuts – not by increasing existing charges, but by creating new initiatives. Where is the research into, and proper business planning of, alternatives to cuts?

Given Mayor Ferguson’s private sector experience and creativity, some are disappointed to see so little enterprise and business planning within these proposals.

2.2 With regard to services, the consultation documents are all about cuts with little or no idea how they will be achieved. They bear minimal relation, and bring little useful content, to the business of planning **which** elements will be affected or **how** the cuts in expenditure will be achieved. Nor do they provide the electorate with anything upon which to base an opinion, one way or another, as to the suitability of the proposed budget.

Officers’ answers to many of the questions about the proposed cuts in services have been ‘we don’t know because we’ve not yet investigated what should go and how this will be possible’. Consequently, with some exceptions, most of the impacts on services are vague and phrased as a ‘review’, even though the amount of ‘savings’ to be achieved is precise.

This is not to say Officers and/or Cabinet have not investigated what should go, rather that they have created this impression (and done themselves a disservice) by failing to indicate what options have been identified so far.

2.3 Disabled people are still being multiply disadvantaged by welfare reform and cuts at a national level, yet we find no evidence that sufficient consideration has been given to this when deciding how to implement budget cuts locally.

This is especially disappointing given the Council assured us last year that they would improve their consideration of the cumulative impact upon Disabled people when drafting future budget proposals.

We acknowledge that setting a budget in the current economic climate will involve taking some uncomfortable decisions. However, we find the impact of your decisions are disproportionate and suggest you reconsider some of the cuts, given:

- i. the Mayor’s and Council’s Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED);
- ii. the inadequacy of many of the Equalities Impact Assessments (EqIAs) - in significant part because they are generally written in isolation from other proposed cuts;
- iii. the huge cumulative impact of national and local government cuts; and, not least,
- iv. the Mayor’s stated priority -

“When balancing our books we don’t want to come up with proposals which affect our most vulnerable people or which stop us achieving our aims for the city.”

2.4 The cuts to Community Transport will have a huge impact on Disabled¹² and Older people and the main carers of children in disadvantaged areas. This impact will include negative affects regarding their:

- ability to work and volunteer;
- access to childcare, learning, arts and culture and to socialise;
- access community health services;
- mental and emotional health;
- physical health;
- dependence on social care;
- be a carer for older and Disabled relatives; and
- ability to engage with their neighbourhood partnership and be an active citizen.

2.5 Many of the cuts will result in additional claims upon budgets elsewhere in the Council e.g.

- i. cuts in community transport will make the difference between some citizens having moderate or substantial needs in terms of social care support - moving them from a category where the Council does not have to provide them with social care into one where it does,
- ii. cuts in community transport are likely to result in some individuals being unable to care for a relative or friend, currently and in the future – with the consequence that the Council will have to meet the ‘cared for’ person’s social care costs instead,
- iii. withdrawal of specialist floating support will result in some people’s health worsening which, in turn, will result in them having increased, not decreased, dependence on and entitlement to, social care support.

2.6 We draw your attention to the impossible burden the Council places upon the generic floating support service as the solution to an extensive range of cuts in services that the Council proposes.

According to the EqlAs, and conversations with 1st and 2nd tier Officers, this service – which is already over-subscribed – is envisaged as taking on an additional workload of supporting:

- i. those moved out of residential care;
 - ii. residents of the supported housing for those with Physical and Sensory impairments;
 - iii. those who lose access to the Home Improvements Agency;
 - iv. residents affected by the reductions in housing related support;
 - v. Older people losing warden support in Extra Care housing;
 - vi. Older people losing warden support in Sheltered housing;
 - vii. all those who lose their Specialist Floating Support Service.
- (This list may not be complete).

Furthermore, the Council proposes this without costing in any expenditure to grow the service to a size where it can support all the additional service-users the Council is planning to refer to it.

This is a prime example of the need for comprehensive business planning as to how the proposed budget will be implemented before taking decisions.

2.7 We have to question the reality of the stated commitment to be person-centred when re-assessing those in The Bristol and School Rd, given the Council has already decided how much it will save in the process. We are concerned that the lack of independent advocacy for the respective service users will result in them being less supported in their independence, more

¹² Please note that, from this point in the document, when we refer to Disabled people we are including all those who are disadvantaged by impairment, whatever the cause – including ageing.

isolated than they are currently, and consequently lead to a decline in their health and wellbeing. In the case of School Rd, we are further concerned that the estimated savings is based upon the cheapest alternative(s) rather than what is most suitable for the individual.

2.7 We are also concerned that those directly affected by the few proposed cuts that are specific, have had to find this out through these documents. We feel this is inconsiderate and caused unnecessary distress among those who have now heard about the upcoming changes to their lives through third parties.

2.8 There is a great deal of concern regarding the proposed cuts to VCS funding. These organisations have been proven to save councils at least £3 for every £1 they receive – a figure that, when he spoke at the meeting organised by Voscur, seems to impress the Mayor in relation to the Arts, but not in relation to the VCS.

The vision, priorities and proposals indicate that there will be an increased need for volunteers to help deliver support the Council no longer provides. However, especially regarding the proposed cuts to the VCS, there is a failure to acknowledge that this carries a cost to every organisation within which they volunteer – regardless of whether there is one single organisation recruiting volunteers or not. Volunteering opportunities will therefore be significantly lower than they could be.

2.9 The cumulative impact of these cuts and service revisions - on top of those already made nationally and locally - will increase the poor health, unemployment, poverty and social isolation of Disabled people of all ages to unacceptable levels.

For example, the revised Disability Living Allowance (DLA), called a Personal Independence Payment (PIP), originally aimed to move 20% of people out of entitlement to the benefit. What is rarely mentioned is that all of this 20% is to come from those DLA claimants of working age only.

On top of this, the change of the qualifying distance(to 20m) for the Enhanced mobility element means 51,000 fewer claimants¹³ will qualify for a Motability vehicle (wheelchairs, scooters or cars) to enable them to get around.

As there are no plans (legislative or otherwise) to increase the number of wheelchair spaces on mainstream buses) this means the need for Community Transport will increase more than the Council has predicted, among the working age population of Bristol.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Council does not cut its Community Transport Grants, subsidised public transport routes and subsidised fares on community transport vehicles and instead generates income to fund this by introducing a city-wide congestion charge.

Despite the Mayor's statement that this is the same as introducing 'residential parking zones' we wish you to note that it is not. The congestion charging we are proposing would enable people to park outside their own homes for free but charge to park anywhere else in the city, subject to the same exemptions negotiated in relation to the Mayor's residents parking proposals (see 5.13.1 below).

This would not only generate revenue, it would stop people travelling short distances in the city where they could easily walk/cycle/use public or community transport. It would also mean that all those travelling into the city would be using public transport or paying to park.

¹³ Department of Work and Pension's estimate.

3.2 That the proposed cuts to the Community Investment Grants' and (previously Health and Social Care) Voluntary and Community Sector' budgets are dropped and replaced by an appropriate 'fair share' of the burden being taken from the arts/culture and Neighbourhood Partnerships and Management budgets (see section 5.14).

The Mayor can then:

- a. Use his contacts, influence and expertise as an individual and an arts professional, as well as his leverage as Mayor, to replace this cut to arts funding by getting the private sector and wealthier residents to provide more support to the arts instead e.g. greater sponsorship, 'friends of' memberships, donations and 'patronage';
- b. Ensure more cost-efficient running of VCS organisations delivering direct benefits to those in most need by funding them from a central pot rather than increasingly forcing them to have to go to multiple neighbourhood-specific grants' pots to secure small amounts of funding – a wasteful use of scarce resources.

3.3 Others have also suggested that the Mayor protect the VCS grant pots by charging a relatively small amount for admission to museums by non-residents.

3.4 Further suggestions, put forward by others at the Voscur-organised consultation event, that we recommend you consider, include:

- cut Arts funding and support them to crowd-fund instead;
- the Council setting aside a certain number of places on Bristol's Sponsored Runs for people to raise funds for local (**not** national) charities and groups.

4. Vision for Bristol – Detailed response

4.1 As mentioned above, we find the absence of Disabled people in the text of this document, concerning – in what it doesn't say as well as in what message this absence sends out.

4.2 We also find a number of conflicting statements within this vision – especially in terms of communities and the voluntary sector, local control and city-wide priorities. For example:

[“We must implement a better system for supporting the voluntary and community sector in Bristol, with a re-shaped and coherent focus on our city-wide priorities...”](#)

Contradictory to

[“ensure that citizens and communities can have real influence and control over what happens in their area.”](#)

and

[“Cities are networks, not organisations”](#)

Yet,

[“neighbourhoods must have more freedom and flexibility to address their specific challenges for the good of the city”.](#)

We find these contradictory because:

a. For several years, the Council's funding of the VCS has already "focus[ed] on our city-wide priorities". Given that the vast majority of those funded already focus on city-wide priorities, the 'what' has already been addressed, leaving only the 'how' as the focus regarding cuts. This view is supported by the consultation conversations the Mayor and his Officers have participated in, where there has been a clear indication that the Council has specific views on how the VCS organisations it funds should operate.

Such centralised control of funded organisations runs counter to the vision of a city where:

"...citizens and communities can have real influence and control over what happens..."

b. The VCS, like the city, is a network. Consequently, when you cause a service or organisation to close, you impact other services and organisations within the network. This impact includes increased pressure to 'fill the gap', with no additional funding to resource it; increased unmet need and the consequences of that; the disappearance of services other organisations have been receiving from the ones that have gone.

In short, these proposals do not adequately take in to account that when you break individual links, you break the network.

c. By increasing the role of local neighbourhoods in who gets funding you create a system that, in very many cases, is not cost, or service, efficient. The needs of those minority communities that are not geographical remain unmet due to many decisions being based on the needs/concerns of the majority and leaves those who need a service not provided in the neighbourhood in which they live, are excluded from it. Furthermore, it will increasingly mean that those VCS organisations providing services over a number of neighbourhoods/citywide will have to put in multiple funding applications for services delivered in multiple areas where previously they put in one application and ran services in the minimum number of areas required to meet people's needs.

5. Proposed budget – Detailed response

General

5.1.1 We appreciate the Council's stated willingness to include the views of those with 'protected characteristics' within their final EqlAs. However, even taking this into account, we find the EqlAs are of variable quality and, in many cases,

i. lack relevant statistical information the Council does have or could obtain (e.g. the number of 'looked after' children it supports who are unaccompanied asylum seekers);

ii. omit to include data based on national statistics or estimates, where local data is not available (e.g. percentage of population likely to identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Transsexual [LGBT]);

iii. sometimes lack information that should have been provided to the officer conducting the EqlA;

and, whilst we welcome the Council's willingness to collect information from consultation respondents,

iv. rely too much on others to provide the content for them through the consultation process- especially as you have given so little time for people to provide it.

The absence of key information, for whatever reason, from the EqlAs is of great concern and needs to be addressed.¹⁴

We are concerned this may be a high risk strategy given the recent case law that, to take a decision without adequate information on the impact upon the lives of individuals with 'protected characteristics', is a breach of the PSED (see judgement against the government regarding the decision to close the ILF).

We will be responding separately to the (lack of) detail in the Cumulative Impact EqlA.

5.1.2 With regard to some EqlAs we are concerned that some 'Lead Officers' and/or Equalities Officers – perhaps due to having too large a portfolio – lack the knowledge required for an EqlA. This has worrying implications, for staff health as well as service users, especially when they are looking at decisions about service cuts.

For example (and unrelated to our views on the Centre itself) –

R-PL025 Eliminate subsidy to St Pauls Learning Centre and explore other options (Service Impact):

- a) omits to mention the use of the building by a significant number of Disabled people,
- b) the fact that none of the Council's other adult education/ community learning facilities offer the accessibility St Pauls Family & Learning Centre provides, due to the accessibility of the equipment, as well as the building;
- c) the uniqueness of the building as a learning environment for the most disadvantaged with a 'built-in' crèche facility;
- d) the likely impact upon BME and Faith communities of the loss/hiatus in local ESOL support that would result from withdrawing from the building;
- e) the uniqueness of the public access darkroom housed within the building.

All of the above was known to the Council yet none of it included.

5.1.3 We were concerned to discover, towards the end of the consultation, that a number of cuts to voluntary sector remain totally hidden in the paperwork provided e.g. Knowle West Health Park.

This goes against the transparency the having a consultation suggests and the commitment previously given by the Council to improve, not worsen, its transparency.

Service Specific

5.2 Children and young people

5.2.1 [R-PP-003 Review of Children's Centres and Early Years support](#)

5.2.1.1 We welcome the assurance given by the Mayor and CYPS Officers that there will be no reduction in the number of places and that any decrease in the number of centres will not include any centres that are performing well.

However, we note with concern that this EqlA clearly states that a likely outcome is that some of those in disadvantaged communities **will** lose their local Children's Centre. This appears to be contradictory to the assurances given.

We note that there is no indication as to who will, and will not, have to pay.

¹⁴ See Appendix 2 – Examples of weak EqlAs

We are concerned that the reduction in support for Children's Centres and the training of 'early years' staff will result in fewer staff having the of level of skills, knowledge and expertise in deploying them, that will be required to maximise the opportunities and outcomes for Disabled children - and those from other equalities communities that workers are not a member of.

The percentage and number of BME people in Bristol is due to rise significantly but this not discussed with regard to the impact on the size and spread of service required in the near future, or whether the percentage of BME people in the childcare workforce will adequately reflect those using the services in the future.

Nor is there any mention of what reasonable adjustments are needed to address the under-representation of men and Disabled people e.g. the suitability of bursaries to address this.

5.2.1.2 We are concerned that the information on proposed cuts to Speech and Language Therapy Services fails to state the amount of headline savings that are anticipated, by reviewing it, or how the 'unit rate' cut in this commissioned service is going to avoid impacting on the quality of the service and the number able to access it.

5.3 Corporate

5.3.1 [R-BC-001 Reduce support services across the council \(pdf, 165 KB\)\(opens new window\)](#)

The lack of information regarding what criteria are going to be used in deciding which 'support services' are reduced, and by how much, is concerning.

We note that Disabled people are under-represented in all of these services. Whilst we are conscious that the Council cannot 'pick and choose' who they make redundant, we find the lack of acknowledgement that Disabled people will be additionally disadvantaged due to the additional barriers they experience in securing work (inaccessible workplaces, ignorance/attitudes of those recruiting etc) unsatisfactory in what is an EqIA.

We also note that, depending on where the most redundancies fall, other equalities communities could also be significantly disadvantaged.

We therefore seek reassurance that there will be full consultation with equalities groups within the Council, as well as with trades unions, and that external equalities advice is sought when it comes to ensuring you are sufficiently informed to take decisions that do not unduly disadvantage.

5.3.2 [R-CC-003 - Ensuring cost duplication is minimised \(pdf, 313 KB\)\(opens new window\)](#)

This is a proposal that clearly has value.

To work well the panel will need: extensive training in areas outside of their (up-to-date) expertise; to give adequate weight to the experience and expertise of those 'on the ground'; and to ensure membership is not 'finance' top-heavy.

We suggest it is essential the Council ensures adequate expertise and understanding of equalities communities is incorporated into the decision-making.

This is not about ensuring familiarity with the legislation as that is available across departments; it is about a willingness to request, respect and accept specialist advice on the match between the decision the panel is of a mind to make and the lived experience of the equalities communities it will affect.

5.4 Equalities

[R-PL-022 Reduce Equalities and Community Cohesion Team \(pdf, 114 KB\)\(opens new window\)](#)

The number of corporate Equalities Officers has been cut repeatedly over the past few years. As a consequence the workload of the few remaining corporate Equalities Officers no longer provides sufficient time to keep abreast of the range of issues equalities communities are facing, or professional development in equalities expertise. We further believe this lies at the heart of why the EqlAs, whilst better than those of other Council officers, are not of a standard we would hope to see.

We are therefore deeply concerned by the proposal to cut the corporate Equalities team and further rely on non-specialist staff in departments, especially given the substantial cuts to those training budgets over the past few years.

The discussions we have held with Council officers over the past few years clearly demonstrates that they are not an adequate replacement for the specialist corporate equalities officers needed to provide meaningful equality.

With the national Equalities picture changing for the worse we believe there is an even greater need for specialist officers, not less.

5.5 Health and social care

5.5.1 [R-PP-005 Expand the shared lives programme to reduce spend on residential care](#) [R-PP-012 Review the use of School Road](#)

We generally welcome moves to reduce placing Disabled people in residential care and support the expansion of the Shared Lives programme, for those who want it. However, we believe that the individual Disabled person should be given 'Choice and Control' of what care they receive. Therefore, any expansion of the programme needs to reflect the demand from Disabled people, not the wishes of the Council.

Whilst we accept that the Council needs to save money, we are strongly opposed to the implication here that the Council has found a 'one size fits all' solution. We oppose anything that might lead officers (and others) to infer that the choice for the Disabled individuals concerned is now restricted to this or something even cheaper – especially as the individuals concerned have not even been consulted.

We also note that the Council intends to,

[“Expand the Shared Lives service by 30 to offer more placements to people within a family home as an alternative to placing people in residential or nursing home placements.” \(R-PP-005 Expand the shared lives programme to reduce spend on residential care\)](#)

Yet in [R-PP-012 Review the use of School Road](#) it is envisioned that this scheme will provide “52 people with a Learning Difficulty” with respite/short breaks

[“with the average usage being 39 nights per year”.](#)

We therefore question whether the increase of the Shared Lives programme to incorporate a further 30 opportunities will come anywhere near meeting the needs identified (especially given all the other plans for using this project) – even if it had been proven to be the best solution. Unfortunately this cannot be proven as there has been no 'cost-benefit' analysis of a range of options available.

We also find it worrying here, as elsewhere, that there is no mention of the need for, and provision of, independent advocacy to ensure residents are not unfairly disadvantaged. We believe this is essential if the Council's budget cuts are to be implemented fairly and equally.

As indicated in the Overview, we are further concerned that the Council had not even mentioned its plans in regard to those affected before publishing. Not only is this discourteous and inconsiderate, it is likely to have caused a great deal of distress to a user group the Council is aware are particularly sensitive to change and experience extreme distress when not adequately supported in receiving such news.

5.5.2 [R-PP-006 Expand Community Supported Accommodation to reduce spend on residential care](#)

Supporting people to live independently and inclusively is welcomed. What raises concern is the proposed reduction in specialist floating support and the short-term nature of floating support services.

Those specifically mentioned as primary beneficiaries of this proposal need support from individuals and service managers with specific expertise in supporting them. They often also need staff to spend more time, per session, and per duration of support, than other service users.

There is a real risk that the proposals to cut the hourly rates the Council pays contractors, the other pressures on contractors' to cut their unit costs, and the reliance on 'competence' policies rather than specific evidence of staff training and practise, will not result in a better service to the Disabled people affected but a worsening of their health and wellbeing.

The Council should therefore take action to mitigate these risks, including changing the assessment criteria, at tendering stage, to focus on evidence of practise rather than just policy and the provision of independent advocacy.

5.5.3 [R-PP-007 Reduction in the cost of residential and nursing placements for older people](#) [R-PP-010 Better value for money from residential and nursing placement contracts](#)

We welcome the proposal to cut costs by increasing supported, independent living. However, there does not appear to be any suggestion regarding longer term support to live this way.

We also believe that the cuts in Community Transport services and fare concessions will mitigate against the claim that access to family and friends will be ensured – unless the Council is proposing to use Council funds to provide, or require residential care providers to supply, transport 'on demand'.

We mention this because experience to date indicates that, without adequate accessible transport, independence becomes imprisonment and, in residential care, access to provider-supplied transport is very limited. With funding being reduced this is very unlikely to improve.

Similarly, those in residential/nursing care who need support to get 'out and about' are likely to be particularly disadvantaged by cuts in the hourly rate negotiated between the Council and the provider. Without adequate funding to provide residents with 1:1 support outside of the residential facility, we are concerned the residents will be restricted to activities provided 'in house' and/or rare group outings. This will mean they are not being supported to live a full life and engage with social/other activities of their choice.

Consequently, we are of the view that the Council must investigate these risks more thoroughly than has been done here, before making decisions about how they are going to achieve the required savings.

The proposal to get “[Better value for money from residential and nursing placement contracts](#)” also needs to be investigated in this way, with specific attention paid to quality of life, as well as of care.

5.5.4 [R-PP-008 Increasing the use of Direct Payments](#)

We welcome this proposal.

We note the difficulties the Council has had in getting as many people on Direct Payments as could benefit from it and wonder why they have ignored suggestions as to how this could be overcome.

The Council has a good track record of ensuring WECIL can support those who have decided Direct Payments might be suitable for them. What it has not done is ensure there is a user-led service to those who are not yet at that stage. This cannot be done by the same provider supporting those on Direct Payments as they will (and/or be perceived to) have a clear financial interest. Yet the Council has not supported any other provider to work on this issue.

People have very real fears about the responsibilities of being an employer that are further exacerbated when they see press reports of people falling foul of employment law. It is not until the Council addresses this that the drive to improve take up of Direct Payments will be successful.

We therefore take this opportunity to re- propose that the Council:

- Develops a wider range of options between Managed Budgets and Direct Payments;
- Funds a multi-strand peer-led project that will, for example, decrease social isolation, increase inclusion, and improve health and well-being as well as providing the space, time and peer experience/knowledge to address the fears preventing individuals taking greater control of their care; AND
- Increase both the hourly rate funded and the amount of Direct Payments that be held in reserve to a level that enables individuals to meet the ‘market price’ and save enough to cover all their responsibilities and financial commitments (this is not happening at present), OR
- Set up a ‘ring-fenced’ alternative to provide the finance required to absorb a change in each Direct Payment recipients’ circumstances (beyond their control) without falling foul of the law.

5.5.5 [R-PP-009 Commissioning Home Care against Reablement Outcomes](#)

We have little to add to the findings of the consultation other than:

- independent advocacy should be provided for negotiation of “[\[each\] individualised Support Plan](#)” to ensure it fully meets the needs of that individual;
- service users should not have their access to a specialist provider limited for purely financial reasons (otherwise it is not an individualised support plan);
- account needs to be taken of the need to adequately fund the ‘community provision’ you will be encouraging home care support service users to access;
- adequate account needs to be taken to meet the needs of the minority communities within a given contract-area, not just the overall area profile.

5.5.6 [R-PP-011 Provide equipment to enable one carer to work alone](#)

We only wish to note that this needs to enable that the service user feels safe as well as enable one carer to work alone.

5.5.7 [R-PP-013 Prevention budget reduction](#)

We find the tone of this EqIA and how it reflects policy across the board within the Council, of concern.

Just because the fund for 2014-15 hasn't been allocated does not mean there will be "no negative impacts".

It is well documented that money cut from prevention budgets may provide an immediate gain for the budget holder but that such a cut in the short, medium and long term has significant negative impacts upon everyone else.

It is therefore of considerable concern for the future sustainability of the Council's finances that it is conducting such a wholesale cut in prevention services across departments.

In the short term it also means that, when a good opportunity arises the Council will be unable to take advantage of it. As always, it is service users who will bear the consequences and, given the disproportionate load of national cuts Disabled people are already bearing, it will be Disabled people who will be disproportionately impacted.

5.5.8 [R-PP-016 Reduction in Supported Housing budget for physically and sensory impaired people](#)

We have been assured that all those affected are currently receiving social care support and that their care package will be reviewed and adjusted to provide the support they will be losing i.e. that the cost of housing support will be transferred by increasing the amount of social care support they receive.

What concerns us is that:

- a) some housing support tasks are not covered by social care funding criteria;
- b) there has been a suggestion that this support will be provided via non-specialist floating support, which is not a service provided to an individual on a long-term basis;
- c) the generic floating support service is mentioned as the alternative to budget cuts three or four times over even though it is over-subscribed already and the proposed expansion will not come close to meeting the amount of work this budget assumes they can take on (see further below).

Given the above we seek assurance that all those affected won't be disadvantaged by the change and that independent advocacy is provided to support them through the change process.

Again, we criticise the discourteous and inconsiderate manner by which the general public was informed of the proposal before the individuals who will be directly affected were.

5.6 Housing

5.6.1 [R-PL-002 Review of Strategic Housing Service: Reduction of Welfare Rights and Money Advice Service \(WRAMAS\) training](#)

At a time when advice services have been cut, increasing numbers of people are in debt, additional numbers are moving into debt as a direct result of the 'Bedroom Tax' (otherwise called Under Occupancy Contribution), more people require support to be able to get the benefits they need, more people are having to appeal benefit decisions, and fewer VCS services are available, this proposal does not seem logical.

The lower people's income, the more the Council has to fund. Given the national cuts to advice services, it seems the cheapest and most sensible way to maximise the numbers getting the benefits they need, is to train as many people providing other services as possible, so that they can provide non-specialist support and information.

5.6.2 [R-PL-002 Review of Strategic Housing Service: Reduction in Preventing Homelessness commissioned services](#)

There appears to be no evidence provided that:

- The currently increasing levels of homelessness have been factored in to this proposal;
- The proposals will make the savings indicated, rather than result in people living in more expensive accommodation ("larger alternative accommodation", higher support needs, etc);
- The Council will mitigate the increased risk of physical, sexual, mental or emotional abuse experienced by younger people (esp LGBT), people with Learning Difficulties and women of being placed in larger and/or mixed hostels 'alternative accommodation'/hostels.

We therefore recommend that the additional 5% cut is not included in the budget until such time as an adequate 'cost – benefit' analysis and full consultation with the service users concerned, has been undertaken.

5.6.3 [R-PL-002 Review of Strategic Housing Service: Accessible Homes savings](#)

We are extremely disappointed that the EqIA fails to mention the impact on Disabled people of having to find over £150 per item, per annum, for the servicing and emergency call out costs, once the 5-year maintenance agreement has ended.

For individuals who have several accessible home features this will escalate an already high annual cost e.g. one of our members who lives alone has a stairlift, bathlift, steplift, automatic door opener and specialist lavatory. The combined cost of funding all those elements when their maintenance is no longer funded by the Council, will be substantial.

This person is already on benefits, is likely to lose some of their Care Component when migrated to PIP and will have no alternative funding to meet the costs.

In addition, by the time all the 5yr maintenance agreements expire, the government will have fully implemented the roll out of cuts via Universal Credit, PIP and a range of employment- and income-related benefits. In addition, the government has clearly stated that they will introduce a 'benefit cap' specifically for Disabled people in 2015.

There is a significant risk that, once a cheaper installation and maintenance contract expires the suppliers will seek to recoup their 'loses' by increasing the charge to the individual concerned.

5.6.4 [R-PP-020 Reduction in funding for Home Improvement Agency](#)

Disregarding the agency providing the service, we have some concern about this proposal.

We also have concern about the lack comment within the EqIA regarding the impact upon Disabled people (including those older people receiving social care support).

Furthermore, there is no indication of which specific services will be impacted e.g. will the BME-specific services bear more or less of the burden? will it be improvements that the Council envisages the NHS funding (so people can be sent home) that will be withdrawn?

We note that,

[“The proposal intends to mitigate this impact by signposting service users to other existing services, such as generic floating support, welfare rights and money advice service and housing advice.”](#)

Given that the:

- Council intends the Generic Floating Support service to take on the work of the Specialist Floating Support Service;
- Council proposes cutting WRAMAS and housing advice; and
- the existing Floating Support Services is already over-subscribed¹⁵;

we question the viability of these ‘mitigations’ and note that this further underlines that, to propose a budget without far better cost-benefit analyses and business planning, is unwise and not sustainable.

We also note that it illustrates well what most perceive to be the continued failure of Council officers to check with other sections when re-configuring their service – even when that section of the Council is within the same department.

We also draw your attention to the fact that this is yet another aspect of the proposed budget that disproportionately disadvantages Disabled people of all ages, but especially Disabled people of working age. This is because those over 65yrs old are exempt from many of the welfare reforms.

We suggest you consider more thoroughly, how you can make this ‘saving’ without impacting on the poorest who need the service e.g. restrict funding to that work that is essential, that will address health inequalities and to those who cannot afford to pay.

(Please note that this is an example, not a recommendation, as the Council has not provided sufficient information upon which to base any definite recommendations).

5.6.5 [R-PP-024 Housing related support](#)

We would comment on this proposal, if we had been told what it was, other than part of a plan to ‘save’ £80000.

We also note that, yet again, it is envisaged that the generic floating support service will help ‘mitigate the impact’ by providing some of the support that will disappear. Given how many times the Council states that this service will provide the support being cut elsewhere, this seems unlikely.

5.7 Libraries

5.7.1 [R-PL-024 Re-design At Home Delivery Service](#)

It seems highly unlikely that:

¹⁵ “What is left is 1 generic service that sees 250 people for a short 5 months each so already in high demand: They will not have capacity to pick up other services.” (Said by someone with inside knowledge of generic floating support services. See notes from Voscur-organised equalities consultation event)

- those the Council has in mind to deliver books in place of the library service will have the time, expertise or knowledge to replicate the service librarians currently offer e.g. suggested reading, advice of best sources of information etc;
- that external agencies will be willing to provide more time for staff to provide the service without additional income.

5.7.2 [R-PL-025 Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's learning centre and explore other options \(Service Impact\)](#)

We support the proposal made at the Centre that the Council:

- move the St Pauls Unlimited staff into the building;
- sell their current office premises; and
- use the money this provides to continue running the centre, giving St Pauls Unlimited a year in which to conduct a feasibility study into the running of the centre by a group of local organisations.

5.8 Older people

- 5.8.1 [R-PP-022 Cease funding for a specialist floating support service for older people](#)
[R-PP-023 Review of housing related support provided to independent sector sheltered housing schemes for older people](#)
[R-PP-019 Reduce Older People Extra Care Housing Warden](#)

These proposals, on top of those already commented on above, yet again rely on a service to step in (generic floating support) and compensate for what is, cumulatively, a cut in over 8 services leading to a support-shortfall to a very large number of people.

Furthermore, even if the generic floating support service did have the capacity, this 'solution' is only offered for up to 5months yet this is a user group where the majority are unlikely to cease needing support i.e. those in Extra Care and Sheltered housing – a service that is only there for those who have long-term needs.

- 5.8.2 [R-PP-018 Ceasing older people's warden and alarm services within independent older people housing schemes](#)
[R-PP-021 Introduce charges for Older People's Housing Alarms in sheltered schemes](#)

We are of the view that the 'mitigations' proposed for addressing the negative impact of these cut are not sufficient. Yet again, it is assumed that generic support services will be able to 'fill the gap' – at least for those assessed as having 'substantial or critical need' for social care support.

Aside from the fact that the service does not have the capacity, the EqIA, avoids:

- quantifying of how many will be impacted overall;
- quantifying how many will not be eligible for floating support;
- addressing the potential impact of the loss of this support;
- addressing the potential impact on those who will have to pay for their alarm service;
- indicating how many will, and will not, qualify for financial support to have an alarm.

It also fails to address the health impact on many of the residents who will no longer have anyone around to notice if their health is deteriorating, they are struggling to cope, are becoming isolated.

Given the levels of poverty among Older people and Disabled people of all ages, and the escalating costs of daily living, this is a serious omission there appears to have been no attempt to discover how many people cannot afford to pay.

There appears to be an underlying assumption that some housing providers could/would continue to provide the service; this seems highly unlikely. They are also being squeezed financially and

many will only be able to take on the burden of the funding cut by reducing services/service quality. This will therefore need to be thoroughly investigated.

There will also need to be:

- a. ongoing development work with residents to not only assess whether they will be able to use the assistive technology but to build confidence in using it;
- b. given the cumulative effect produced by the other budget cuts proposed, there will need to be a raising of the threshold for who can receive financial help;
- c. an adequate cost-benefit analysis of the proposal using precise figures.

5.9 Parks

[R-PL-005 Parks ground maintenance retender of contracts](#)
[R-PL-015 Reduce Nuisance Response Team](#)

Our main concerns regarding these proposals are:

- they will make the creation of the byelaws recently consulted on largely pointless because there will not be anyone around to notice they are being broken, or to report to that they are being broken;
- whilst it has been said that the police will take the lead in this enforcement, because it is they who requested the byelaws, this is unconvincing – there are already numerous ‘low level’ crimes that the police do not enforce, on the basis that they don’t have the resources, and no evidence has been provided that they will act differently regarding byelaws regarding parks and green spaces;
- poor levels of ground maintenance and an absence of staff in parks could increase the risks to Disabled (and other) people – specifically, due to obstacles not being cleared and the potential for an increase in bullying, harassment and abuse.

However, we have been assured that PCSO’s cover this work and report when action is needed. We trust this is correct.

5.10 Public toilets

[R-PL-019 Review public toilet provision](#)

We welcome the undertaking provided that the Council will promote where accessible toilets are, as well as increasing the total number. We also welcome the undertaking to monitor the existing 48 toilets in private businesses that are accessible by the public more frequently and ensure they are both well signposted and maintained.

We do, however, find the decision to keep open possibly one of the dirtiest public toilets, and one that is difficult to access at certain times of the week/day, distinctly odd. We therefore recommend that you either, take action to improve this facility to an acceptable level or consult parents, older and Disabled people as to which is the best toilet to retain.

5.11 Safer Bristol

5.11.1 [R-PL-003 Safer Bristol – reduce spending on crime reduction projects](#)

We request confirmation that the proposed cuts in crime reduction services will not negatively impact Hate Crime support services and funding for PCSO’s, as the paperwork does not make this clear.

The EqIA notes that action is needed to “actively encourage” Disabled people to report domestic and other abuse crimes, therefore more funding should be allocated, not less, to ensure a quality service for the future.

The EqlA proposal to

[“use the recommissioning of domestic and sexual violence services as an opportunity to review work with perpetrators which tends to be relatively high cost per perpetrator”](#)

is welcome, given that we have been informed the scheme has yet to evidence that it is successful. Nevertheless, we are concerned that policy development cuts will mean no other, more effective approaches will be developed in Bristol.

We need further reassurance that the cuts will not adversely impact the other domestic and sexual violence services, which are predominantly delivered to women and children.

We are dissatisfied by the lack of analysis of how many of these are Disabled women and/or Disabled children and recommend that the collection of this data, along with information on what improvements their need to be in services for them, is addressed in the review.

5.11.2 [R-PL-008 Reduce policy development in Safer Bristol](#)

We accept this proposal **only if** the Council ensures this proposal does not negatively impact upon policy development regarding taxi licensing and sexual entertainment venues (SEVs).

As the EqlA states, reductions in taxi policy development would have a disproportionate, negative impact upon Disabled people.

Current policy still fails, in substantial degree, to ensure equality of access.

Only a few weeks ago one of our members who uses a manual wheelchair and was accompanied, was refused transport by three taxi drivers in a row (with the third eventually agreeing to take her) only a couple of days after having been refused by another driver. This was only a few days after another of our members has two taxis prepare to drive off as they saw a wheelchair user approaching the taxi rank. One claimed he had just received a call to pick up a passenger (then changed his story by saying he had to pick up his wife!) the other refused to offer any explanation, merely pointing to his phone as he drove off.

Enforcement can only do so much and, at the moment, evidence suggests that even with the best will in the world there is not a great deal under current policy.

We also note that sexual exploitation (including SEVs) is a serious, and increasing, issue nationally with Disabled women at additional risk. Given this, we need to develop strong policies to address emerging issues.

5.12 Sports

[R-PL-013 Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts](#)

Given that research has indicated that 90% of non-statutory sports and fitness centres are inaccessible, we only support this cut if a system is established to be proactive in ensuring that this provision substantially improves access – both to the building and to the services/facilities within it.

5.13 Traffic and transport

5.13.1 [R-PL-027 Review Community Transport Grants](#)

This is one of the proposed cuts of greatest concern to Disabled people and all those who live on or close to poverty levels of income.

Community transport is key to ensuring social, and economic, inclusion. It helps working people get their children to school on time, carers to visit those they are caring for, volunteers to get to volunteer, as well as Disabled and Older people get to the community services the Council's budget relies on them using.

The proposed cut will therefore ensure that many of the Mayor's priorities and his 'vision' for Bristol **cannot** be achieved. It will also be to the detriment of businesses in Bristol as cuts in community transport will, as well as isolating people socially and economically, force them to shop online, thus undermining the local economy.

The issues for Disabled people of all ages in accessing conventional public transport, have been well made over a number of years. It is not just about accessing a vehicle (although this is an important issue) it is about the difficulty some have in getting to a bus stop and about having to wait in all weathers, unsure if there will be a space available – because there is only one space per bus allocated for wheelchair users and this can often be unavailable due to pushchairs using the space.

Those using community transport are bus users who are often on low incomes, have no access to a car and must be amongst the majority of people for whom loneliness and social isolation are a real issue.

We, as well as Council Officers, are of the view that these cuts will lead to an increase in social care costs as more people:

- i. experience worsening physical and mental health as a direct consequence of social isolation and loneliness (as evidenced by a Geriatrician and national government advisor's estimate that this accounts for around 50% of NHS spend on geriatric services);
- ii. will need 'meals on wheels' type services;
- iii. will need PA support to get out and about as a direct result of the cuts to community transport buses and shopmobility equipment.

This concern is further supported by the EqIA that states these services are vital to enabling many older and disabled residents to maintain their independence, escape social isolation, have a better quality of life and retain or improve their health and wellbeing.

The consequences will, therefore, result in a substantial increase in social care spend.

To cut Shopmobility, as part of Community Transport, will directly impact income to businesses in the city centre and exclude many Disabled people – and their children - from accessing arts and culture in the city. This will further undermine the Mayor's plans for the arts and culture as a primary source for the economic health of the city.

As one of our members has said,

“one would hope that a council, despite the need for severe financial cuts, will never-the-less find imaginative ways of reducing expenditure that avoid penalising the most vulnerable of Bristol's citizens who are already coping with (the disadvantages of having) protected characteristics.”

As well as being detrimental, we believe this cut is unnecessary.

Instead, we propose that the amount the Council plans to cut from Community Transport is recouped from the income generated by levying a city-wide 'congestion charge'. We envisage a workable structure for congestion charging would permit residents to park outside their own home but require them to pay for an annual pass – possibly zoned passes whereby the closer to home

(and or the city centre) residents wish to park the higher the fee – and charges non-residents to park anywhere in the city.

Although there would need to be exceptions similar to those recently negotiated with regard to the Residents' Parking Schemes, this could generate significant income to offset the cost of continuing to support Community Transport, contribute to reducing congestion in the city and support the city's Health and Wellbeing strategy. It may even, in the longer term, fund the expansion of public transport provision across the city.

You should also note that this proposal, which we would be happy to discuss further, is **not** the same as the Mayor's current preference for Residents' Parking Zones – which are piecemeal – and have the benefit of 'economies of scale'. Consequently, the costing of the Mayor's schemes are not applicable to a congestion charge.

We are not alone in supporting such a proposal i.e. generating income from congestion charging instead of cutting community transport, as was indicated at the consultation organised by Voscur.

You may also wish to note that it would take some cars off the road in favour of cycling and public transport and, in so doing, contribute to the city's status as a 'Green City'.

However, for it to work, it will need a 'can do' attitude to addressing the risks rather than the dismissive response we received at one of the public meetings.

5.13.2 [R-PL-031](#)

If you cut this funding there will be a negative impact on all the services who hire community transport – especially their access to wheelchair accessible minibuses.

In turn, this will negatively impact the quality of service provision, especially the ability of the residential services (the same services you propose to pay less without loss of quality) to provide opportunities for residents to keep in contact with the community they have been moved from, and the community they have moved into.

Given that a significant proportion of services provided to Disabled people by other organisations are nevertheless part of the Council's statutory duties, and that they access community transport hire as part of delivering those services, this proposal could constitute a breach of one or more parts of the Equality Act.

5.13.3 [R-PL-028 Reduce local bus service \(subsidy\)](#)

Much of the wider concerns outlined above also apply to this proposal.

We do not agree with the statement at a public consultation meeting that these services are only used by students going out drinking. Not only is this statement ageist, it is wrong. It is also wrong to say, as the officer did, that the loss would be mitigated by the fact that the universities run night buses, as well as nonsensical. These services are also used by people who work in the evenings and/or do shift work ending mid-evening, by people attending evening services at their church or temple, by those attending evening classes, etc.

However, what is most worrying about this is that the officer who made these statements was the same person who proposed/ signed-off the cut. This raises serious issues as to the evidence base employed by service managers when coming up with suggested 'savings'.

We do not share the Council's stated belief that First bus will continue to run these services without a subsidy, simply because they did once before. The circumstances are very different now – not least because they've just cut into their profits by implementing price-cuts.

We are therefore additionally concerned about the potential impact upon the safety of those who previously used the subsidised services for travelling at night, especially those who already experience 'more than average' risk of assault:

- i. young men;
- ii. women;
- iii. those subject to hate/mate crime.

5.13.4 [R-PL-029 Saving from non-statutory free travel \(community transport concessions\)](#)

As mentioned above, Community Transport, such as Bristol Dial a Ride (as was), are the equivalent of public transport for Disabled people and as such legally have to operate under a Section 19 (or Section 22) permit of the Road Traffic Act.

Given this, its passengers should be treated in the same way as those who can use conventional public transport and to say that Diamond cards can be used on one and not the other is totally discriminatory.

Our community transport specialist has stated that, because of this,

"I would suggest that a strong case could be made under the Equality Act of 2010."

5.13.5 [R-PP-002 Review Home to School Transport service](#)

Again, an amount of 'savings' has been decided without a cost-benefit analysis or evidence the 'savings' can be achieved.

This proposal states that each child will be re-assessed individually and a determination made as to whether they still need the Home to School Transport service. Given these assessment reviews have yet to be conducted it is difficult to see how the Council can know how much it will 'save'.

Consequently many are concerned that the assessment reviews will be driven by the target 'saving' and not the needs of the child and their family – especially as, in some cases (e.g. PA support to become more independent), the outcome could be more costly.

There is also significant concern that there has been little or no thought given to:

- a. the extra time it takes many Disabled children to walk to school – for a wide range of impairment-related reasons other than mobility difficulties;
- b. the impact of this upon the primary carers ability to get to work on time after walking their child to school;
- c. the need for a reduction in the qualifying distance for Home to School Transport for most Disabled children and young people – due to time taken and/or their reduced mobility.

Given the high incidence of Disabled children living in poverty, point b. above is a more serious oversight than it might initially appear.

5.14 **Voluntary and community sector**

[R-PP-015 Reduction in Voluntary and Community Sector Budget](#)
[R-PL-006 Reduce Community Investment Grants](#)

There is substantial concern, both among our membership and the wider community about these two proposals.

The Deaf health project have done some research and concluded that more cuts could be made in leisure and culture, despite the Mayor's view otherwise. They also point out that it is not logical to claim an exception for arts and leisure funding on the basis that such spending promotes growth of economy and saves money whilst ignoring the ample evidence that spending on childcare and services for vulnerable people also save money and make a positive contribution to the economy.

There is concern and, in some quarters, anger that arts funding for disadvantaged people (those referred to in Council-speak as "the vulnerable") is being cut, whilst arts for the advantaged are not e.g. Knowle West Health Park will lose 100% of grant over 3 years but it's buried in the proposals. [\[Taken from the 'table discussion notes' taken at the Voscur-organised consultation event\]](#)

There is also a lot of opposition to the decision to protect funding to neighbourhood partnerships and neighbourhood management etc but cut VCS funding.

We find that opposition entirely justifiable, not least because the budget proposals this opposition refers to appear to:

- make no business sense;
- disproportionately disadvantages communities of interest;
- be more politically motivated than needs-led;
- mitigate against the Mayor's priorities.

The VCS has, overall, proven to be an extremely effective service provider and relatively representative, whereas Neighbourhood Partnerships and Forums have been demonstrated to be very ineffective and unrepresentative.

Council grant-funded organisations provide services to people where and when they need it, within reasonable economies of scale, whereas grant-funding allocated at a neighbourhood partnership level is severely, geographically restricted and so rarely provides for most communities of interest.

Furthermore, for organisations to secure neighbourhood partnership grants to provide for communities of interest requires a hugely inefficient use of fundraising resources.

The Mayor's vision, priorities and proposals indicate that there will be an increased need for volunteers to help deliver support the Council no longer provides. For this to be possible, Bristol needs a larger, not a smaller, VCS – especially when you factor in that the cuts to Council-run/commissioned services will increase the demand for VCS support.

We therefore also broadly support the Voscur submission regarding these cuts.

5.15 Waste

[R-PL-020 Reduce Commercial Waste enforcement](#)

With regard to this proposal, we are concerned that there is no mention, or proposed mitigation, of the indirect risk to Disabled people; namely, the 'trip hazards' the lack of enforcement will create.

We also note that no information is provided as to how the Council is going to achieve this proposal without adversely affecting general public health as a consequence of not enforcing the appropriate disposal of food waste – especially as they also propose to reduce Pest Control services.

Appendix 1 – Timescales

As well as breaching the Compact, albeit with what you have stated was the agreement of several of the larger voluntary sector organisations, the timescale has not given many of the VCS organisations with an in-depth knowledge of how the proposals will impact upon the most disadvantaged and/or vulnerable, sufficient time to provide an 'in depth' analysis.

As an example, each Equality Forum receives enough funding to employ a person half-time to manage and develop the organisation, which means they had 12 FTE days in which to:

- i. continue fulfilling their weekly commitments,
- ii. consult current and potential beneficiaries,
- iii. encourage beneficiaries to respond in their own right,
- iv. analyse the proposals,
- v. consider alternatives,
- vi. compile their Forum response and
- vii. get it approved by the trustees.

Even with its greater staffing levels the Council doesn't expect to operate to such time limits itself.

It is therefore inevitable that many of the (especially equalities-focused) VCS' will have had their ability to meet their usual high standards undermined. In our Forum's case, as a Disabled people-led charity, this has been further compounded by limited access to P.A. support within such a short period of time.

When added to the fact that the consultation was, in effect, not accessible to people with certain impairments until part way through the consultation, we believe you may well have breached your PSED.

Appendix 2 – Examples of weak EqlAs

Please note that, although these examples come from the same section of the Council, they were picked, at random, from a pile of possible examples. They are in no way a suggestion that they are either, the worst examples of an EqlA, or that this section's proposed cuts are worse than any other section of the Council.

Example 1:

R-PL025 Eliminate subsidy to St Pauls Learning Centre and explore other options (Service Impact):

Whilst no-one would doubt that the equalities information on the Centre's users is incomplete, the EqlA does not even mention the Council's data collected from those enrolling for adult education and community learning courses. It also omits information key to any EqlA of this proposal, including not mentioning:

- a) one of the tenants is a Disabled people-led organisation – despite its presence there being well known to the department, which is its main funder;
- b) this tenant being one of the main customers of the ad hoc room booking service for its MC, Exec, Media Group, and public events and therefore the use of the building by a significant number of Disabled people,
- c) the fact that none of the Council's other adult education/ community learning facilities offer the level of accessibility St Pauls Family & Learning Centre provides, due to the accessibility of the equipment, as well as the building;
- d) the uniqueness of the building as a learning environment for the most disadvantaged with a 'built-in' crèche facility;

e) the uniqueness of the public access darkroom housed within the building.

Yet we know that the last Drawing For Beginners and Improvers class was almost all Disabled people, and that September – November 2014 saw Community Learning run a course solely for Disabled people.

The EqIA also fails to address the issue of how it is going to ensure adequate accessible equipment for adult learning once they withdraw from the facility.

Example 2:

R-PL-023x Libraries – Review of Library Service

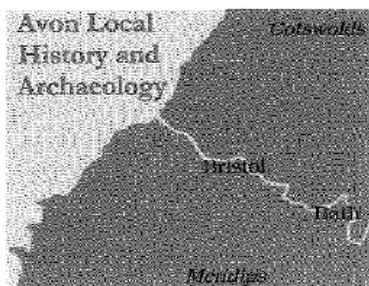
“Initially, this EqIA will be updated with feedback from the budget consultation, and then if the proposal goes ahead, the EQIA will continually develop as we re-shape the service.”

Given the consultation on the budget is not accessible, this is not acceptable. BME, Older and Disabled people (the communities most ‘digitally excluded’) are likely to be the most affected by this proposal and those for who the consultation is least accessible. Furthermore, it fails to acknowledge that some of the libraries are already co-located with other services e.g. branch library and adult education/learning communities, and therefore changes in libraries will also affect the viability of the services it is currently co-located with.

“We can however ensure that in this re-design we keep the needs of groups with protected characteristics at the heart of our planning.”

Given Library’s intention of divesting itself of the adult education and community learning site most accessible to Disabled people and most used by BME communities, i.e. St Pauls Family and Learning Centre [see ‘R-PL025 Eliminate subsidy to St Pauls Learning Centre and explore other options (Service Impact)’], the evidence would suggest the opposite. Indeed, this intention is not even mentioned.

19. Avon Local History and Archaeology Group



Avon Local History and Archaeology
Registered charity number 270930

Honorary secretary
Jan Packer

Tel 0117 977 1728
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18 December 2013

Dear George

Re: Bristol City Council budget – proposed cuts for 2014-2017

The executive committee of Avon Local History and Archaeology met in December and I was asked to communicate the thoughts and ideas that were discussed. I hope that you find this concise and (I hope) constructive letter of value in your future decision-taking.

We understand that Bristol's budget must be cut and that the cultural aspect of the budget will be as vulnerable a target as any other. So it was with some resignation that we discussed the impact on our members during December's meeting. Here we outline our thoughts which include positive recommendations that we believe should be taken into account for the Mayor to flesh out the detail under his broad proposal.

In considering the four main services:

Library Service (as a whole)

As the plan is to cut costs by 20%, we assume that staff and premises will be the main targets, which will mean that ALL resources held locally will become less accessible. At this stage, and being largely in the dark as to specifics, we feel we cannot argue against this. From a local history viewpoint, we would like to see a centralised service that will continue to serve the whole area, ideally including a central library of local history resources maintained at or near the Bristol Record Office. The Family History Resource Centre is already successfully co-located: this proposal would secure Bristol's library of history resources and continue to allow access to both its own public and to the growing number of heritage tourists who we should continue to attract to our city.

Local delivery of library services

This affects schools, prisons, home library. Any loss might impact on an individual but in these difficult times we can't propose that these services be protected if to do so would jeopardise basic provision for people at large.

Periods of closure of historic houses

We assume these to be Blaise Castle House, Red Lodge, Georgian House and Kingsweston Roman villa. Again, if worthwhile savings can be made by moth-balling these houses on annual rotation this may have to be accepted if that is the price that has to be paid for keeping the main museum services accessible: those premises are already closed through the winter. There is an argument to try to create additional income through better use of these premises, but as this has not been achieved in the last 2-3 years of austerity, we doubt the wisdom of asking for money to be spent on extra effort without any assured potential of success. The budget proposal hints at a possibility of raising funds externally from grant-making trusts and suchlike: we would support efforts in this cause so long as there is full consultation with service users.

Archives

The proposal is to withdraw the archive outreach service to save £50,000. Again, this is disappointing but it is less important than continuing to add to the archive for the future, and conserving the records we have.

Overall

ALHA's recommendation for limiting loss of service through such drastic budget cuts is that we hold continuity of the work of the BRO and the local history section of the central reference library to be paramount, and strongly recommend extending BRO's scope to host local history services centrally and comprehensively.

Missing from the budget is any allowance for new money coming in from the lease of space at the Central Library to the Cathedral School. Obviously any income should be used directly to reinforce these services being cut and should not be diverted to other budgets.



Jan Packer

20. West of England Care and Repair

*West of England care + repair
5 Hyde Market Waterloo St, St Philips, Bristol BS2 0BH*
WEC&R's response to BCC Proposal R-PP-020

Executive Summary

West of England Care & Repair (WEC&R) Home Improvement Agency provides a number of services to older and disabled Bristol homeowners and private tenants ranging from minor repairs through to help when leaving hospital or advice on home adaptations. The organisation is in a unique position to help Bristol City Council (BCC) in meeting the Mayor's vision of a Healthy and Caring Bristol by enabling older and disabled people of all ages to "keep living in their own homes wherever possible".

WEC&R recognises that, in challenging economic times, difficult financial decisions need to be made and that value for money must be demonstrated. However, we believe that the proposal to reduce funding for WEC&R from £1,020,000 to £920,000 per annum, whilst apparently generating savings of £100,000, is a false economy which will severely impact upon the health and well-being of some of the most vulnerable residents of Bristol. Furthermore, we believe it will lead to an increased burden upon statutory services and thereby mitigate any apparent financial savings identified.

As part of its continual internal review process, WEC&R has identified expected expenditure savings of approximately £30,000 through making changes to the way in which work is allocated across the Surveyor Team. However, if WEC&R is required to absorb a cut in funding in excess of this, savings would need to be made across those services which do not generate additional income for the organisation. The proposed cut in funding of £100,000 would result in a headcount reduction of between 2 and 2.5 full-time Caseworkers (the equivalent of 25% of our Bristol Caseworker team). The Caseworker team has already been substantially restructured in order to maximise effectiveness and streamline its operations and therefore this reduction in headcount would inevitably impact directly upon WEC&R's most vulnerable clients who tend to require high level Caseworker support.

Impact of proposed cuts on client group

We estimate that based on current data, between 250-300 clients would no longer be able to access our services as a result of the identified reduction in the number of Caseworkers. However, with an ageing population and as demand for the organisation's services increases, this could be higher. Furthermore, all of these affected clients will be people with protected characteristics either due to their age, disability, sex or ethnicity. Evidence shows that all of these client groups are more likely to require social services for care and support and face particular challenges when trying to maintain their existing homes.

Due to the complex needs and circumstances of these clients and the impact of other proposed cuts to services for older people, it is unlikely that other existing services such as generic floating support will be able to meet their individual requirements. If people are unable to repair or adapt their home, they may choose to move to more suitable accommodation. However, proposed cuts to warden services, charges for emergency alarm services, reduction in warden services in Extra Care Housing, and the proposed cut to specialist floating support makes this less of a viable option, or suitable for their needs. Furthermore, the proposed Shared Lives Programme as an alternative to residential care is not appropriate for older people.

We ask BCC to recognise the connection between health, social care and housing disrepair and to acknowledge the role of the Caseworker as being essential in providing residents with

the right housing advice and enabling people to navigate complex funding issues to complete work. WEC&R Caseworkers in Bristol are forecast to generate approximately £750,000 in additional private and charitable funding and welfare benefits in the current financial year. This is funding which may not otherwise be brought into the city and underlines the cost-effective holistic service which WEC&R Caseworkers provide.

By maintaining funding for the current level of Caseworkers, we estimate that the cost per client intervention to the council is between £200 and £250. However, this does not take into account the estimated income of approximately £600 per client that is generated by the Caseworker's intervention. The majority of our clients are 'older old' (58.9% of our clients are age 75-110) and at greater risk of losing independence and requiring statutory care. If clients are unable to access WEC&R's preventative services, the potential cost to the council will be significant (for example, the average weekly cost for a Bristol care home alone is £394). In the first six months of the current financial year, over 3,000 of Bristol's residents have stated that they have been able to continue to live independently, in their own home or suitable alternative accommodation, as a result of intervention by WEC&R. Not only is this a positive outcome for these clients but it also represents a much lesser financial burden to BCC than the alternative of statutory care. At a time of increasing demand and reductions in funding, it is critical for the council to be investing in preventative measures such as those provided by WEC&R Caseworkers rather than incurring higher downstream costs.

The budget proposal also suggests "increasing the threshold for people being supported". If this was to happen, and either a higher age or minimum income threshold was to be introduced, this would impact upon WEC&R's ability to generate alternative sources of funding. Younger or more affluent clients are more likely to self fund and need lower level interventions. WEC&R has made great strides in charging for services including handypersons, technical work and sale of equipment from the Waterloo Centre. This wider threshold enables the organisation to generate income to support existing services. Raising the age threshold or minimum income threshold will further reduce WEC&R's income streams and increase the organisation's dependency upon BCC's funding.

WEC&R's wider impact upon statutory services

The work of WEC&R also helps prevent health problems arising from inadequate or poorly maintained housing. Rather than reduce WEC&R's funding and capacity, and ultimately increase pressure on statutory services, BCC should view WEC&R as a creative part of the solution to help BCC's outcomes to be met.

In the area of social care outcomes, Bristol is one of the lowest performing local authorities as measured by the national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework. For 'older people receiving reablement services after leaving hospital', Bristol ranks 143rd out of 150 local authorities, with only 1.1% people receiving a service. Under the outcome 'success of reablement services for older people leaving hospital' Bristol ranks 83rd out of 143. WEC&R is ideally placed to be part of a hospital discharge and reablement package, helping to facilitate a timely, safe, discharge from hospital for patients and therefore resulting in fewer returning to hospital or requiring input from Adult Care Services.

Furthermore, WEC&R will be a critical player in helping BCC release savings totalling £1.5 million identified in proposal R-PP-009. It is proposed that 'home care be commissioned

against reablement outcomes', so that people are supported to maximise their independence and their care journey is slowed down, thus reducing weekly care packages. Bristol has a higher than average number of people (age 65+) permanently admitted to residential care (ranking 118th out of 150 local authorities¹). Length of stay in residential homes is also increasing, indicating that older people in Bristol are going into care when, with the right kind of support offered, they could remain at home for longer. Social workers often lack the time and knowledge to guide a person through the process of home repairs and adaptations, thus often resulting in placement in a care home because it's the fastest, albeit more costly, option. Furthermore, if people are discharged into a care setting because they are fit for discharge but their home requires work, WEC&R Caseworkers can offer a swift service to enable the work to be carried out as quickly as possible and thus reducing the cost to the public purse.

Enabling greater personal independence is at the core of WEC&R's guiding purpose and the activities of the organisation should be seen as crucial in helping make direct savings to H&SC and NHS budgets.

Finally WEC&R's role will also be critical in ensuring the success of BCC proposal R-PP-011 - Provision of appropriate equipment to reduce the need for multiple carers. WEC&R Caseworkers are trained to provide advice on equipment and also demonstrate it at WEC&R's state of the art Home Independence Centre. Accordingly, their role going forward will be crucial in supporting self funders to access equipment at an early stage and therefore reducing their dependency upon carers.

Alternative savings proposal

As previously stated, WEC&R acknowledges that budget savings are necessary but would argue that they should be generated through increasing or maintaining investment in preventative measures such as the work carried out by WEC&R. We do however believe that BCC should cease investing £2 million per annum in Neighbourhood Partnerships as these are generally poorly attended; benefit a very small number of people and need considerable BCC officer time.

Conclusion

Whilst we believe that we are in a position to absorb cuts of up to £30,000, the proposed cut in funding to WEC&R of £100,000 will inevitably impact upon front-line services, ultimately resulting in BCC incurring greater expenditure on other statutory services.

We are an agency who can offer not only comprehensive housing advice and practical help, but also a multi-skilled holistic approach to client wellbeing. Our service is unique in Bristol and we believe that continued investment in it at current levels is essential in helping BCC meet the Mayor's aim of supporting every citizen to reach their potential and for Bristol to be a place where the cared for and the caring, young and old, are respected and valued members of our society.

¹ Data from Health and Social Care Information Centre (Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework), Published December 2013

21. Bristol and Avon Family History Society



Bristol & Avon Family History Society

Reg. Charity No. 295799

The Mayor
Bristol City Council

31 The Witheys
Whitchurch Village
Bristol BS14 0QB

chairman@bafhs.org.uk

27th December 2013

Dear Mayor

Budget Consultation 2014-2017

I am writing to make a brief comment on the outline proposal to 'cut' some £50K from the budget for Archives services.

You may be aware that we work closely with Bristol Record Office in the provision of a service to family and local historians who make extensive use of the resources held by ourselves and the BRO. In addition there is a close link to use of the facilities within the Local and Family History Section of the Central Library and the reference to the archival materials stored there.

My concern at the possible reduction in the availability of historic records and documents is based firstly on the fact that many, if not most, researchers do not rely on what can be sourced via the internet but insist on checking original material. In addition, many people from outside Bristol, and indeed from overseas, value the excellent range of resources that can be studied here and it is not unusual for such people to plan holidays to Bristol and the surrounding areas to do more than just their bit of academic family history research. The concept of 'ancestral tourism' is being promoted by the Federation of Family History Societies to encourage people to take a wider view of their ancestors' lives and the places in which they lived, not just to record names on a chart.

All this means that people come to Bristol for a broader experience than simply history and culture. Inevitably they spend more money in the local economy and return home, hopefully, with an impression of a welcoming and vibrant city. I personally feel it would be regrettable to reduce the availability of our historic city's heritage resources from the current level.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Yours sincerely

Geoff Gardiner
Chairman

22. Bristol Fawcett Group

Bristol Fawcett group response to 2014-17 budget proposals December 2013

Bristol Fawcett members campaign to improve policy and services for women and girls. We bring an informed gender equality perspective to local decision making bodies.

Summary

A more detailed response can be found in the appendix to this document. We welcome the move to a 3-year budget. We recognise that the cuts have been imposed on Bristol by national government. We believe in and share the principles outlined in the consultation document, specifically

- **Protect vital services for those who need them most**

This means that **women and children who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse and sexual violence must be a priority for the Council.** We call on the Mayor and on all members of Council to protect and enhance the funding for violence against women services – these services do not currently meet the level of need and are needed more than ever in the current economic climate.

- **Help close the city's inequality gap and stimulate investment, growth and jobs in the Bristol economy**

There must be recognition, as is universally accepted, that the national and local cuts to public sector spending and welfare have had a massive and cumulative disproportionate impact on women – progress towards women's equality has now gone into reverse, with the gender pay gap nationally and in Bristol actually increasing for the first time in years. Disabled women, BME women and single parents (92% women in Bristol) are hit hardest of all. Women's employment and the provision of childcare that enables women to take part in training and the workforce must be at the heart of Bristol's economic vision – this means that cuts to 'wraparound' childcare provision in Children's Centres should not be implemented – and there must be a rigorous gender equality impact assessment of the £49M internal change programme for its discriminatory impact on women as employees and low earners.

Our recommendations are:

- do not cut funding that addresses violence against women and girls in the city
 - do not cut wraparound childcare provision in children's centres
- do use any of the many toolkits available to produce a *cumulative impact assessment* of the proposed cuts – including the change programme – and including the historic cuts to date locally & nationally - upon the women of Bristol and apply the data. If the Council's Equalities Team is not well resourced enough to undertake this exercise then we respectfully suggest that it is not well resourced enough to be cut as proposed in the consultation.
- Make further savings from the Neighbourhood Partnerships budget (excepting the 10% most deprived area NPs) and the Arts budget in order to maintain funding for violence against women services, childcare, the Equalities Team and the VCS.

Bristol Fawcett commentary on a number of the Mayor's budget proposals 2014/15 – 2016/17

Towards a cumulative impact assessment

Our response concentrates on the impact of the proposals upon women and their children in particular. We take items in the order in which they are published in the consultation.

Acronyms

CDSA	Crime and Disorder Strategic Assessment
D&SVA	Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse
NP	Neighbourhood Partnership
VAWG	Violence and Abuse Against Women and Girls
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector

• Improving business efficiency

- **Relocating Youth Offending team:** reducing operating costs implies reduction in 'back office' staff, majority held by women. Also women's responsibilities for family wellbeing means that reduced service will adversely impact on women.
- **Reduce the running cost of council buildings:** obviously should be done, but Council should check that limiting Council business to a smaller number of buildings, which may increase commute time and cost for some Council employees, does not adversely impact on the large number of Council employees who are women and in the lower paid echelons.
- **Ensuring cost duplication is minimised:** obviously services and costs should not be duplicated. However services previously funded under different budgets may have had significant differences. E.g. Public Health funded provision of services to prevent VAWG is substantively different from Safer Bristol strategic support and funding of provision of services and protection from VAWG. Care should be taken in the detail so that crucial sections of a holistic service are not omitted.
- **Challenge council spending:** this presents potential enormous savings without any detail, therefore must be challenged for more information. Which Council budgets are "consistently underspent"? Could this be, e.g. Council Tax rebate, in which case the underspend would be more beneficially spent in increasing take-up support.
- **Proposed reductions in Procurement and ICT –** could pose serious problems for women; e.g. procurement support in contracts for services affecting women needs to be first-rate to ensure contracts give both good quality and value for money. Council is proposing to avoid duplication by increasing reliance on technology, so ICT needs to be in best condition to ensure that services delivered through technology are accessible and achieve what they intend to achieve.
- **Reduce Equalities and Community Cohesion team:** the current team has already been reduced, including scrapping specialisation by equality area, which means that expertise on e.g. women's equality is no longer structured in. Staff training in equalities across the board is essential, but you can't train out lack of commitment. Council performance requires back-up and monitoring by specialist staff.
- **Prevention budget reduction:** it is misleading for the Council to say they can't assess impact – they know how this money has been used in the past, supporting emerging and innovative projects often started by people in the community who are

not (yet) “professionals”, of whom many will be women looking to solve problems they experience, such as domestic violence and abuse, in addition to the other named groups such as men and women with disabilities, mental ill health, etc.

- **Increasing the use of Direct Payments:** this needs to be offered only as a genuine option and alongside budget and debt advice. Council needs to maintain a role to monitor services bought by recipients, as direct payments – e.g. to a carer – could increase the opportunities for neglect and even abuse.
- **Housing Related Support:** Council should refer to research by the University of Bristol into homelessness and women.¹ Cutting support costs could place women at greater risk of abuse, from cuts in training and qualifications, and will also impact on support jobs, which are largely held by women.
- **Reduce policy development in Safer Bristol:** It's crucial to maintain effective policy and licence enforcement, for the safety of women (affected by pubs and clubs and by taxi services).

- **Changing how we fund and provide services**

- **Review of Children's Centres and Early Years support:** these are potentially disastrous proposals. Children's Centres enable children to have good quality support and they celebrate diversity and social cohesion. Limiting use of Children's Centres to the most disadvantaged is likely to reduce social cohesion and diversity and lead to stigma. Additional childcare is provided in many CCs for women attending the Freedom Programme domestic violence and abuse prevention; and support. Family financial disadvantage is not the sole indicator of other and broader forms of disadvantage – e.g. isolation, family abuse. These proposals will not only disadvantage children but will also disadvantage women/mothers. The size of the projected cuts seems totally disproportionate. Cutting additional paid childcare in CCs entrenches disadvantage for low-paid parents who need accessible affordable childcare in order to work.
- **Review the use of School Road:** we are dismayed at the prospect of the loss of respite care, which will largely affect women as carers of their disabled children and other relatives, and at the prospect of the loss of 19 women's jobs (as opposed to 3 male).
- **Review of strategic housing services:** this will impact on women tenants experiencing domestic violence and abuse. Also on support for tenants receiving direct payments, of which effectiveness is dependent on adequate benefits support.
- **Review of Library Service & Cease library non-statutory services - Prisons Service and Schools Library Service. Redesign At Home Delivery Service:** we don't think this will necessarily adversely affect women more than men, but are very concerned by what the proposals may mean for current users of the services.
- **Review of housing related support provided to independent sector sheltered housing schemes for older people:** the majority of older people using these services are women – who may be more likely to 'not want to bother' a floating support worker and therefore their support needs, even in quite drastic situations, risk not being met.
- **Safer Bristol – reduce spending on crime reduction projects:** Bristol cannot afford – morally or in terms of the human and ongoing financial cost to the city – to reduce spending on D&SVA. Levels of reporting are already far below the known incidence levels, as set out in the recently published Crime and Disorder Strategic

¹ <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/sps/research/projects/current/RK7228/index.html>

Assessment (CDSA)². D&SV is extremely complex – indirect cuts (e.g. reducing the projects team) would mean loss of specialist understanding and ability to procure appropriate services, monitor and correct any shortcomings in service. The CDSA shows a 24% increase in demand for Next Link's domestic violence and abuse service³ and this is unsurprising given what we know about links between economic stressors and increased violence against women.⁴

- **Review Home to School Transport service:** acceptability of this proposal will entirely depend on effectiveness of the proposed assessment (of placement and transport) system, e.g. the disasters that have happened with ASOS assessment of entitlement to disability support should not be mirrored.
 - **Reduce Local Bus Service (Subsidy):** loss of late-night services will expose women service users to greater risk of assault. Gender data should be provided on users of the services at risk.
 - **Reduction in the Voluntary and Community Sector Budget within Health and Social Care budgets:** no mention in the EqIA of women being adversely impacted which is surprising given what we know about the numbers of women accessing services and the number of women who are carers. Cuts to the VCS in Health and Social Care mean that women, as carers, will pick up the extra burdens created.
- **Better buying**
- **Commissioning home care against reablement outcomes:** According to the council's own figures, 66% of those who currently receive home care service are female, so the changes here could potentially affect twice as many women as men. The stated objectives of individualising care and helping individuals to maintain or increase their independence are in principle desirable, but achieving the hoped for budgetary savings at the same time might prove impossible. It is therefore important that these changes are closely monitored to ensure that home care users are happy with the services provided, and that particular needs and preferences are fully met; (e.g. for care staff to be of the same gender and ethnicity as the service user, and/or to be sensitive to cultural and lifestyle differences).
 - **Reduce costs of residential and nursing placements for older people:** This could mean reduced choice of providers, and consequently in some cases people may need to move away from their immediate local area to access residential care. It may also result in providers cutting wages for residential care staff (who are predominantly female) and/or redundancies, in order to maintain low costs.
 - **Better value for money from residential and nursing placement contracts:** As above, this sounds good in principle, but in practice may create problems, and needs to be closely monitored.
 - **Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts:** currently there is a greater need for take-up of these services by women, who earn less than men and for

² (p37)

http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/community_and_safety/safer_bristol/Crime%20and%20Disorder%20Strategic%20Assessment%20Accessible%20Version%2012.11.13.pdf

³ *ibid.*, p.41

⁴ e.g. Van den Berg & Tertilt (2012) <http://tertilt.vwl.uni-mannheim.de/slides/MannheimNov2012.pdf> and in the UK, cuts impact research by the Young Foundation in Camden: http://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/uts_on_some_of_the_most_vulnerable_in_Camden_2.pdf and EHRC Research report No. 47:

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/research/47_the_equality_impacts_of_the_current_recursion.pdf

whom there are more cultural barriers to participation in sport and fitness. This will have a discriminatory impact on women. Women-only swim sessions and sessions for pregnant women are at risk unless protected by detail of the new contracts.

- **Reducing or stopping services**

- **Reduction in funding for Home Improvement agency:** These services are used predominantly by older and disabled people, at least 66% of whom are women. Removing support may lead to an increased need for statutory services – hence counteracting any potential savings.
- **Cease funding for specialist floating support service for older people:** The council acknowledges that this proposal could mean that some older people do not get the support they need, and some will need to access residential care. Some will be able to access generic support services – but the absence of specialist support could mean that many fail to receive adequate support (e.g. they may be unable or unwilling to make their needs known; and staff – who may lack sufficient specialist training - not picking up on unvoiced concerns, e.g. abuse from partners, relatives or other carers.) This is likely to affect women more than men, particularly in the older age groups. It will also increase the burden on family and other carers, most of whom are women. This has not been acknowledged in the EqlA.
- **Reduce Older People extra care housing wardens:** as above, this could mean that some older people do not get the support they need.
- **Stop supervision of Hengrove Play area:** why is Hengrove supervised at all? Is this because of evidence of greater need amongst children and young people in this area? So we have to presume that cessation of supervision will impact more on disadvantaged young people, many of whom are solely parented/cared for by women.
- **Reduce nuisance response team:** Noise and other nuisance complaints often affect vulnerable people, and women may feel threatened and be at risk of abuse, without being able to call on council enforcement services.
- **Review public toilet provision:** This in effect means closing 22 of the 23 street public toilets in Bristol. This is bound to have a major impact on the quality of life of many women in Bristol. As is acknowledged by those making the proposal, the impact will be greatest on those whose need of the provision is greatest – i.e. older women, those with particular health or disability needs, carers (usually women) with children, and pregnant women – none of whom will be served by the on-street urinals for men's use of the leisure economy but which remain funded. These closures may greatly limit the activities of many women, and may cause some to become housebound due to lack of easy availability of suitable toilet provision, when and where it is needed. Increasing community provision – e.g. in cafes, shops, community buildings and so on – is not a substitute: many women will be reluctant to use toilets in cafes and pubs, if they are not also a customer; and accessibility, for disabled users, is also likely to be an issue.

23. Youth Opinions – Handout circulated at Budget meeting with the Mayor

Youth opinions - knowle George met them 11 Dec 2013.

Handout for mayor budget

Current council spending



Generate Income -

- Hengrove – external fundraising and grants
 1. Does the cafe make money for the playground? Open on an evening for a youth cafe?
 2. Move BYL staff onto the playground instead
- Rent out BCC buildings to private companies instead of selling off – private renting brings in more money.
- Sell BCC specialist services to companies – skills as consultants/trainers, practical jobs to companies.

From this to this – need to save £90m over 3 years.

After current savings left with deficit of
£43M – Consultation.

Council Budget



Make savings:

- It has been difficult to decide how savings can be made without knowing what the amount of funding stated is actually for, so it could be that some cuts could be made on different areas without cutting the lot, but would need to know how the stated amount is used.
- Bristol Youth Links - unsure what this amount is for, but BCC are not doing very much delivery but still a lot of managers, do we really need them all to oversee contracts?
- There is a huge budget for homelessness, what is costing so much, and could this be cut to make more for care services?
- Crime prevention – should this be funded by PCC/police rather than the council?
- Toilets – instead of closing them turn them over to local people to run cafes or charity shops and make money for vol groups so the people affected by the closures could still use toilets (elderly, postmen, bus drivers, etc)

24. Bristol UNISON response to the Budget Consultation



Bristol UNISON's response to the 2014-17 Budget Consultation

Lack of Meaningful Consultation

This consultation represents the most significant and far reaching change to the services provided by the council and the way in which they are delivered and yet the Council has imposed the minimum legal consultation period of 45 days. Furthermore no account has been taken of the fact that the period includes the Christmas week when many staff are on holiday and 'business as usual' is traditionally suspended which means that the consultation has, effectively been reduced by at least a week.

In addition to the very short timescale we have only seen concrete proposals for £43m, and have been informed that £49m was not for discussion.

We understand that this £49m includes the reduction of Bristol workplaces to save £30m which we cautiously welcome but recognise that the detail of this plan is not yet in place and the impact on staff has yet to be fully assessed. We are, however very concerned about the proposal to save £27 from the staffing budget in the organisation review and restructure which will impact significantly on UNISON members and the services they provide.

UNISON has asked several times for meaningful consultation on the whole package, but this has been denied. We have sought to understand the implications of the cuts at directorate level but have generally found this to be both unhelpful and frustrating, in part due to the uncertainty around the structure of the new directorates. Some DJCC's were cancelled, and only reinstated after pressure from trade unions. Others lacked the information that we needed to fully understand the implications of such significant cuts on the provision of services, the staff who provide them and the members of the public who rely on them. We have been assured that any service reviews should follow managing change process. We are concerned that these procedures are not being followed and the effect on services could be to make some public services dysfunctional and not fit for purpose. We would like to ask what risk assessment processes have been undertaken by the City Director to ensure budget "objectives" offered by strategic directors are deliverable and sustainable. It is of great concern to us that requests for voluntary severance are being sought and granted whilst there is no clarity being shared about the future 'shape of services'.

Having said this, it has been possible in some isolated areas for UNISON to provide the kind of detailed response that we would like to and we have attached a response from the Sport and Health Development Team as an appendix.

Review Of Sport Development

The service has reviewed the proposals published for the 'review of sport development' and the 'removal of subsidy for leisure and sport contract. A number of areas cause concern for the future delivery and provision of sport city-wide.

Headline concerns are:

- The potential severe impact on provision for and within deprived communities
- The Potential severe impact on provision for those with health inequalities
- The limited capacity, resources and rationale of third or private sector organisations expected to 'fill the gap' and the failure to adequately test this as viable prior to this proposal.
- The disproportional cuts to the service compared to other discretionary services and those which have similar outcomes
- That the proposals contradict a number of statements, documents and visions for the city, indicating that the outcomes of service has not been adequately recognised.
- That the budget consultation is not transparent enough for the public to fully understand the potential implications of the cuts to the services they value.

By reviewing a number of council led documents and visions for the city we believe there to be a disproportionate proposal of cuts to this service that will have a detrimental effect on the most vulnerable communities and widen health inequalities. The response goes on to outline a number of proposals to make savings that would keep their services intact. A full copy of this response is attached as an appendix.

We would have hoped to have provided a similarly considered response to all of the proposals but a lack of information and the extremely short timescale has made it extremely difficult to engage in the process.

Library Services

In particular we would wish to provide a detailed response on the future of the library service but we have not yet received the detailed feedback from our representatives in the libraries. We are extremely concerned about the proposals to cut posts in a service which is staffed almost exclusively by women working part time. This will have a far greater impact than the figures would suggest and is likely to mean the loss of at least twice as many jobs. In addition to the 4.5 fte 4.3 fte jobs outlined in the consultation document there are possibly up to 22 FTE's to be lost in the overall library review (R-PL-023). It is difficult to gauge this accurately as the job losses are "to be determined". It would appear that Bristol's library service is in line to take the brunt of the Mayor's cuts, in terms of jobs. Staff are already effectively excluded from the annual leave purchase scheme because of understaffing and are often unable to take their leave when they want. Further cuts to staff will see stress levels soar and morale plummet.

We are likely to see libraries close and reduced opening hours (this is happening already). Libraries are a vital resource for vulnerable and digitally excluded people in Bristol, who are likely to need this resource even more as the council moves to digital transactions. We urge the council to reconsider the scale of cuts in the Library service.

Children's Centres and Early Years Support

The funding cuts here will have a major adverse impact on women. These services are almost exclusively staffed by women and the childcare provided currently enables women to work by providing wraparound care. As pay has failed to keep pace with inflation since 2008 more women, especially from low income families are seeking work.

The EIA suggests that there will be sufficient flexible and affordable provision in other settings but this is not evidenced and anecdotally we know that many women in different parts of the city have difficulty accessing suitable, affordable childcare at present. (Womens Voice) Already reorganisation in Childrens Centres across Bristol is seeing a reduction in staff and higher graded staff are being replaced by lower graded staff in an attempt to reduce costs. In the meantime, it has come to our notice that consultations on the closure at Hengrove Park continued without waiting for the conclusion of the budget consultation with employees being informed that their jobs were at risk of redundancy.

Neighbourhoods – R-PL-002

We note the proposal to cut 11 staff from strategic housing services. This was questioned at the recent N&CD DJCC but the director has not yet responded to UNISON's question. We are very concerned at this proposal as it will potentially directly affect some of the most vulnerable people in the city, i.e. homeless and people on welfare. Furthermore we are aware that teams in these directorates have recently been subject to several reviews and bids for services (Tenants Support Service) and so we can see little potential for "efficiencies". We must therefore conclude that despite the mayor's assertion to the contrary, these cuts will affect the most vulnerable in the city. Please provide full details of the proposals affecting these services as a matter of urgency.

Development and Training

We would expect the Council to ensure that a robust training programme is put in place to ensure that council staff can provide the council services of the future. We have had some discussions with the Change and Performance team in BCC HR about corporate training for redeployment of staff and look forward to a genuine dialogue at the earliest opportunity to ensure that staff moved under transferable redundancy arrangements are adequately supported in their new roles.

We note that the equalities and community cohesion team is to be reduced by 2.5 FTE's, saving 181K. This is to be mitigated by better training across the council. While we applaud genuine embedding of equalities in the council's management structure, we have yet to see any specific budget allocated to this training or programme for the training. This concerns us as the scale and pace of cuts will threaten equalities groups and community cohesion disproportionately. Please provide an outline of the training package for equalities and community cohesion.

Health and Social Care proposed closure of School Road

This proposal has prompted the families of service users to start a local petition. The unit currently runs at 81% occupancy and is seen as a lifeline by those families who use it. No attempt has been made to rationalise the resource to make it more cost effective and it currently dovetails well with the 'Shared Lives' service. We urge the council to work with the staff working in this unit to examine to options for reducing overall costs without the need for closure.

Community and Voluntary sector

Our members in community and voluntary sector are already seeing their pay terms and conditions cut in order to provide services on a reduced budget – further significant

reductions will increase this trend in a council which hopes to see its own staff paid the living wage in 2014 – a goal unachievable in Community and Voluntary sector organisations which provide essential services for some of the most vulnerable people in Bristol. Again, no detail of how the cuts will affect these services has been provided.

We request further meaningful consultation

A consultation meeting has taken place with the trade unions and Councillor Gollop but there were restrictions on how many questions could be asked and the meeting was limited to one hour. This did not appear to be an open process. We have not yet received a response to the written questions

We would welcome proper consultation and engagement on the future of our city and the budget that determines this, but with only half the picture this is impossible. We find it difficult to suggest alternatives for cuts, particularly if these lead to job losses in other areas, however the full picture of the Council's accounts and all spending is not something that has been shared with trade unions to enable this consideration to take place. Additionally although the Council has stated that it has looked at statutory and discretionary services no information has been provided as part of the public consultation as to which other 'discretionary' services are continuing to be funded.

We would like to engage in how we could save money, and cut costs and we do welcome some aspects of the budget proposals including the determination of the Council to reduce the PFI spend by renegotiating the contracts and would urge you to challenge the Government on the expectation that councils will pick up the interest payments on schools buildings for academies. We welcome the greater transparency provided by the requirement to justify staff spending, in particular on consultants through the People Process and the measures that have been identified to tighten up procurement and the transfer of staffing costs associated with capital projects to properly reflect the cost of capital expenditure. We are keen to see a reduction in the council spend on expensive consultants now and in the future.

Steve Mills

Branch secretary, Bristol Unison

Appendix: Sport and Health Development Team response via UNISON.

The service has reviewed the proposals published for the 'review of sport development' and the 'removal of subsidy for leisure and sport contract. A number of areas cause concern for the future delivery and provision of sport city-wide.

Headline concerns are:

- The potential severe impact on provision for and within deprived communities
- The Potential severe impact on provision for those with health inequalities
- The limited capacity, resources and rationale of third or private sector organisations expected to 'fill the gap' and the failure to adequately test this as viable prior to this proposal.
- The disproportional cuts to the service compared to other discretionary services and those which have similar outcomes
- That the proposals contradict a number of statements, documents and visions for the city, indicating that the outcomes of service has not been adequately recognised.
- That the budget consultation is not transparent enough for the public to fully understand the potential implications of the cuts to the services they value.

By reviewing a number of council led documents and visions for the city we believe there to be a disproportionate proposal of cuts to this service that will have a detrimental effect on the most vulnerable communities and widen health inequalities.

The EQIA's and statements within the budget report suggest that the third sector and private sector will provide the service gap that will result from the proposed cuts. The team has concerns about the quality assurance of these providers and their capacity to take on what has been the council's role. We are concerned that non local authority providers will not deliver according to the needs of Bristol's citizens as they do not operate in a 'neutral' public service way. This includes, not at a wide enough geographical remit - there are significant gaps in providers within deprived communities, they will need to focus on business that enables them to maintain financial viability, they do not have the governance structures in place to bring in the investments at the same level as the council. It should also be recognised that these organisations are facing additional funding pressures that will further reduce their capacity to deliver more. Some of these pressures may be added by proposed and confirmed cuts in other council departments, including Discretionary Rate Relief for sports clubs and the grounds maintenance budget for parks affecting pitch hire arrangements.

Although we recognise that the council should take on a wider role in supporting these organisations we are concerned that the remaining resources will not be able to do this sufficiently on a reduced budget to the extent proposed. There has been significant progress in the strategic development of sport within the city over the past 2 years, including the Sport4Life Strategy, Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategy and the Access to Schools Project. We have one of the best performing leisure contracts in the country and have significant national relationships with organisations such as Sport England, StreetGames and Access

Sport. Willingness to invest financial and human resources into sport in the city is greater than ever with 27 National Governing Bodies highlighting Bristol as a key city for them as well as other key partners. We believe that now is the best time for the council to invest in sport and use this as a high profile portfolio of events, community and health development programmes, facilities, and club which significantly contribute to recognised priority outcomes for the city. As part of the portfolio of evidence for the Sport4Life strategy we have collated, developed and recorded a vast number of data sets to support the 'power of sport'. It seems a massive contradiction that this service is seeing the biggest cuts proportionally of all discretionary services within the council and we believe our contribution to wider city priorities has not been recognised with the directorate, despite its high profile prevalence in a number of key policy developments and statements – which we will highlight in the following statement.

THE STATE OF THE CITY REPORT

In the Mayors 'State of the City Report' in its many forms, sport, is recognised in a number of key areas of work and priorities.

(1) HEALTH AND CARING

Physical activity

QUOTE FROM THE DOCUMENT:

The Health Impact of Physical Inactivity tool estimates that if everyone undertook recommended amounts of physical activity, whether exercise, recreation, or just living in a more active way such as using active travel, in addition to improved wellbeing, specific benefits in Bristol include:-

- Saving almost 250 premature deaths
 - Preventing over 60 emergency admissions to hospital from Heart Disease
 - Preventing over 40 new cases of breast cancer and almost 30 new cases of colorectal cancer
- and reducing new diagnoses of diabetes by over 1,800.

1 in 3 people in Bristol exercise at least 5 times per week, a rate which has been broadly consistent for the last few years. Across Bristol this ranges from a quarter (Bishopsworth) to almost half (Clifton).

RESPONSE - Sport is a recognised and integral element of 'physical activity'. The services provided by the Sport and Health Development team and the leisure contracts provide opportunities for people to take part in sport. The focus is on getting the inactive, active and developing pathways to support 'sport for life' and behaviour change. It is noted that the populations where health inequality and deprivation are highest have the lowest participation in sport. Much of the sport development work from the service is targeted within the most deprived communities. 2 of the 6 leisure centres within the contract subsidy are within the most deprived communities. Evidence from research carried out as part of the Sport 4 Life Strategy, Facilities Strategy indicates that provision for the most vulnerable and deprived communities is poor from the private and third sector and needs further investment. The EQIA suggests that the impact on equalities groups attending leisure centres is a real possibility. The necessity for SLM to make changes to their business model to become financially

viable - whether this is by increasing fees or closing centres that are the least cost effective. The concessions available to Bristol residents with a number of health inequalities are vast, providing access to sport and physical activity thus contributing to a healthier lifestyle.

It is important to recognise the role of the Sport and Health Development team in ensuring our leisure contractors fulfil their equalities agenda. Members of the team aid this via close contract management and by providing expertise to advise contractors and engage communities. A member of the team was recognised this year in the Celebration Success Awards for her contribution to equalities work.

The Sport4Life Strategy includes a specific theme of 'healthy and equal'. This was by far the biggest concern and issue raised within the extensive consultation for this strategy and strong feelings were made this this is a priority for sport in the city.

(2) VIBRANT BRISTOL Sports and Active Recreation

QUOTE FROM THE DOCUMENT:

Sport and active recreation have long been at the heart of Bristol life. Across the city there is an abundance of community sports clubs, a range of high profile professional clubs, an impressive sporting events calendar and numerous high quality participation initiatives and fun family activities. Bristol also proudly boasts an excellent and expanding network of built and natural facilities and spaces for sport and active recreation.

The Council's overall participation rates in sport and active recreation are amongst the highest of all major cities in England and compare well against national averages. However, participation levels vary widely across our communities. Some groups are much less active than others and a large proportion of our population remain inactive.

The council wants to build on the positives and do more to ensure that Bristolians fully grasp the opportunities available to them and build sport and active recreation into their daily lives. In 2013 A **Sports Commission** was launched to advise the Mayor on how he might seek to raise sporting aspirations in the city to the same level that secured Bristol the award of „Green Capital of Europe 2015" and achieved its recognition as one of the UK's leading „Creative and Cultural„ cities. This will look at a range of sporting services available in Bristol with the aim of raising participation across all ages and demographic groups. In addition it will help the city council unlock an array of benefits in relation to; health and wellbeing, social cohesion and sporting endeavour.

It is highlighted within the Quality of Life survey that 40% of respondents participate in active sport once a week. This is noted as a cause for concern.

Response - The disproportional cuts to the service area contradicts this statement from The Mayor. The statement says we will do 'more'. We understand that the sector as a whole needs to contribute to the provision of sport within the city but believe that the contribution the Council can and should make has not been fully understood. The extent of the cuts to the Sport Development Budget - will be predominantly staff - raises questions regarding the capacity of the council to 'do more' itself as well as its support role to private and third sector organisations that are also facing cuts. Although partners have been extensively consulted as part of the Sport4Life Strategy and the Commission there has not been an audit of the collective provision of services. Without this it is not possible to say with certainty that the private and third sector organisations will be able to provide services within our most deprived and vulnerable communities. The aspiration from The Mayor is to increase participation in sport across all ages and demographics, the significant cut in investment by the council (100% of SLM leisure centre subsidy, 60-75% in sport development) contradicts and jeopardises this vision. The Council has the opportunity to lever in more funding for sport as a local authority than the third and private sector via Sport England Core Cities, substantial funding sources and partnerships with NGB's and national organisations - yet these cuts could mean that these WILL not be fully utilised for investment in the city. Indeed the Sport Development function of the team, while the staff are core funded, the entire delivery budget is resourced from external funding partners who invest in us because we have a proven, quality track record of delivering quality services. Council projects and programmes have been recognised as good practice, shown as national case studies, used as pilots for national schemes and formed part of University Study's this includes, Ping! StreetGames Doorstep Sport Clubs, BALP and Action 3:30. While we recognise that the third sector, in particular, have access to some funding, much of this requires partnerships and reliance on the local authority, we are concerned that the capacity of the service will be reduced to a level that cannot support this.

(3) EMPOWERED CITY

QUOTE FROM THE DOCUMENT

4. Sports

Intends to unlock a range of benefits related to health and wellbeing by raising participation in sport and physical activity.

Response: We note that Public Health services have not been cut, recognising the importance of investing in public health services. The team is concerned that the role of sport in delivering health outcomes has not been recognised. Many services provided by the leisure centres and sport development team will be at risk under these proposals.

These include Cardiac Rehab, COPD, Exercise Referral, MS Referral and many others. Again the number of concessions available within the SLM contract for people with recognised barriers to participation in sport. Additionally, the projects delivered by the team to engage and change behaviour within the city's most deprived communities will be under threat with this proposal.

(4) ACTIVE CITIZENS

QUOTE FROM THE DOCUMENT

But some wards still experience significant quality of life issues and these include:

Avonmouth and Kingsweston - leisure facilities, jobs Cabot - drunk **and** rowdy behaviour

Southmead and Henbury - fear of crime, behaviour of children, vandalism and dog fouling, *Hillfields, Eastville and Frome Vale* - fear of crime, noisy neighbours, community cohesion -

Bishopsworth, Whitchurch Park and Hartcliffe - obesity, parks, community cohesion, health and disability, creative activities, internet use.

Response: The sport development team includes a focus on supporting the provision and development of community sport facilities and spaces within communities - this includes work with sports clubs, NGB's, Parks and Green Spaces. Our GetInto programme provides qualifications and volunteering opportunities for unemployed and those with no or few qualifications as well as all residents who would like to contribution the sport within their communities. Sport is particularly good at engaging young people and people from BME communities. Although we recognise that there are some third sector organisations delivering aspects of this work much of this is dependent on the council sport development team , We are concerned that there will be significant gaps in delivery of sport within these communities where sport can have a positive impact on the biggest priorities.

The Mayoral Vision for Bristol

'sport' is again mentioned in its various forms across the breadth of the Mayors Vision for Bristol.

The document recognises some significant achievements including:

QUOTE FROM THE DOCUMENT

Introducing 'Make Sundays Special' by freeing city centre streets of traffic once a month, allowing people to enjoy street markets, entertainment, games and **sporting activities** and attracting many more visitors to the city centre, while also dropping Sunday street parking charges throughout the city.

Response - the sport development team significantly contributed to the success of the sport element of the MSS initiative. This included

delivery of activities, volunteers, ensuring the inclusion of the city's voluntary sports club sector in providing activities and advising the events team. The MSS evaluation specifically highlights the value of the sporting activities and the desire to continue and enhance this element moving forward. The proposed cuts to the sport development budget will have an impact on the capacity to be able to deliver this initiative.

SECTIONS OF THE VISION

(1) Healthy and caring Bristol – we will

QUOTE

Develop socially mixed communities and embrace every citizen's responsibility to be a good neighbour, promoting volunteering as a way to encourage greater levels of community participation

Response: Volunteering in sport is recognised as low within the city (Sport England Active People Survey). The sport development team has a significant volunteering programme linked to major national initiatives and bringing in funding to do so. This includes 100's of volunteers with Run Bristol, SportsJam, StreetGames, Community Sports Clubs, and Leisure Centres The concern is that third and private sector organisations will not have the capacity to deliver a quality volunteering package through sport that will engage such a high number of volunteers and provide adequate pathways into employment and for personal development.

(2) Keep Bristol working and learning

QUOTE

The drop in the level of apprenticeships is cause for concern in Bristol and nationally, particularly given Bristol's general shortage of lower and mid-level skills in the workforce.

Both the leisure contract and sport development budgets support apprenticeships directly and indirectly. SLM, Parkwood and the council have appointed apprentices and support local education providers in the third and private sector. The cuts to both budgets could have a detrimental impact on the number of apprenticeships delivered and an impact on third party education providers and colleges who provide them and access funding to do so.

QUOTE

The key route is through learning, leading to skills and qualifications, employment and a living wage, being able to support a family and giving children choices in their lives. Our job across the city is to put together the networks and ladders of progression that help all our young people to clearly see how they can progress in learning, develop skills and qualifications, build self-confidence and get a sustainable job. At the same time, we must work with the private sector across the city to ensure skills needs are recognised, and that

the local labour market is providing the people they need to grow their businesses. Our local economy and labour market operates over an area much larger than just the Bristol council boundary, which is why we must work closely with the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership on behalf of the whole Bristol-Bath city region.

Response: Our GetInto education through sport programme is part of the Local Enterprise Partnership, delivering skills and training in sports qualifications. These courses are currently delivered in BANES, S.Glos, North Somerset & Bristol. The proposed cuts could reduce the capacity of the team to deliver this leaving a gap in provision to the detriment of the LEP objectives. We do not believe there to be third sector or private sector provision with sufficient capacity or expertise to deliver this. This project is closely linked with the leisure contracts to increase the sporting workforce and further skill leisure staff to improve the quality of provision within the centres.

(3) Vibrant Bristol

QUOTE

Bristol will be a place where the streets are alive with activity, and where every citizen and community participates in the cultural life of our city.

Bristol is a city with a rich and diverse cultural landscape. It is home to outdoor street art galleries, a leading centre for the contemporary arts, the UK's oldest working theatre, Britain's foremost centre for new media and the South West's largest TV and film production space. With annual theatre, live art, galleries, festivals and events, location filming, museums, attractions, major sporting events and facilities, culture can be seen to have a vital role to play in Bristol being a vibrant, creative and prosperous city.

Response: The service contributes to this through both major sporting events and community festivals. The Run Bristol portfolio delivers 2 mass participation high profile road races which form part of the city's major events programme. Run Bristol projects attract approx. 25,000 adult participants and include a number of other smaller running events including those for young people. The events also involve working with hundreds of volunteers and have city-wide support from Bristol residents as well as bringing thousands of tourists to the city.

The sport development budget supports the provision of sport within community festivals, either through direct delivery or by supporting third sector sports clubs and organisations as partners. We are concerned that sport will be at risk of exclusion within community events due to reduction in capacity of the service to support. This is of particular concern within our most deprived communities and those without built leisure facilities es.

QUOTE

(4) Active citizens – we will:

- Encourage every individual, organisation, business and community to play an active role in the life of the city.
- Develop a reshaped model for supporting and resourcing the work of voluntary and community organisations in the city that is centred on achieving the overarching objectives in this vision.

- Deliver a new city-wide framework for volunteering, that is again centred on city-wide objectives and which celebrates and rewards the impact of projects and programmes.
- Redesign the system of neighbourhood governance and decision-making in the city to ensure that citizens and communities can have real influence and control over what happens in their area.
- Develop neighbourhood deals with the council, which, beyond a core offer, will allow for greater devolution of power and resources where neighbourhoods can demonstrate a commitment to deliver priority outcomes for the city.

Response: The service has a close affinity with neighbourhood working and supporting the priority outcomes for the city. We have, and continue, to work hard to respond to community need via close working with departments such as Neighbourhood Partnerships, Neighbourhood Working, Community Investment and Neighbourhood Engagement. We note that these services are not being cut as part of the Mayors budget, highlighting the importance of these services within the most deprived communities. We feel that the utilisation and impact of sport within these service areas has not been recognised. Projects such as S106 capital projects in parks, the response to community need such as activities for young people and health inequalities will be under threat due to reduced capacity. This will have a detrimental effect on the provision and delivery of services via these other departments and a threat to the added investment sport can bring to projects. Examples of this include the knowledge and expertise to generate partnership funding for facilities, activities and resources.

25. Bristol City Council response to UNISON questions

Response to UNISON questions regarding the 2014-17 Council Budget Consultation process.

Dear Councillor Gollop, we thank you for giving us this chance to engage in the consultative process. However, with the budget headings as they are, do you concede that it is nearly impossible for us to do so? We have only had notification of £43million, and apparently £49 million is going to be made elsewhere. How do you think we can consult and engage please?

There has been a considerable amount of information provided on the Council's website in respect of the Mayor's initial savings proposals and additional information has been provided on specific questions raised at the various public meetings. The budget packs provided at the initial meeting with union representatives held on the 20th November 2013 contained much of this information and we are happy to answer any specific questions you may have. In addition, there was a JCC held on the 12th December 2013. Would it not be helpful to make this consultation meaningful, and give us a clear idea of what is intended? The intention of the consultation is to engage as widely as possible with the citizens of Bristol, partner organisations (including the Trade Unions) and the business sector for them to challenge the initial proposals or suggest alternatives. The Mayor held six public meetings to discuss the budget and a range of separate briefings and meetings were held with interested groups.

Do you feel that this consultation is meaningful?

The response to the meetings and the level of discussion and engagement has been far greater than in previous years and the public meetings very well attended. If the purpose of consultation is to engage with the public and listen to their concerns and alternative suggestions then this process has been very meaningful.

Would you not, as a Councillor of our City, prefer a robust and meaningful consultation process, so we can collectively offset the worst effects of budget cuts look at other ways of raising revenue?

I refer to my answer above and increasing revenue has been considered as part of the budget construction. There is of course a real danger that in raising revenues by charging more for the Council's services that this might penalise the more vulnerable or poorer members of our society.

The proposed increase in Council tax of 2% (less than inflation) is more likely to impact those members of our community who are better off and more able to afford the increase.

How do you envisage consultation to occur on a directorate, and service level? These figures in our opinion are very vague, but the effects on services could be catastrophic. Will you please ensure that there is directorate, and service consultation on these cuts prior to setting this budget?

The information on the website provides an analysis of all the initial savings proposals as the directorate analysis cannot add that much to the debate. Once the Mayor has considered the responses to his initial proposals a more detailed construct of the budget by directorate will be prepared for consideration at the Cabinet meeting on 16th January and for approval by Council on 18th February.

Officers have considered carefully the impact at directorate level as part of the budget construct.

We understand that the council has a legal obligation to

- 1) Calculate an estimate of the council's gross revenue expenditure (Section 32 (2) of the Local Government Act)
- 2) Calculate an estimate of the anticipated income
- 3) Calculate the difference between them (therefore the net revenue expenditure)

This in my understanding is known as the budget requirement. This has to be set prior to setting the council tax. When will this be done please? If it has been done, when will you share it with the trade unions, and the citizens of Bristol?

These matters will be reported as part of the Mayor's Budget Recommendation to be submitted for approval at Cabinet on 16th January and will meet all of the statutory requirements. The formal document is currently being drafted by officers and the Section 151 Officer will ensure that it is fully compliant with current regulations. The document will be in the public domain 7 days before the Cabinet Meeting and remain so until Council meets on 18th February.

We also note that BCC financial systems were of concern. This was raised in BCC's Audit committee 24th September 2013. The report raised issues around the employment of consultants, and procurement process. It also noted that monies were missing from several sources. I have attached the link below, to help.

https://www.bristol.gov.uk/committee/2013/sc/sc015/0924_14.pdf

Would it not be better to sort out our finances, and get a clear understanding of what we are spending and where before we start another round of further cuts?

The Council's Statement of Accounts were approved by the Audit Committee with an unqualified opinion from the Council's external auditors on 29th September 2013. The Council's internal audit team expressed their view on the internal control framework which existed prior to 31 March 2013. During the current year new financial accounting systems have been implemented which have provided robust financial control procedures within their internal operating processes and have resolved many of the control weaknesses previously identified. As a result the Council is able to build the new budget on the basis of sound financial information this year.

We note that our senior Finance officers have moved on, and we have a new post holder. We fully understand that he has to find his feet in his new position. However, under section 151, and S114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, he has to report to all the councillors, in consultation with the monitoring officer, if there is, or likely to be, unlawful expenditure or an unbalanced budget. When does our Chief Financial officer intend to do this?

The Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet are regularly updated with the financial position of the council on a quarterly basis. This has been enhanced since September this year with a monthly update to identify key expenditure risks within the revenue and capital budgets. As part of the budget setting process a statement to this effect will be made.

If he has, has the report been circulated to aid this consultative process? How can this report be correct, in relation to the Audit Committee's concerns as stated in September's meeting?

The Audit Committee's concerns related to historic events and did not reflect the progress made to enhance overall financial control since 31 March 2013. The Audit Committee receives regular updates on the work of Internal Audit and improvements to the control environment and will be examining this in detail at their meeting in January 2014.

We also note that the post of chief Finance officer is vacant on the new structure chart. We understand that we have an interim, but it would appear that we do not have the necessary post holders to carry these budget proposals through. Does this correspond with your understanding of the legal requirements?

The City Director has almost completed the restructure of the first and second tier management structure and the full team will be in place early in the New Year to ensure an effective handover and pick up of the budget once approved. The substantial part of the budget will be the delivery of the Change Programme which the City Director controls through a board of senior managers.

Furthermore, the monitoring officer has a duty to write a report if they believe that any proposal, omission, or decision might be illegal. Has the officer in question written this report, and if so where is it? if the officer has written this report is it on the £43m, or the full £92 million, which would include the £49 we are not allowed to see?

The Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer are working together closely to ensure the budget process complies with regulation and constitution. The Council will debate the Mayor's budget recommendations on the 18th February with the statutory officers present to ensure compliance.

With the Mayor proposing to borrow £91m for the new arena, would it not be more prudent to use this money for services for the citizens of Bristol?

The Mayor cannot propose £91m borrowing as this is a decision reserved for the Section 151 Officer as part of the approved Treasury Management Strategy. The Arena project is included in the Councils Capital Programme for approval on 18th February 2014.

Have there been any proper evaluation of the reserves, and if these could be used to offset these cuts?

The council general reserve is currently at a level below that recommended by the Audit Commission and it is important that this reserve is sufficient to cover the known risks within the overall budget envelope. The section 151 Officer is obliged to confirm the adequacy of the Council Reserves as part of the Budget

approval process. At the present time it is unlikely that reserves are available to mitigate the required reduction in spending.

How have we arrived at the figure of £92 million? My understanding was that the MTFP stated £35m, then this went up to £80m, before increasing in the same week to £90 million.

The budget consultation document explains in full the construction of the budget and the resulting budget gap based on the information and assumptions made at the time. The assumptions used have been rigorously challenged by the Council's Resources Scrutiny Commission to ensure they are realistic. The budget gap reflects current information and will almost certainly change as a result of the Autumn Statement, Local Government Settlement or any other Council decisions made before the budget is approved.

Why is the authority pressing ahead and trying to achieve most of the reductions in the first year? Would it not be more prudent to take a longer term approach? New funding streams could be found. The political climate is very likely to change after the 2015 election. We still are unsure how much will be in the new HSC national grant, and where we could spend it. If a longer approach was taken, then compulsory redundancies, and also VS costs could be lessened by natural wastage. Taking a longer time could also protect service delivery. Also if we did this over 3 years, as previously envisaged would reduce costs accrued by severance and pension costs. It would also give organisations and charities longer to plan, and fill the gaps in service provision, thereby lessening the social problems.

The scale of the change required is both challenging and disruptive. It is the officers view that the changes should be made as quickly as possible to minimise the uncertainty and stress for employees affected. This will also minimise the risk to service delivery during the recovery period as cultural and operational change is embedded.

We look forward to hearing and reading your response. I hope that you and your fellow councillors will work with us, and ensure that proper and meaningful consultation will occur. We firmly believe that these cuts will negatively affect our city for generations to come, and we should be very mindful of implementing them, and ensure that service delivery to the most vulnerable in our city continues.

The Mayor's savings proposals are directed at improving operational efficiency and reducing unnecessary cost in the delivery of the services being delivered. It is true that the scale of the savings required has meant the identification of some service reductions or cessation, but this is only £3M of the total savings proposals and a very small proportion of the total annual investment through the Council of over £1bn. Yet, they remain difficult decisions and will impact some members of our community harder than others.

With thanks

Steve Mills

Branch secretary (on behalf of Bristol Unison)

26. Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge



FOD+AG Statement re Proposed closure of Public Toilets with reference to Clifton-Durdham Downs Review public toilet provision (R-PL-O19)

View:

FOD+AG strongly disagree with the proposal (R-PL-O19) as it applies to the three public toilets currently serving users of the Downs – at Clifton Suspension Bridge, Sea Walls and Stoke Road (Water Tower).

Comments:

We actively object, on behalf of all Downs users for whom we were set up to speak, to a proposal which:

- a. is simply a list of possible cuts;
- b. contains no economic or social impact assessment and no consideration of consequences, positive or negative
- c. is likely to elicit responses which, in the main, are based on self or group interests.

If implemented not only would this proposal offend against the health and welfare of many Downs users, but would also substantially undermine many of the activities for which the Downs was originally, and continues to be, established.

FOD+AG was set up with at the behest and with the active encouragement of Bristol City Council:

- to help to conserve the Downs and Avon Gorge
- to promote their use
- to encourage public involvement in its welfare and
- to protect and enhance this precious green space, remarkable not only for its international, national and local status as a site of scientific and conservation interest but also for its closeness to the centre of this great city.

Its accessibility as a green space at the heart of an urban environment, at a conservative estimate, attracts more than a million visitors each year. It has green flag status and has made a significant contribution to the awards to the city of Gold medals in the Britain in Bloom competition as a result of which Bristol was selected to represent the UK and gain second place in the equivalent European competition. In all of these the judges were impressed by, and appreciative of, the opportunities afforded to visitors. This culminated in the city being chosen as the European Green Capital for 2015. For this reason, above all that follows, we would question whether this is an appropriate time to be proposing to seriously damage the experience of the huge number of people who are likely to come here from all over the world.

It is hard to imagine, and certainly no evidence has been presented in support of the proposal under discussion, that any consideration has been given to the well-being and comfort of Downs users, to the

numbers and diversity of both the activities which take place here and of the participants in them or to the importance of tourism and therefore to the economy of the city.

Before making a decision on whether or not to adopt this proposal, we urge you to consider, in addition, what follows and to ask yourselves "is there sense or either practical or moral justification in it?"

- Over the last 10 years, the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project (AGDWP) has provided educational experiences to more than 50,000 people of all ages and backgrounds including many children;
- Tens of thousands of others have used AGDWP leaflets to "discover the local wildlife" for themselves;
- In addition, Mandy Leivers, education officer for AGDWP, runs courses during school holidays, for children, for parents and toddlers and for families
- Guided Walks by such organisations as "Walks for Health", Bristol Naturalists, and ourselves, FOD+AG, as well as individuals like Tony Titchen and Francis Greenacre have catered to the interests of thousands of others:
- Hundreds of students and pupils from local Universities and schools have spent time with their lecturers and teachers exploring, studying and/or drawing inspiration from this special place;
- A new co-operative initiative between AGDWP, the Downs Ranger and FOD+AG called "Your Downs", whose ambition is to welcome as wide a range of people as possible to the Downs, has begun with a series of guided walks tailored to the needs and interests of equalities groups including, the elderly, the disabled and the socially isolated.
- Next April, the "Your Downs" project will run soccer coaching sessions for primary age boys and girls from schools in the city without playing fields of their own. This venture involves a partnership with the Downs' League and with the Westbury Foxes, who already provide a similar experience and opportunity for youngsters from areas local to the Downs every Saturday morning during the season.

These activities illustrate just some of the demands that there are for public toilets on the Downs and question how it can be acceptable or right to risk precluding so many children, families, elderly, disabled and disadvantaged from visiting an area "granted to the people of Bristol in perpetuity".

- Visitors to the Clifton Suspension Bridge number approximately 100,000 annually, and with the work currently being undertaken by the Downs Ranger's team to expose the Iron Age fort on Observatory Hill, this number might well increase as also might the time spent there .
- Throughout the year, volunteer working parties from FOD+AG amongst others, are involved in a variety of conservation projects in support of work which the now depleted Downs Ranger's team, are unable to accomplish alone. This includes, scrub clearance, invasive weed control, building of Dead hedges to protect the limestone wild flower meadows and restoration of ancient hawthorns in danger of being overwhelmed by encroaching scrub.
- In addition regular Deep Litter Clearances are carried out throughout the autumn and winter to remove litter which accumulates in copses, thickets, scrub and woodland. The absence of any toilets in the 400 acres of the Downs, will mean that the areas we clear will be subject to "pollution" by human waste - being the only locations with even a modicum of privacy available.
- These observations can not begin to quantitatively estimate the extent of the impact of people visiting the Downs independently of organised activities, but it will be far more substantial than those outlined here.

- The Downs and Avon Gorge are protected by the Downs Act of Parliament, 1861. Hence the absence of all but a few buildings. This is relevant to the suggestion that, in the absence of public toilets, people will be able to use toilets made available via the community toilet scheme. On the 400 acre site there is one café, with a single toilet for the use of its patrons. Café Retreat is not prepared to open its toilets to non-customers and who can blame it, even if there was the remotest possibility that it could cater for the demand!

Finally, in the context of our responsibilities as European Green Capital 2015 please consider:

- What would be the impact on visitor numbers of an absence of any public toilets?
- What would be the reaction of tourists to a city whose council had closed operational toilets?
- What could it do to the reputation of the city, which is representative of the best in Europe?

Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge – December 2013

27. Comments from the Older People's Partnership Board

Budget Proposals

Comments from members of the Older People's Partnership Board, 17.12.13

Re-tendering home care

- There is a big dependence on the voluntary sector as BCC do not deliver so much home care now. The Council must ensure that organisations improve the care staff's terms and conditions and that they are paid sufficiently to enable them to do this.
- Provider Performance Meetings – older people find it difficult to engage at these meetings as they feel intimidated and worried to speak up, so while having performance meetings is a good idea, there needs to be good support to enable people to engage properly. There is concern that it will be hard for the Council to monitor external home care providers with fewer commissioning staff if their numbers are cut as a result of the budget.
- 11 Geophysical areas for home care – will providers be able to apply to cover all these areas. There should be a system to limit them and prevent a monopoly happening. The Council should also bear in mind that some areas will be easier to provide a service to than others.

Public Toilets : This is of major interest for older people and BOPF are very keen to keep toilets open as one of the reasons that older people find it hard to get out and about in their local areas is the lack of easily available toilets. The Mayor previously said he would encourage cafes and businesses to open up their toilets to the public. However, although notices were supplied to be put on cafes doors, they did not comply. Older people who asked just to use the toilet felt this was looked on askance by café staff. Cafes want people to spend money not just use the toilets. The Mayor should encourage businesses to put notices on their door to say the public may use their toilets. It would be terrible if Bristol is not able to offer toilets to tourists and visitors – look how much income they brought to the City when the Gromit trail was active. The council-owned toilets are very clean and good quality which makes Bristol a very civilised city. Now if these toilets are closed the City won't be considered civilised. Also, some businesses are not accessible for older people and their carers so having public toilets ensures an accessible place.

It was noted that 48 companies registered to be part of the toilet scheme in addition to the 19 toilets in parks which are not included in the budget proposals. Ideas in place of closure of the toilets included asking people for a payment to use a public toilet.

Community Transport : Community Transport helps prevent loneliness. The Bristol Older People's Forum is actively working with Age UK Bristol on a project to attract up to £6m of Big Lottery funding into the City to tackle older people's social isolation. One of the key findings of work so far is that transport is vital to ensuring that older people can access all that the City has to offer. A lack of transport can mean that older people become isolated with subsequent deterioration in their physical and mental health which then leads to a greater need for health and social care services. If an older person has mobility problems, does not live on a bus route, or cannot walk to the bus stop, this will increase their risk of isolation and they will not be able to participate in activities being set up nor will they be able to contribute to their communities.

Domestic Violence to women and children : Funding should be extended, not reduced for women and children. Older people are subject to domestic violence. This is an increasing problem but they do not meet the 'needs criteria'. Often older people by-pass other services and end up being suicidal or having mental health problems as a result. This is an increasing problem in the City. These people may not be eligible for social care services but domestic violence can severely affect their health and wellbeing and they may become homeless.

Independent Housing Schemes : The proposals mean older people lose wardens and are instead to be charged for alarms. Charging means people will not take an alarm, leaving them at risk. Having an alarm is no substitute for a person who can check on the older resident, provide an opportunity to socialise and pick up on other concerns and act preventively.

Respite Care: Younger people with an impairment or disability want to live their own lives and be independent – we all accept that. However, the Council needs to also consider that people with a disability will get older and that their needs for support may be different from other older people's needs. We are thinking of people with learning difficulties as well as people with a physical disability. If you cut respite, lives will be directly affected. Furthermore, some older people go regularly to School Road respite care and love attending. It feels safe. Closure is short sighted and will be replaced by more expensive services in residential care in all likelihood. Older people who are parents of people with a learning difficulty are also affected by this potential closure. 50 people use Respite Care at School Road. Not all of them want a Direct Payment and people need to be supported in a safe environment.

Reduction in the cost of nursing placements for older people

Surely this is a Statutory expenditure? How are you going to reduce down any more and ensure safe and good quality care home services given all we have heard in the media over the last year? Reducing costs may impact on staff salaries, activities for residents and their nutrition

Speed of proposed change: A lot of the proposed cuts to services are for savings from April and there hasn't been enough time for the voluntary sector to plan for change to happen so immediately both in terms of their staff and the older people in receipt of services currently.

Impact assessment: The impact on older people has been greatly underestimated and there has been a limited amount of time for BCC officers to understand their needs. More time is needed to plan for the changes and to implement new services where needed.

There will be a high cumulative impact on older people of all the budget proposals and this needs to be considered along with the impact on all equalities communities.

Older people were once younger people. We know that younger adults cannot envisage a time when they will not be able to cope and when seemingly small problems become insurmountable. Please do not underestimate the need of older people for some of these services when considering eligibility criteria and making proposals to cut budgets for much needed support.

There are 39 cuts in total. 24 of those will impact on older people. This is not proportionate and the Council should reconsider the impact of the budget on older people.

Supporting People Services – more time is needed to look at each individual person's needs before cuts are made. Organisations can make cuts somewhere but need to look closely at where they are needed to minimise the impact on older people. Officers should not underplay the work done by supporting people services. Why are so many of the cuts impacting on older people's services? We hear that supporting people services for younger adults have been protected because they have other needs (e.g. learning difficulties), and yet some of the older people being supported by the voluntary sector also have learning difficulties, mental health problems and/or disabilities – has this been taken into account? Why aren't those services also exempt from these proposals? Why does the Council feel that services for younger people are more important than those for older people? This is borne out in the forms used to monitor Supporting People services too which discriminate against age because they prioritise services which look at getting people back to work. Not many older people who need services, are in a position to be looking for work, so services for them have been impacted on disproportionately and unfairly. This is discriminatory.

The impact on the voluntary sector has not been taken into account in these proposals. No-one has looked at the viability of organisations as a result of these proposals. A lot of costings have not been done on the known-on effect of the changes and time is needed to take into account people's individual needs and the needs of the organisation.

The Council should look at giving more time to look at making any cuts over a longer period of time.

We realise that cuts have to be made and costs saved but these proposals need to be more proportionate. We respectfully ask Cabinet to delay implementation of cuts to the voluntary sector services in order that they have time to see what cuts they can reasonably make and within a realistic timeframe. Cuts need to be staggered and to have an exit strategy that is planned with partners along with a recognition that some organisations will have to close as a result.

Libraries: Libraries are community centres; the hub of the community, used by everyone. They are a key part of the fabric of communities that helps prevent social isolation and should not be cut. They act as mini community centres in many places and are used by all ages and helps educate people – education is important to personal and whole community wellbeing.

28. Comments from the Learning Difficulty Partnership Board

Budget Proposals & Consultation - discussion / feedback from members

Family Care M.R

Adverse effects of proposals on family carers include:

- Closure of essential respite service provided at School Road issues
- Cuts to transport including for those to go to local schools
- Cuts to local toilets – what will replace it and is there sufficient accessible facilities out there = not just basic toilets
- Family carers have to plug the gaps left by cuts

Support Provider: CH

- Loss of expertise, knowledge and skills from cuts to staffing in the Council who and what expertise will be left?
- All the information is about what will be cut and we need to know what will be left can we hear what is statutory and what is discretionary spending

Service User DG

User lead organisations in the voluntary sector are being put at risk, cuts will make such groups unstable and then they will go under.

Limits in transport make vulnerable people socially isolated

CLDT Rep LB

History has shown that when closures and cutbacks are made and proposed, referrals to the Community Learning Difficulties Team have increased – example given: closure of the Bush Day Centre.

Provider Rep DS

Reduction of library services; connection to friends / relatives. Libraries and museums are essential to feeling you are part of Bristol.

Service User JO

An introduction of charges for go to the museum would affect tourism, learning and having good things to do in the day rather than go to a day centre

Service User and Carers (Various)

Regarding cutting public toilets, how can Bristol support integration / inclusion with these cuts. This will affect vulnerable people and their carers.

Surely this will also have a bad effect on tourism and the reputation of Bristol.

Is the use of shop facilities going to be a reality? Concern expressed regarding the expectation to buy something so it becomes a charge. The access to most shop toilets is very limited.

29. Bristol Youth Links

Children and young people's responses to the Mayor's Budget Proposals.

In order to gather the views of children and young people across the city on the Mayor's budget proposals, Bristol Youth Links consulted with children and young people across the city throughout November through 3 area-based forums.

Children and young people from North, South and East/Central Bristol were invited to attend the forums supported by local youth workers in order to have their say on the budget proposals. Across the city 49 children and young people were consulted and the key themes from this consultation are outlined below.

- The strongest emerging theme was concern regarding cuts to services for older people; there was concern across the board relating to all the cuts to services for older people. Children and Young People were supportive of increasing community supported accommodation for those who are able to benefit from it, but concern was raised about the impact these changes may have on access to services for more vulnerable older people.
- Concern was raised about the impact of removing the subsidy for sports/ leisure contracts as increasing prices would have the biggest impact on those who are less economically well off, therefore having a potential impact on health and wellbeing for this group. It was proposed that there should be a strong campaign to encourage healthy lifestyle changes that are low/no cost such as running, cycling and healthy eating and that campaigns to promote this should be invested in.
- Concerns were raised regarding whether the relocation of the Youth Offending Team will result in reduction to service delivery.
- Reduction in bus services raised concerns for young people about increasing isolation for those who live in already isolated communities and for older people.
- There were mixed views about the proposal to stop supervision at Hengrove Park, with a small majority being in favour of the cuts, proposal was made that BYL services could provide play rangers in the park at key times as an alternative. This could also include training older young people as volunteer rangers.
- There was support for the plans to reduce the cost associated with council buildings.



Bristol Scrutiny

Response to the Mayor's Draft Budget Proposals 2014-2017

Each of the individual scrutiny commissions has reviewed and commented on the individual savings proposals which relate its remit. In addition, the Resources Scrutiny Commission has also considered the wider financial impact of the proposals particularly in terms of their deliverability. All the responses are summarised in the attached table.

In addition to this response to the consultation phase of the budget savings proposals, the Resources Scrutiny Commission will also be examining in detail the final budget proposals when they are published in early January 2014. This will also include the Capital Programme for 2014/15 – 2018/19 and the Housing Revenue Account.

As well as commenting on the individual proposals some Commission made some general comments and also expressed concerns about the budget setting process itself. These are summarised below.

1. Overview & Scrutiny Management Board

Members expressed their concerns that there were no representatives at the meeting from departmental management, to discuss the budget proposals with them and answer their questions. They thought that this was discourteous, insulting to the people of Bristol, and indicative of the way in which councillors were being treated under mayoral governance. The Chair said that he would take up members concerns with the City Director.

2. Children's Services Scrutiny Commission

The Interim Strategic Director explained the context for the proposals against the backdrop of a significant change programme over the last year to 18 months. The proposed service changes have been carefully planned to deliver improved outcomes and ensure children are not put at risk.

Members made the following general points in relation to the budget information:

- It is difficult to evaluate the proposals as there is minimum information about impact
- The proposals are not shown in the context of the overall base budget
- There is no context in relation to the current revenue budget and any areas of projected over/underspend

- There is no background on how proposals have been arrived at and other options considered
- There is no information on staffing implications
- The areas of discretionary spend are not clearly explained
- The proposals are not set against the context of what proportion of the budget relates to statutory services and what is discretionary spend

Members sought clarification on how the budget proposals had been put together and noted that:

- A balanced budget is predicted for year end 2013
- Only approximately 5% of the budget relates to discretionary spend, the majority of the budget relates to statutory services
- Costs have been benchmarked against other Core Cities using Section 351 statutory returns and where spend is in the bottom quartile a careful examination of the reasons behind this has been carried out.
- Where appropriate savings have been made in some service areas e.g. Youth Offending to bring spend in line with other core cities. In other areas, however, such as Children's Centres and Early Years the Council has not followed the same level of spend as other core cities as this does not support the early help/ intervention strategy and could have a perverse outcome in terms of higher costs elsewhere.
- Assurances were given that the proposals do not impact on the action plan relating to the recent Ofsted Inspection

3. Health Wellbeing & Social Care Scrutiny Commission

The Commission considered the above Budget Proposals at their Meeting on 18th December 2013. They raised a number of points of clarification and expressed general concerns about the impact of cuts on services.

With particular reference to the Public Health Budget, Members expressed great concerns about the proposal to fund Port Health by an amount of £125,000 and Food Safety by an amount of £498,000, making a total £623,000.

Members noted that these functions are, and have been, City Council responsibilities, not Public Health responsibilities. Members considered that these functions should not be funded from the Public Health Budget. The Public Health Budget should only be used to maintain and improve Public Health Services not to maintain City Council Services.

Members therefore requested that the proposal to fund Port Health and Food Safety by a total amount of £623,000 from the Public Health Budget be reconsidered.

4. Resources Scrutiny Commission

Members were told at the initial briefing for councillors that information on job losses would be available on the equalities impact assessments. This information has proved to be pretty sparse with some mention of job losses in the library service relating to the schools and prisons provision and some reference to job losses relating to planning charging capital projects for staff and other costs. When will clear and precise information relating to how the known number of 800fte job losses are matched to the cuts proposed in this budget?

With the exception of some limited information on pest control there seems to be no information about what increases to charges are being proposed in this budget. When will this information be made available so that the consultation process can become credible?

5. Neighbourhoods & Community Cohesion Scrutiny Commission

Members stated that it was difficult to reconcile plans for increased decentralisation and make significant budget cuts at the same time. Officers reported that efforts were being made to get Neighbourhood Partnerships to focus on priorities in their areas and draw coherent resources to bring efficiencies. It was necessary to look at new ways of doing things. This was part of a bigger governance discussion.

Members emphasised the importance of avoiding a silo mentality and duplication.

6. Sustainable Development & Transport Scrutiny Commission

The Commission expressed concern that the Capital Budget had not been available to scrutinise alongside the revenue savings proposals. This was significant because in many of those proposals money was being taken from the capital budget in order to save revenue.

Produced by the Scrutiny Team 24th December 2014

Attachment 1 - Bristol Scrutiny's response to the draft budget proposals

BRISTOL SCRUTINY'S RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT SUMMARY OF SAVINGS PROPOSALS 2014 - 2017

Improving Business Efficiency						
Reference	Service label	Proposal and brief description	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	SCRUTINY RESPONSE
R-PP-004	Children and young people	Relocating Youth Offending team Reduced operating costs will be identified within the Youth Offending team when it transfers over to Children's Services in 2014/15.	(174)	(200)	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Members sought clarity on the base budget which is £1.55 m •The proposed savings equate to .2% of the overall budget •The Youth Offending Team are expensive compared to elsewhere in country •The proposals will not impact on service standards <p>The Troubled Families Programme is progressing well which provides early intervention</p>
R-CC-001	Corporate	Reduce the running cost of council buildings Reduce the running costs of the Council's buildings by selling surplus buildings, increasing energy efficiency, and reviewing rents charged to third parties	(600)	(2,900)	(6,500)	<p>These corporate savings are considerable. Resources Scrutiny Commission considered that there was insufficient background detail provided in the consultation material to effectively challenge the impact of these proposals.</p> <p>More detail will be available at the Resources SC meeting in early January 2014 when further scrutiny will take place with recommendations being made direct to the</p>
R-CC-03	Corporate	Ensuring cost duplication is minimised To identify services provided by the Council and other ring-fenced funds (Housing Revenue Account and Public Health) are not duplicated and relevant costs are appropriately charged	(2,806)	(1,000)	(1,000)	
R-CC-002	Corporate	Challenge council spending We have set up spending review panels to ensure all non essential spending is rigorously challenged and savings opportunities identified	(3,500)	(500)	(500)	

R-BC-001	Corporate	Reduce support services across the Council Reduce support service costs to a level equivalent or below that in similar sized councils. Ensuring charges are fair across the Council and to the right place	(3,400)	(400)	(200)	Mayor and Cabinet.
R-PL-022	Equalities	Reduce Equalities & Community Cohesion team Better training for council staff and manager on equalities, meaning we can fulfil our responsibilities with a smaller specialist team.	-	(181)	-	Assurances were sought that BCC would still retain an appropriate number of specialist equalities practitioners. The Council has very specific duties under equalities legislation. It must be made clear where the responsibilities for these will lie in future. Concerns were expressed that the proposed £181 reduction would have a disproportionate effect on the ability of that Team to continue to deliver their work programme.
R-PP-013	Health and social care	Health and social care prevention budget reduction Reduction of £340k of pump priming funding for preventative initiatives. As this is one off money there is no impact on services or organisations.	(340)	-	-	
R-PP-008	Health and social care	Increasing the use of Direct Payments for care services Encouraging greater take up of Direct Payments to give service users needing care services greater choice, control & flexibility at reduced cost to the Council	(250)	-	-	It is not clear how service users will be encouraged to take up the direct payment method. There should be a guarantee that anyone who cannot access or chooses not to use this payment method will not be at a financial disadvantage.
R-PL-036	Housing	Housing register - streamlining processes Improving administration in the housing registration process	-	(75)	-	

R-PP-024	Health and social care	Housing Related Support Housing related support is delivered through a variety of service providers at an average cost of £16 per hour. Where services are more expensive we will look to deliver better value at a reduced cost to the Council.	(80)	-	-	It is not clear how this saving will be delivered. If it's not possible achieve the efficiencies promised then the net result will be a reduction in service capacity with a direct impact on service users.
R-PL-004	Museums and galleries	Reduce administrative support in Bristol Museums Galleries and Archives Service Reduce administrative support for bookings, finance administration and general administration.	(50)	-	-	This is a relatively small saving but it will have a significant impact in that there will be fewer public events and exhibitions and less access to archive material.
R-PL-018	Pest control	Pest control Review of charging for pest control services. The charging review will be sympathetic to residents on benefits. Review of internal trading arrangements.	(200)	-	-	It was accepted that the service had to be put on a more commercial footing to generate this income. Exempting people on certain benefits from charges was welcomed but there should also be reduced charges for who were on low income. If not, there was a danger that mice/rat infestations would not be reported with obvious health implications.
R-PL-008	Safer Bristol	Reduce policy development in Safer Bristol Reduced policy development support for licensing and regulatory functions, such as taxis, pubs and clubs	(11)	(11)	-	A cut in funding in policy development for licensing and regulatory functions could inhibit the effectiveness of the Council in its role as the licensing authority. Failure to regulate the proliferation of licensed premises and licensing hours effectively would potentially have a harmful effect on the quality of life of constituents who live in the vicinity of such premises;
R-PL-037	Street Lighting	Street Lighting Energy Efficiency Savings Conversion of street lights to white light and LED fittings will reduce energy costs.	(200)			
R-PL-016	Trading standards	Reduce Trading Standards service Review and eliminate some non-essential enforcement and investigative work. Instead there will be more signposting to consumer advice services.	-	-	(24)	Priority should be given to preserving the work that related directly to public safety and wellbeing.

R-PL-030	Traffic and transport	Reduce costs in Highways & Traffic Business Support A more efficient back office Business Support Team dealing with correspondence, consultation, administration and finance support.	(40)	-	-	
Sub total			(11,651)	(5,267)	(8,224)	

Changing how we fund and provide services

Reference	Service label	Proposal and brief description	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	SCRUTINY RESPONSE
R-PP-003	Children and young people	Review of Children Centres and Early Years support Changing the way we fund and provide Children Centres and Early Years services to ensure that funding is targeted on families with the greatest need. Services will be reshaped to avoid gaps and duplication and make best use of reduced resources.	(760)	(450)	(318)	<p>Members were assured that no stand-alone Children's Centres would be closed as a result of these proposals. The savings are ambitious and Scrutiny will expect to see a fully developed plan for achieving them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Members sought assurances that the savings were possible given the expanding population •System Leadership and streamlined management will ensure high quality provision with high calibre leadership and support •The proposals are about re-shaping rather than reducing services offered to young children and families •Savings will be through efficiencies and the service will provide improved outcomes •Members wanted to be assured that the service would remain a city wide universal service although focused on children most in need and that there is there is adequate child

						<p>minding capacity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •It will be important to evaluate the impact of the proposals against an agreed framework to track the impact on children from birth onwards
R-PP-014	Children and young people / Health and social care	Development of the 0-25 years service within CYPS/H&SC Development of a new service for 0-25 year olds for those under 18 who are disabled, have a physical impairment and/or Learning Difficulty (excluding those placed in care) and all of those between the ages of 18 and 25. Better planning will means that the right package can be identified for their transition into adulthood in the most cost effective way.	(200)	(143)	-	Members were assured that the current savings proposals are relatively small in relation to the overall budget and that the service reconfiguration will ensure a more integrated approach with improved outcomes.
R-PP-016	Health and social care	Reduction in the Supported Housing budget for physically and sensory impaired people A review of provision in order to reduce spending from £611k to £311k in respect of PSI accommodation support. Services would be retained at Buckley Court (directly managed Accommodation) and the Council's Deaf/Blind floating support service. Housing support to The Bristol would end.	(300)	-	-	This amounts to almost a halving of this budget. Members need to see more evidence about how this will be achieved without an impact on the people affected by this saving proposal.
R-PP-012	Health and social care	Review the use of School Rd respite facility Review the use of School Road, a respite facility for seven people with learning difficulties, with a view to commissioning more flexible respite in other places e.g. Shared Lives	(290)	-	-	This review must be carried out with due regard to our statutory duties to those affected. It may well be that these savings cannot be achieved.
R-PL-002	Housing	Review of strategic housing services Review spend of all teams that provide advice, welfare support, commissioned services, and sourcing tenancies.	-	(700)	-	This is another example of where we are predicting savings in Year 2 from a review which has yet to take place. At the least there should be an indication of the range of services under review and the current cost.

R-PL-023	Libraries	Review of Library Service There are 1.7 million visits to Bristol Libraries each year and we will work directly with casual visitors, the 15% of people who have a library card and the with the wider population whom we would want to use the service in order to jointly design the future shape for Bristol's library service within the changed financial limit. This reshaped service will be designed to better meet the needs of our communities in the 21st century. Further consultation will be undertaken in due course.	-	-	(1,100)	In this case we are predicting massive savings in Year 3 from a review that has yet to take place. It's not clear from the description what the vision for the Library Service actually is. Members need to understand and be involved the review process so that they can have confidence that the savings can be made without harming the service. There will also be major capital implications.
R-PL-024	Libraries	Cease library non-statutory services - Prisons Service and Schools Library Service. Redesign At Home Delivery Service Stop the delivery of Prisons Services and School library service. The At Home service is non-statutory but it serves a vulnerable client group who cannot access the static libraries - but in small numbers (about 350 people). We do not intend for this group of customers to be excluded from receiving a book service, however we will design an alternative way to deliver this. We are currently working with colleagues in Health & Social Care to design an appropriate joint approach to embedding the access to a books service, either directly into other home delivered services within BCC (internal or contracted) or via partners other settings. We are aiming to have an approach in place for these customers by April in 2014.	(125)	-	-	Members identified that that the real risk was to the at home delivery service. Discussion was underway with adult social care colleagues to reach individuals who need the service. There would no longer be a dedicated service.
R-PL-007	Museums and galleries	Review of funding arrangements for Blaise Castle Museum, Red Lodge, Georgian House, Roman Villa Review alternative funding models to eliminate costs to Bristol City Council.	-	(162)	-	Scrutiny will expect to involved in this review. Any proposal that involved closure or mothballing of any of these historic buildings would not be supported.
R-PP-023	Older people	Review of housing related support provided to independent sector sheltered housing schemes for older people Cease funding for daily warden service but continue to	(145)	-	-	Providers should have the option to opt for a warden service if users are prepared to pay for it.

		provide floating support to respond to emergencies.				
R-PL-003	Safer Bristol	Reduce spending on crime reduction projects Saving from reshaping Domestic and Sexual Violence Services (new contracts will start April 2015), gaining efficiencies from other service agreements and reducing the projects team.	(100)	-	(150)	Members expressed their general concerns about the reductions envisaged for Safer Bristol crime reduction projects and in particular for domestic and sexual violence services. They considered that the cuts were short sighted, bearing in mind that at times of economic uncertainty and high unemployment, stress in communities and in families (a potential trigger for incidences of domestic violence), was likely to be considerable. Resolving such problems could potentially be more costly for the Council in the longer term;
R-PL-012	Trees	Review tree planting and maintenance service All future tree planting will be absorbed into the PIPs (planting in primary schools) tree planting scheme (involving primary school children) which will introduce 36,000 new trees to the city over 3 years.	(200)	(100)	-	It needs to be made clear that this saving is not a cut but is based on the expectation that the cost will be met from sponsors. The wastage/loss is 50% so in effect we need to actually plant 72,000 trees!
R-PP-002	Traffic and transport	Review Home to School Transport service Ensuring those who really need home to school transport are the ones who get the support and making sure we get good value for money from commissioning the contractors. In the future we will make sure educational places are closer to where they live.	(181)	(600)	(500)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The savings proposed are additional to those made through the Children First Programme •Home to School Transport costs are the highest of all core cities - on average £77 per student compared to £110. •The proposed savings take the Council to just above core city average. •Members sought assurances that the savings could be made in the last year but noted that the savings for the year after were based on a number of assumptions, particularly relating to SEN provision and its location in the city. •Reducing spend to below the core city average would be difficult with the current

						public transport infrastructure •The biggest way to make savings is about changing where we have SEN provision - not much more can be gained from how we organise and buy transport.
R-PL-028	Traffic and Transport	Reduce Local Bus Service (Subsidy) A reduction of 33% in the level of subsidy given to bus companies to run services that they otherwise wouldn't operate. This will mean a reduction in some under used evening and Sunday services, unless private companies picked up the services.	-	(700)	-	This means that In future the level of service for certain areas of Bristol and at certain times will be determined on commercial grounds by the operator. The effects of this need to be given due weight when considering the reduction of this subsidy.
R-PL-027	Traffic and Transport	Review Community Transport Grants A thorough review of the grant funding allocated to community transport providers, in order to reduce funding by a further £410k from the current budget of £910k. There will be more detailed proposals once the review is complete.	-	(410)	-	Members expressed concern that the driver for a reduction in bus services and the community transport grant should be a better service and not the financial target, There is no guarantee that smaller providers would not be squeezed out by this magnitude of cut.
R-PL-029	Traffic and transport	Savings from Non Statutory Free Travel (Community Transport Concessions) Following First Buses decision to offer a one third fare reduction to 16 - 21 year olds from November 2013, the pilot concessionary travel scheme is no longer required saving £200k. A further £180k saving will be achieved from 2015/16 by stopping the extension of the Diamond Travelcard scheme to community transport groups.	(200)	(180)	-	
R-PL-032	Traffic and transport	Severn Beach Line subsidy funded by new Government franchise Funding for additional services on Severn Beach line would be picked up by new franchise, meaning the council will no longer need to fund the service.	(250)	-	-	Members welcomed the fact that the Severn Beach Line would no longer be subsidised by the Council and that changes had been introduced so that relevant costs would be charged to the Capital Programme.

R-PL-006	Voluntary and community sector	<p>Reduce Community Investment Grants</p> <p>The Council will reduce funding for some community groups . A full review will take into account criteria such as council priorities, the resilience of groups/organisations in terms of their reliance on BCC funding and their ability to deliver key and measurable impacts within the communities they serve and the areas of work they deliver.</p>	(300)	-	-	<p>It is accepted that we should only fund community groups whose activities contribute to the achievement of the council's priorities. It is important, therefore, that these priorities are clear and well publicised. As yet, it was not clear where the reduction would fall and which groups it would affect. The aim was that over time, this would assist the voluntary service in becoming more efficient.</p> <p>An extensive list could be found on-line of the groups funded by the Community Investment Grant, it was recognised that this would impact significantly on communities if it went ahead. Organisations would be supported through the change. Everything was subject to funding being available, even those with agreements for another year</p>
R-PP-015	Voluntary and community sector	<p>Reduce Voluntary and Community Sector Budget</p> <p>A proposed 10% reduction in Voluntary and Community Sector budget within Health and Social Care budgets, targeting resources on the most vulnerable.</p>	(60)	-	-	
Sub total			(3,111)	(3,445)	(2,068)	

Better buying

Reference	Service label	Proposal and brief description	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	SCRUTINY RESPONSE
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R-PP-009	Health and social care	Commissioning Home Care against Reablement Outcomes Commissioning Home Care against reablement outcomes so that people are supported to maximise their independence and their care journey is slowed down. Savings will be generated by reducing the average weekly package for home care as individuals maintain their independence.	-	(750)	(750)	It is important that the Council gets value for money from the home care services that it delivers/commissions. The savings involved are huge (£1.5M) and Members need to be convinced that this will be achieved by more effective commissioning and not by simply reducing the amount of care available.
R-PP-007	Older people	Reduce cost of residential and nursing placements for older people Reduction in the cost of placements for older people by negotiating better prices.	(754)	-	-	
R-PP-010	Older people	Better value for money from residential and nursing placement contracts Deliver better value for money and cost reductions from all new residential and nursing placements by introducing a framework approach to provide services at the right price to the right standard.	(124)	-	-	
R-PL-013	Sports	Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts To re-negotiate / re-tender sports contracts with a reduction in future subsidy. This will affect 6 Leisure facilities which are currently subsidised by £1.1m	(500)	(600)	-	This is likely to lead to the closure of some of these facilities. It is also likely to result in a price increase for the user of these facilities? Has an estimate of the elasticity of demand for these facilities been done and if so what percentage of users are expected to cease using these facilities following a price increase? Have the knock on effects upon the health of Bristolians as a result of any price increase in sports facilities been ascertained and if not can any estimate of use reduction be used to find this by consulting with health professionals?

Sub total		(1,378)	(1,350)	(750)	

Reducing or stopping services

Reference	Service label	Proposal and brief description	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	SCRUTINY RESPONSE
R-PP-020	Housing	Reduction in funding for Home Improvement Agency Increasing the threshold for eligibility to home improvements in order to make savings.	(100)	-	-	This was a good example of where pooling money across the council and the 4 local authorities in the west of England could generate savings albeit rather modest.
R-PL-011	Museums and galleries	Reduce Archive service Review of archives public engagement services and remodel to include greater use of digital sources.	-	(50)	-	
R-PP-022	Older people	Cease funding for a specialist floating support service for older people Current preventative service provided to older people irrespective of where they live. Where needs are identified these could be met through the generic floating support service which would continue to be funded.	(411)	-	-	This is one of a number of cuts affecting older members of the Bristol population. Has the cumulative impact been assessed? Will it mean that some current recipients will no longer be eligible for service or will receive a reduced service?
R-PP-019	Older people	Reduce Older People Extra Care Housing Wardens Reduction in warden service in Older People Extra Care Housing as there are care services based on site.	(70)	-	-	
R-PL-010	Play	Stop supervision of Hengrove play area To stop supervision of Hengrove Play Area so that it is the same as other play areas across the city.	(200)	(100)	-	There were no plans to close the Hengrove Play Park per se. The proposal was to cease staffing/supervision, but this conflicted with

						the terms of the lease. If negotiations were not productive, the decision to withdraw staff would have to be reconsidered. Notwithstanding the outcome, the CCTV present on the site would remain. Members emphasised the importance of direct communication with the public and managing people's expectations. We need to revisit and understand the reasons why supervision was introduced in the first place.
R-PL-005	Parks	Reduce work specification for parks, ground maintenance contracts Re-letting contract in 2015 and reducing the specification of works in parks. This will enable essential functions such as, but not limited to, litter picking and grass cutting to take place in all parks and green spaces.	(500)	-	-	Despite officers' assurances this is likely to lead to a more "neglected" feel to our parks and public spaces which could in turn encourage anti-social behaviour. It is difficult to make more specific comments on this without seeing the new contract specifications.
R-PL-017	Pollution control	Reduce Pollution Management service Focus pollution investigation on businesses that are high risk to public health and the environment. Obligations to advise on planning applications and responding to major incidents.	-	(116)	-	Members were concerned that cuts in the budget for pollution control, could prevent the Council from carrying out its statutory duties. The proactive education of the public and polluter pays proposals should be fully explored before the service was cut.
R-PL-020	Waste	Reduce commercial waste enforcement Reduce the level of enforcement and awareness raising work, such as illegal dumping of business waste.	-	(86)	-	Dilution of this work could lead to illegal dumping of waste in public spaces making them unattractive and possibly dangerous. The cost of removal and remedial work might exceed any saving.
R-PL-015	Pollution control	Reduce nuisance response team Reviewing and reducing the out of hours and general	-	(51)	(52)	This service already struggles to cope with the demand placed on it. There is no logic in

		noise nuisance response service. Look at opportunities for greater prioritisation of cases, closer joint working with the police and other agencies to resolve cases and greater use of restorative approaches.				reducing the out of hours service when this is the time when most of the complaints arise. How can closer working with the police be proposed when they are facing cuts in their funding?
R-PL-019	Public toilets	Review public toilet provision Closure of 22 of the 23 public toilets across the city, except the weekend temporary toilets in the city centre and keeping one city centre toilet open. Increased promotion of the toilet scheme where cafes and other business allow customers to use their toilets and use of other public buildings in those areas.	(500)		-	<p>This is wrongly presented as a fait accompli but it is in fact a review. Many members said that in their experience the Community Toilet Scheme was not a viable alternative as it currently stands. It was inadequately publicised, limited in scope, lacked effective signage, quality/accessibility varied and enforcement was patchy. No public toilets should be closed until the alternative was implemented and working.</p> <p>Detailed information could be found on-line. There would be increased promotion of the toilet scheme where cafes and other business allow customers to use their toilets.</p> <p>It was pointed out that the majority of residents would not go on the website and people were therefore unclear about what was actually happening. Many of the High Street shops are not accessible. Dedicated work was also necessary to ensure an even spread and to ensure that the provision was adequate and up to standard. Officers confirmed that regular customer satisfaction surveys were undertaken and the intention</p>

						<p>was to work in partnership with businesses.</p> <p>It was recognised that businesses were generally happy for to accommodate tourists but were not as receptive to the homeless.</p>
R-PL-009	Sports	<p>Review sports development work</p> <p>Reduce direct delivery and have a greater role in supporting partners to deliver more.</p>	(200)	(100)	-	<p>This reflects the fact The Council is gradually withdrawing from being a main provider of sports development. This shouldn't mean a reduction in sporting activity in Bristol. Members emphasised the importance of funding from the bottom up and engaging more with local clubs to ensure young people remained active and opportunities were made available to them.</p> <p>In supporting partners to deliver more, it was suggested that money should be spent to research accessibility - 90% of private health clubs were not accessible to Disabled people.</p>
R-PL-026	Traffic and transport	<p>Reduce remit of Highways Area Engineering Team</p> <p>To review non-statutory transport functions carried out by the Highway Services teams.</p>	(100)	-	-	
R-PL-025	Libraries	<p>Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's learning centre and explore other options</p> <p>Proposal to eliminate subsidy to St Paul's Learning Centre and explore other options. This service suffers from a lack of use, options to be explored include it being managed by community groups or similar. The Library will be considered within the wider review of Library service.</p>	(162)	-	-	<p>Officers confirmed that consultation with the local community and users of the building had been underway for 18 months in relation to its future use. Alternative models of delivery were being looked at but there would be more consultation once the final position was established.</p>

						Members noted that there was no intention to close the library.
Sub total			(2,243)	(503)	(52)	

Invest to save

Reference	Service label	Proposal and brief description	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	SCRUTINY RESPONSE
R-PP-011	Health and social care	Provision of equipment to reduce need for multiple carers Provision of appropriate equipment, so that individuals require one carer rather than two. This is better for the individual and a saving is made in the cost of the second carer.	(300)	-	-	
R-PP-006	Health and social care	Expand Community Supported Accommodation to reduce spend on residential care Expand Community Supported Accommodation as an alternative to residential and nursing home placements, improving outcomes for individuals and reducing our spend on residential care.	(170)	(170)	(170)	
R-PP-005	Health and social care	Expand the Shared Lives Programme to reduce spend on residential care Expand the Shared Lives programme by 30 extra placements to offer more placements for people within a family home as an alternative to placing people in residential and nursing home placements. By doing this we will deliver better outcomes for individuals and reduce our spend on residential care.	-	(300)	(300)	
Sub total			(470)	(470)	(470)	

Increasing our income						
Reference	Service label	Proposal and brief description	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	SCRUTINY RESPONSE
R-PL-001	City Docks	Increase mooring charges at City Docks Increase fees to vessel owners by 6%.	(30)	-	-	
R-PP-018	Older people	Cease older people's warden and alarm services in independent older people housing schemes This is low level support which in many, if not all cases could be managed through better use of assistive technology (e.g. Care Line). To do this alarm services would be required and would be charged to residents.	(172)	-	-	
R-PP-021	Older people	Introduce charges for Older People's Housing Alarms in sheltered schemes Introduce charging for older people's sheltered housing alarms. These alarm services would still be provided to the current 790 tenants but would be a chargeable service.	(168)	-	-	There is no information on the scale of charges. Member are concerned that under the proposals that current users are unable to pay might lose their alarm.

R-PL-021	Safer Bristol	Emergency control centre to become self-funding Renegotiate contracts and generate new business to ensure the Emergency Control Centre is a self-funded unit by charging for its services. It will continue with its community safety function and contracts with other councils and private healthcare providers.	(220)	-	-	
Sub total			(590)	-	-	

Charging relevant costs to the capital programme

Reference	Service label	Proposal and brief description	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	SCRUTINY RESPONSE
R-PP-001	Schools	Secure funding for schools asset management To ensure the cost of staff involved in delivering capital projects is included within the funding of the projects they support.	(117)	-	-	
R-PL-014	Parks	Review Environment and Leisure project team This team works with the Park groups and Environmental sub groups in delivering improvements and schemes that maintain and improve parks. This proposal will offset costs within the revenue budget and recharge them to capital schemes or development projects.	(278)	-	-	The net result of this will be a reduction in the amount of capital available for improvement schemes. This could be offset if it was factored into negotiations with developers for e.g. Section 106 arrangements.
R-PL-034	Planning	Place shaping/Urban Design To charge the full staff and other costs of development and design work to the capital projects they support, replacing costs to the revenue budget.	(137)	-	-	Members of the SD&T Commission expressed concern that the Capital Budget had not been available to scrutinise

R-PL-033	Traffic and transport	Securing Transport Funding To ensure the cost of staff involved in delivering capital projects is included within the funding of the projects they support, replacing costs to the revenue budget.	(230)	-	-	alongside the revenue savings proposals. This was significant because these proposals money was being taken from the capital budget in order to save revenue. More information is required on the merits of this approach.
R-PL-035	Traffic and transport	Transport scheme and programme development To charge the full staff and other costs of development and design work to the capital projects they support, replacing costs to the revenue budget.	(200)	-	-	
Sub total			(962)	-	-	

Foreword from Mayor George Ferguson

This year, council officers, my Cabinet and I have looked at absolutely everything we spend and the way in which the council operates. Now I am suggesting a budget which is unlike any Bristol has seen before. It prioritises spending money where it can make the most difference, whilst also facing up to the harsh economic realities of government cuts and an increasing demand for services. These pressures have left me needing to make savings of around £90 million over the next three years, even though the council has already saved that much over the past three years. Nothing in my suggested budget is set in stone – it's up for debate and change. I have launched a six week public consultation where I will listen closely to the views of many different people and organisations all over the city. A final set of proposals will then be debated in a Full Council meeting on 18 February 2014.

Revenue budget

This consultation is about our revenue budget which pays for staff costs and equipment to provide services. This consultation does not include our capital budget which pays for major projects such as buildings, schools and roads.

Why is there a budget gap?

We face a decrease in overall funding of around £52 million. This is a reduction in Government grants of £75 million over three years, minus increased income from Business Rates and Council Tax. On top of this we expect the cost of providing essential services to rise by around £36 million over the next three years. This includes an extra £5 million supporting capital projects from 2015/16 projects which will create jobs and help improve our economy.

Discretionary services

The revenue budget provides statutory services (services the council has to provide by law) which we spend £329 million on and discretionary services (services that we are not legally obliged to provide) which we spend £60 million on. Sadly some discretionary services will be affected by reductions over the next three years. Of these discretionary services the Mayor is protecting around £48 million which he thinks are most important.

£9.1 million of savings are identified and are happening now. Through simplifying processes such as introducing a new finance system, a major restructure of Health and Social Care services and our Children First programme. This is already happening so is not part of this consultation.

Increasing our business efficiency to save £49m. This is not expected to impact on services residents receive so is not included in this consultation.

The Mayor's proposals for savings. The proposals fall into several categories (listed below) and total around £43 million. You will be asked about these proposals in this survey.

- * **Improving business efficiency** around £25 million. 16 proposals.
- * **Changing how we fund and provide services** around £8.5 million. 18 proposals.
- * **Better buying** around £3.5 million. 4 proposals.
- * **Reducing or stopping services** around £3 million. 13 proposals.
- * **Invest to save** around £1.5 million. 3 proposals.
- * **Increasing our income** around £0.6 million. 4 proposals
- * **Charging some staff costs to the Capital Programme** around £1 million. 5 proposals

The budget for 2014 - 2017 also proposes a below-inflation council tax increase of 2% for each of the next three years. You will be asked your view on this in the survey.

This year, the Mayor is publishing a list of things we spend money on which we don't have a legal duty to provide. At the end of the survey you can look at these areas of discretionary spend and suggest other ways to make savings if you don't agree with the proposals.

Please read the full budget information provided in the reference pack before responding. If you want to respond on one proposal in each category, the survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

We propose to increase Council Tax by 2% per year in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

What is your view on the level of Council Tax?

- ☐ Council Tax should increase by 5% per year. Consequence: the budget gap would decrease by £18 million over three years. (A referendum would be needed costing £0.5 million).
- ☐ Council Tax should increase by 2% per year. Consequence: we can deliver the level of service proposed.
- ☐ Council Tax should stay the same for 3 years. Consequence: the budget gap would increase by £12 million over three years.

What is your view on the council's budget for 2014 - 2017?

- ☐ I agree with all of the proposals
- ☐ I agree with most of the proposals
- ☐ I have no opinion on the council's budget
- ☐ I disagree with most of the proposals
- ☐ I disagree with all of the proposals

The following pages show the savings categories, ordered by the greatest level of saving.

Category: Improving business efficiency

Includes joining up services or removing unnecessary duplication – doing things once and doing them together without reducing the service. In some cases it means where we have costs, we'll charge those costs back to another area of the council which is funded from capital or grants which are dedicated to certain areas, meaning the money isn't coming from the net revenue budget. This includes savings proposals from the areas of: Children & Young People, Corporate, Equalities, Health & Social Care, Housing, Museums & Galleries, Older People, Pest Control, Safer Bristol, Trading Standards, Traffic & Transport.

Relocating Youth offending team (R-PP-004)
Reduce the running cost of Council buildings (R-CC-001)
Ensuring cost duplication is minimised (R-CC-03)
Challenge Council spending (R-CC-002)
Reduce support services across the Council (R-BC-001)
Reduce Equalities & Community Cohesion team (R-PL-022)
Health & Social Care Prevention budget reduction (R-PP-013)
Increasing the use of Direct Payments for care services (R-PP-008)
Housing register - streamlining processes (R-PL-036)
Health and Social Care Housing Related Support (R-PP-024)
Reduce administrative support in Bristol Museums Galleries and Archives Service (R-PL-004)
Pest control (R-PL-018)
Reduce policy development in Safer Bristol (R-PL-008)
Street lighting energy efficiency savings (R-PL-037)
Reduce Trading Standards service (R-PL-016)
Reduce costs in Highways & Traffic Business Support (R-PL-030)

Category: Changing how we fund and provide services

Providing different amounts of funding to services, making small changes to what they do or maybe providing the same thing in a different way. This includes savings proposals from the areas of: Arts & Culture, Children & Young People, Health & Social Care, Housing, Libraries, Museums & Galleries, Older People, Parks, Safer Bristol, Traffic & Transport, and Voluntary & Community Sector.

Review of Children Centres and Early Years support (R-PP-003)
Development of the 0-25 years service within CYPS/H&SC (R-PP-014)
Reduction in the Supported Housing budget for physically and sensory impaired people (R-PP-016)
Review the use of School Road respite facility (R-PP-012)
Review of strategic housing services (R-PL-002)
Review of Library Service (R-PL-023)
Cease library non-statutory services - Prisons Service and Schools Library Service. Redesign At Home Delivery Service (R-PL-024)
Review funding arrangements for Blaise Castle Museum, Red Lodge, Georgian House, Roman Villa (R-PL-007)
Review of housing related support provided to independent sector sheltered housing schemes for older people (R-PP-023)
Reduce spending on crime reduction projects (R-PL-003)
Review tree planting and maintenance service (R-PL-012)
Review Home to School Transport service (R-PP-002)
Reduce Local Bus Service (Subsidy) (R-PL-028)
Review Community Transport Grants (R-PL-027)
Savings from Non Statutory Free Travel (Community Transport Concessions) (R-PL-029)
Severn Beach Line subsidy funded by new Government franchise (R-PL-032)
Reduce Community Investment Grants (R-PL-006)
Reduce Voluntary and Community Sector Budget (R-PP-015)

Category: Better buying

We'll buy smarter to make sure we get great value from our suppliers. We'll also make sure we only spend what we absolutely need to by reviewing each and every request to spend money in certain areas. This includes savings proposals from the areas of: Health & Social Care, Older People and Sports.

Commissioning Home Care against Reablement Outcomes (R-PP-009)
Reduce cost of residential and nursing placements for older people (R-PP-007)
Better value for money from residential and nursing placement contracts (R-PP-010)
Remove subsidy for leisure and sports contracts (R-PL-013)

Category: Reducing or stopping services

Areas where we'll stop doing something completely or reduce it significantly. This includes savings proposals from the areas of: Housing, Museums & Galleries, Older People, Parks, Pollution Control, Public toilets, Sports, Traffic & Transport and Voluntary & Community Sector.

Reduction in funding for Home Improvement Agency (R-PP-020)
Reduce Archive service (R-PL-011)
Cease funding for a specialist floating support service for older people (R-PP-022)
Reduce Older People Extra Care Housing Wardens (R-PP-019)
Stop supervision of Hengrove play area (R-PL-010)
Reduce work specification for parks grounds maintenance contracts (R-PL-005)
Reduce Pollution Management service (R-PL-017)
Reduce commercial waste enforcement (R-PL-020)
Reduce nuisance response team (R-PL-015)
Review public toilet provision (R-PL-019)
Review sports development work (R-PL-009)
Reduce remit of Highways Area Engineering Team (R-PL-026)
Eliminate subsidy to St Paul's learning centre and explore other options (R-PL-025)

Category: Invest to save

This is where we'll put in a little extra because the result will mean saving more than we spend. This includes savings proposals from: Health & Social Care.

Provision of equipment to reduce need for multiple carers (R-PP-011)
Expand Community Supported Accommodation to reduce spend on residential care (R-PP-006)
Expand the Shared Lives Programme to reduce spend on residential care (R-PP-005)

Category: Increasing income

This means we plan to raise our charges in a small number of areas. We're limiting this so as not to hit people's pockets more than we have to. This includes savings proposals from the areas of: City Docks, Older people, Safer Bristol.

Increase mooring charges at City Docks (R-PL-001)
Cease older people's warden and alarm services in independent older people housing schemes (R-PP-018)
Introduce charges for Older People's Housing Alarms in sheltered schemes (R-PP-021)
Emergency control centre to become self-funding (R-PL-021)

Category: Charging some staff costs to the Capital Programme

This means we'll pay some staff who work on major capital projects from the capital part of the budget rather than the revenue part of the budget. This includes savings proposals from the areas of: Children & Young People, Parks, Planning, Traffic & Transport.

Secure funding for schools asset management (R-PP-001)
Review Environment and Leisure project team (R-PL-014)
Placeshaping/Urban Design (R-PL-034)
Securing Transport Funding (R-PL-033)
Transport scheme and programme development (R-PL-035)

Which proposal do you want to comment on? (Please write in the name and reference number)

What is your view on this proposal?

- ☐ Strongly agree
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly disagree

If you have any comments on this proposal please write here.

Which proposal do you want to comment on? (Please write in the name and reference number)

What is your view on this proposal?

- ☐ Strongly agree
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree
☐ Strongly disagree

If you have any comments on this proposal please write here.

Which proposal do you want to comment on? (Please write in the name and reference number)

What is your view on this proposal?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

If you have any comments on this proposal please write here.

Which proposal do you want to comment on? (Please write in the name and reference number)

What is your view on this proposal?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

If you have any comments on this proposal please write here.

Which proposal do you want to comment on? (Please write in the name and reference number)

What is your view on this proposal?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

If you have any comments on this proposal please write here.

Which proposal do you want to comment on? (Please write in the name and reference number)

What is your view on this proposal?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

If you have any comments on this proposal please write here.

Which proposal do you want to comment on? (Please write in the name and reference number)

What is your view on this proposal?

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

If you have any comments on this proposal please write here.

If you would like to comment on any more proposals please continue on a separate piece of paper starting your comment with the name and reference number of the proposal.

Alternatives. If having looked at the proposals you don't support some, please keep in mind that we must balance the budget. Therefore we are asking you to tell us which other areas you would prefer to make savings from or to suggest your own idea. The council spends £60 million on services which we do not have to provide by law (discretionary spend). Of this, we're proposing £12 million of savings (included in the Mayor's proposals) which we have asked you to comment on. If you disagree with any of these, you can now look at our list of the remaining £48 million discretionary spend and pick other options for savings you think are better than those which the Mayor is suggesting.

Please select one of these areas of discretionary spend where savings would be more acceptable.

Supporting vulnerable people

- ☐ Long term residential support for people with learning difficulty & mental health needs to maintain independence.
- ☐ Short term home support for people with learning difficulty and mental health needs.
- ☐ Home repair and adaptation services for people with disabilities
- ☐ Support in older people's extra care housing
- ☐ Welfare advice service
- ☐ Short term support for all people with care needs to help maintain independence at home
- ☐ Community transport grants
- ☐ Early help for vulnerable children, young people and their families
- ☐ Short breaks for disabled children
- ☐ Bristol Youth Links Activities and services for children and young people
- ☐ Preventing homelessness

Transport and Travel

- ☐ Remaining local bus service subsidy (67%)
- ☐ Park and Ride
- ☐ Lighting energy
- ☐ Lighting maintenance (residential roads)

Supporting communities

- ☐ Increasing citizen influence on local service delivery through Neighbourhood Partnerships
- ☐ Household waste and recycling centres (tips)
- ☐ Crime reduction activities
- ☐ Community investment and grants to the voluntary and community sector to support disadvantaged and equalities communities.

Supporting Arts Culture and Leisure

- ☐ Bristol Museum & Art Gallery and Mshed
- ☐ Support for Museums
- ☐ Arts Grants and support
- ☐ Grounds maintenance in parks
- ☐ Tree management
- ☐ Playgrounds in parks
- ☐ Subsidising sports clubs and facilities

How should we save money in this area?

If you do not wish us to make savings in any of the areas of discretionary spend, how do you propose we make savings.

If you would like to say anything else about the council's budget for 2014 - 2017 please write here.

Please provide your name and address details. Information will only be used to check the validity of responses and find out where in the city people are responding from. Name and address details will not be shared outside of the council's Consultation and Research Team. Information will be used and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Our data protection statement is at the end of the survey.

Name and address including postcode (and organisation if responding on behalf of)

About you

Equalities monitoring enables the council to check that everyone in the city is accessing the services to which they are entitled and that no-one is discriminated against unlawfully. Information provided will be treated confidentially and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and only used to ensure that everyone is treated fairly. All questions are voluntary.

What is your age group?

- ☐ Under 18 ☐ 18 - 65 ☐ Over 65 ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your gender?

- ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Prefer not to say

Are you transgender?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your ethnicity?

- ☐ White British background
☐ Other white background
☐ Black and minority ethnic background (British and other)
☐ Prefer not to say

Do you have a religion or belief?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

Are you disabled?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your sexual orientation

- ☐ Lesbian, gay or bisexual ☐ Heterosexual ☐ Prefer not to say

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the Budget Consultation.

Please post this form back to the Freepost address. You will not need a stamp.

Budget Consultation 2014 - 17 (G27)

Bristol City Council

Freepost (SWB535)

Bristol

BS1 5BR

Data protection: Data you supply on this form will be held and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. It will be considered by the council as part of this consultation. Any personal information you supply on the form is confidential. The council will only publish aggregate or summary results from the consultation, which will not identify individuals. Information will be stored securely in a database and only accessed by members of the council's Consultation and Research Team. It will be stored for two years after the consultation closes and will then be deleted.

Storage of data: The information that you supply on this form will be entered into software called "Survey Monkey" for analysis. Survey Monkey stores data on secure servers in the United States and comply with the European Safe Harbour standards. Survey Monkey's privacy policies and practices can be viewed at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/policy/privacy-policy/>

APPENDIX 6

Relevant e-Petitions on the budget proposals

We have received 5 e-Petitions in the last week in response to the budget:

1. **Keep Bristol Toilets Open** – (petitioner Mary Mellett). Closes 24/4/14
2. **Save Blaise Museum** - (petitioner Councillor Mark Weston). Closes 28/12/13
3. **Save Our City - No to £90m of Cuts** - (petitioner Matthew Carey). Closes 11/2/14
4. **Save Hengrove Park** – (petitioner Thomas Oliver). Closes 3/1/14.
5. **Freeze Council Tax** – (petitioner Alex Smethurst). Closes 22/5/14.
6. **Save School Road respite facility** – (petitioner Emma Jones). Closes 10/4/14.

More details:

1. **Keep Bristol Toilets Open**

Petition:

We the below think the Mayors proposal to close many public toilets is unrealistic. Many of these toilets are in locations frequently visited by large numbers of people. Many senior citizens and dog walkers rely on these toilets each week, as well as 30 Walking for Health Groups (supported by Bristol City Council).

Please see the two links for further

details: <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/community-and-safety/community-toilets> , <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/community-and-safety/toilets-run-council-are-proposed-shut> The first shows all community toilet locations. The second shows the toilets which are in the proposal to close.

Background information

Thousands of visitors as well as Bristol Council Tax payers use the lovely open spaces all year round. Not all of these areas have nearby cafes etc with toilets and not everyone can afford to buy drinks, especially those people with families.

2. **Save Blaise Museum**

Petition:

We the undersigned are deeply concerned with the Mayor's proposal to review the Museum service and potentially close down the Blaise Museum. Blaise is an important part of our community's heritage and we believe that the proposal by the Mayor to turn his back on our history is short sighted and flawed

We therefore call on the Mayor to ensure that the Blaise Museum remains open for future generations to enjoy. Hands off our history.

Description:

The Mayor is currently proposing to 'review alternative funding models to release Bristol City Council from directly funding these properties.' We believe that this threatens the future of Blaise Museum.

By all means let us look at the Museum and see how we can make it better, but we should do so without the threat of closure hanging over its future. Blaise has been enjoyed by generations of Bristolians and with the proper support it will continue to delight generations to come.

3. Save Our City - No to £90m of Cuts

Petition:

We the undersigned:

Oppose the £90m cuts to Bristol City Council demanded by the government which will mean over 1,000 job losses and cuts to vital services from children's centres to care for the elderly, from public toilets to museums & libraries.

Call for transparency from the Council about spending in the past and the current proposed budget.

Call on the Council to vote against this budget and oppose all cuts to jobs and services.

Description:

The 'Save Our City' campaign has been set up by Bristol anti-cuts groups and trade unions to stop Bristol Mayor George Ferguson's proposed further £90m of council cuts and 1,000 job losses.

These cuts will seriously affect many services on which Bristolians rely, including those provided directly by the council and those supported in the voluntary & private sectors.

The current proposals are far too vague for proper consultations to take place. We call on the council to produce details of where they propose to cut jobs and services.

We believe that these cuts are unnecessary and should be opposed by the council. We also believe that the Mayor should demand back the money taken from the city by the Con-Dem government.

The campaign is supported by Bristol Trades Union Council, GMB, Unison, Unite, NUT, Bristol Anti-Cuts Alliance, People's Assembly, Unite the Resistance & Black Activists Rising Against Cuts.

<http://www.saveourcitybristol.org/> Website now live and showing the UNISON response to George Ferguson.

4. Save Hengrove Park

Petition:

I/We call upon the Mayor of Bristol to abandon his plans to cut staffing at Hengrove Play Park, which we fear would result in its closure and the loss of this vital facility. We call on the Mayor to support our park and guarantee its future.

Description:

The Independent mayor of Bristol, George Ferguson, is consulting on cutting the staffing at Hengrove Play Park as part of the budget savings for Bristol City Council. The proposal is to save £300,000 even though the parks staffing costs less than £100,000. The Park attracts well over 100,000 users a year and services a wider area of south Bristol and is used by children of all ages, many from deprived backgrounds.

5. Freeze Council Tax

Petition:

The Mayor's budget includes plans for a two per cent Council Tax hike every year. We call on the Mayor to propose a freeze to Council Tax for the next two years.

Background information

Council Tax freezes are, on average, saving households in England £1,000 over the course of this parliament. The tax hits everyone, no matter how much you earn. As it is unrelated to people's ability to pay, it therefore hits people struggling on low and modest incomes hardest.

In 2011/12 and 2012/13 the Liberal Democrats in Bristol froze Council Tax.

A two-year freeze, with government support, could pump an extra £10 million of public money into the city economy – and give taxpayers back an average £125 over the next three years.

Unfortunately, Mayor George Ferguson is strongly against a Council Tax freeze. By not freezing Council Tax, which takes no account of how much you earn, the Mayor and his Cabinet will make the wrong decision. A Council Tax freeze will help all residents with their cost of living and to help pay for the cost of bills.

6. Save School Road Respite Facility

Petition:

We call upon the mayor of Bristol, to abandon his plans to close School Road Respite centre. This centre provides help and support for a number of disabled people and their carers and improve their quality of life.

Background information:

School Road provides respite/short breaks to a number of Bristol citizens with learning difficulties. This allows their carers a break from the 24/7 care that they provide.

Whilst there are alternatives to this type of respite care on the care market which are being investigated, it takes time for people with learning difficulties to accept change, therefore these facilities are vital in providing ongoing care and support.