



Brighton & Hove
City Council

Overview & Scrutiny

Title:	Scrutiny Panel on the Budget Proposals
Date:	2 December 2011
Time:	3.00pm
Venue	Committee Room 3, Hove Town Hall
Members:	Councillors: Martindale, Mears, Mitchell, K Norman, Pissaridou, Summers and Sykes
Contact:	Tom Hook, Head of Scrutiny 01273 – 29 – 1110 Tom.hook@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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AGENDA

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Budget Process/Overall Financial Context/General Budget Proposals

- o Cllr Jason Kitcat, Cabinet Member for Finance & Central Services
- o Director of Finance, Catherine Vaughan

Draft Budget Proposals Place

- o Cllr Pete West, Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability
- o Strategic Director Place, Geoff Raw

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting will be held on 5 December at 2pm in Hove Town Hall

The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

The closing date for receipt of public questions and deputations for the next meeting is 12 noon on the fifth working day before the meeting.

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Tom Hook, (email tom.hook@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email democratic.services@brighton-hove.gov.uk

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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Agenda Item 1

PROCEDURAL BUSINESS.

A. Declaration of Substitutes

Where a Member of the Committee is unable to attend a meeting for whatever reason, a substitute Member (who is not a Cabinet Member) may attend and speak and vote in their place for that meeting. **Substitutes are not allowed on Scrutiny Select Committees or Scrutiny Panels.**

The substitute Member shall be a Member of the Council drawn from the same political group as the Member who is unable to attend the meeting, and must not already be a Member of the Commission. The substitute Member must declare themselves as a substitute, and be minuted as such, at the beginning of the meeting or as soon as they arrive.

B. Declarations of Interest

- (1) To seek declarations of any personal or personal & prejudicial interests under Part 2 of the Code of Conduct for Members in relation to matters on the Agenda. Members who do declare such interests are required to clearly describe the nature of the interest.
- (2) A Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Select Committee has a prejudicial interest in any business at meeting of that Committee where –
 - (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by the Executive or another of the Council's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
 - (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken the Member was
 - (i) a Member of the Executive or that committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee and
 - (ii) was present when the decision was made or action taken.
- (3) If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the Code requires the Member concerned:-
 - (a) to leave the room or chamber where the meeting takes place while the item in respect of which the declaration is made is under consideration. [There are three exceptions to this rule which are set out at paragraph (4) below].
 - (b) not to exercise executive functions in relation to that business and
 - (c) not to seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.
- (4) The circumstances in which a Member who has declared a prejudicial interest is permitted to remain while the item in respect of which the interest has been declared is under consideration are:-

(a) for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the item, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise, BUT the Member must leave immediately after he/she has made the representations, answered the questions, or given the evidence,

(b) if the Member has obtained a dispensation from the Standards Committee, or

(c) if the Member is the Leader or a Cabinet Member and has been required to attend before an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee to answer questions.

C. Declaration of party whip

To seek declarations of the existence and nature of any party whip in relation to any matter on the Agenda as set out at paragraph 8 of the Overview and Scrutiny Ways of Working.

D. Exclusion of press and public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

NOTE: Any item appearing in Part 2 of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is confidential and therefore not available to the public.

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

BUDGET SCRUTINY PANEL; DRAFT WORK PLAN

Panel Aims

- To provide cross-party challenge to the budget proposals brought forward by the administration.
- To understand the cumulative affect of budget cuts across the council, city, for service users and providers.
- To begin looking at public service budgets across the piece – fire, police, health
- To make recommendations to Cabinet as to how to improve the budget

Budget Process Timetable

Table 4 – Proposed 2012/13 Budget Timetable		
Date	Meeting	Papers / Activities
22 nd September	Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Corporate Plan & Medium Term Financial Strategy ○ Month 4 Forecasts of 2011/12 budget position ○ Public Consultation begins
October / November		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Star Chamber process
End November / beginning December		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provisional 2012/13 Local Government Finance Settlement
8 th December	Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Budget update and savings package
19 th Jan 2012	Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tax base report
9 th Feb 2012	Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Month 9 Forecasts of 2011/12 budget position ○ General Fund Revenue 2012/13 Budget ○ Housing Revenue Account Budget ○ Capital Programme
27 th Feb 2012	Budget Council	

Suggested Scrutiny Panel Timetable & Witnesses

7th November 2011, Private Scoping Meeting, Committee Room 1 HTH – 2-3pm

- Election of Chair
- Timetable of meetings
- Ways of working
- Witnesses

2nd December 2011, Committee Room 3, HTH – 3-5pm

- Budget Process/Overall Financial Context/General Budget Proposals
 - Cllr Jason Kitcat, Cabinet Member for Finance & Central Services
 - Director of Finance, Catherine Vaughan
- Draft Budget Proposals Place
 - Cllr Pete West, Cabinet Member for Environment & Sustainability
 - Strategic Director Place, Geoff Raw
- NB – meeting is booked to start at 2pm but witnesses are arriving at 3pm. This allows an hour to go through some lines of questioning and any outstanding issues from the scoping meeting.

5th December 2011, Committee Room 1, HTH – 2-5pm

- Draft Budget Proposals Place
 - Cllr Amy Kennedy, Cabinet Member for Planning, Employment, Economy and Regeneration
 - Strategic Director Place, Geoff Raw

9th December 2011 – Committee Room 1, HTH – 2-5pm

- Draft Budget Proposals People
 - Cllr Jarrett – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
 - Cllr Shanks – Cabinet Member for Children & Young People
 - Strategic Director People, Terry Parkin
 - Director of Adult Social Care, Denise D'Souza

6th January 2012 – Committee Room 3, HTH – 2-5pm

- Draft Budget Proposals Resources
 - Cllr Jason Kitcat
 - Strategic Director Resources, Charlie Stewart
- Draft Budget Proposals Place
 - Cllr Davey, Cabinet Member for Transport & the Public Realm
 - Strategic Director Place, Geoff Raw

9th January 2012 – Committee Room 1, HTH – 2-5pm

- Draft Budget Proposals Communities
 - Cllr Geoffrey Bowden, Cabinet Member for Culture, Recreation & Tourism
 - Cllr Ben Duncan, Cabinet Member for Community Safety
 - Strategic Director Communities, David Murray

20th January 2012, Council Chamber, HTH – 2-5pm

- Panel meeting to agree final report and recommendations

31 January – Overview and Scrutiny Commission

- Panel reports back to OSC with recommendations

Possible Issues to Consider

1. What are long term financial risks to the authority and what action is being taken to mitigate them?
2. How has the Intelligent Commissioning process influenced the budget proposals?
3. Can you explain the process through which levels of savings have been allocated to each service?
4. What processes exist for identifying the cumulative affects of budget cuts on specific groups/sectors?
5. Is there evidence of funding being directed towards the authority's/LSPs priorities? How do your budget priorities reflect those set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy?
6. What are the principle risks for specific services area budgets for 2012/13? What action is planned to mitigate these risks?
7. Were all the savings targets released for 2011/12? If not which weren't and why? How will this impact on future saving targets?
8. What are the most significant pressures affecting specific budgets? Are these fully accounted for in proposals?
9. What are the major areas for service improvements? How are you reprioritising funds?
10. How are savings targets going to be delivered? How have they been delivered during 2011/12?
11. Can you summarise the staffing proposals including vacancy management? What are the potential service implications? Indicating the anticipated reductions in terms of full time equivalentents (FTEs)?
12. What other options were considered including efficiency or service reductions and why were they rejected?
13. How does the local authority's budget allocation to specific service areas compare with similar Authorities?
14. Is the authority providing services above the statutory minimum standard that were not local priorities?
15. Have any alternative forms of service delivery been considered such as partnership working in order to reduce costs?

16. Are financial/service plans aligned with the human resources/ICT/accommodation policies plans and strategies?
17. Are the local authority's financial reserves sufficient to guard against medium-long term financial risks?
18. Who was consulted in the development of the current budget programme and how robust was this consultation?
19. How does the selection of capital projects link to the council's corporate priorities?
20. In what ways has good practice been sought and implemented in the management of the capital programme?
21. How have you sought to maximise sources of income?
22. Is there evidence that the Council has moved away from a salami-slicing process to deliver cuts?

Recommendations from the In-Year Budget Reductions Scrutiny Panel 2010/11

1. The Panel recommends that where service changes are proposed early and clear consultation with service users, employees and partners is ensured.
2. The Panel recommends that where not already in existence a clear understanding of priorities for and outcomes of, funding are available for all services. These should be reviewed regularly.
3. The Panel welcomes the strong partnership evident across the city and beyond and recommends that creative ways of strengthening sustainable partnership working on changing budgets be developed.
4. The Panel recommends that Equality Impact Assessments be undertaken for all major budgetary decisions and published as a matter of routine with budget papers. Risk and opportunity management consultation should also be reported.
5. The Panel recommends that the ongoing and longer term impacts of budget reductions should be monitored. The Council and partners need to agree a way to ensure that the impacts of changing budgets are understood.
6. The Panel recommends closer working with the CVSF to help improve dialogue between organisations linked to delivering the SCS priorities.

Cross-cutting issues to be aware of:

- Equality Impact Appraisals
- Cumulative Affect
- Partnership Working
- Impact of intelligent commissioning

