

**THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 8 MAY 2024**

**REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGER**

**COVER REPORT - REPSONSES TO THE BUDGET WORKING GROUP REPORT  
2024-25**

**1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Budget Working Group, chaired by Councillor Will Pascall, reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2024 and the report and recommendations were referred to the Leadership Team for a response. All eighteen of the recommendations were adopted by the Leadership Team at its meeting of 7 February 2024 and it was agreed detailed responses would be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the four select committees according to their terms of reference. Responses to the recommendations are attached to this cover report as Appendix One.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny is recommended to review the responses and make any comments.

**Jacqui Hird**  
**Scrutiny Manager and statutory scrutiny officer**

**Background papers: none other than previously published papers**

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## Budget Working Group Recommendations Responses From the Leadership Team:

1. The Transformation Strategy is completed by March 2024 so that it is aligned with the budget process. To facilitate scrutiny, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be provided with quarterly reports on progress (Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

**Response:** We can provide quarterly progress reports. This will be a joint report from the Transformation and Finance team.

2. The scrutiny and select committees should receive quarterly reports on 'spend to save' projects as part of the in-year budget scrutiny, including progress of achieving savings from each investment. This should be a rolling process until the saving (or greater saving) is realised or it is acknowledged that it cannot be. (Working Group)

**Response:** We will include this information in the quarterly financial monitoring reports for 2024/25. OSC receives these financial monitoring reports.

3. A bi-annual report is produced by the Capital Programme Office including information about control measures and slippage. (Working Group)

**Response:** The Capital Programme is reported as part of the quarterly Financial Monitoring report and includes slippage information – this would remove the need for an additional report and can be led by the finance team.

4. Lobby Government and partners for fairer funding for Notting Hill Carnival to reduce the increasing financial burden on the Council (Environment Select Committee)

**Response:** Officers are in the process of working in partnership with colleagues from Westminster Council to lobby the Greater London Authority, Government and Partners to deliver a fairer funding agreement for Notting Hill Carnival.

5. To provide an update to the Select Committee on the proposal around the possibility of increasing the amount of street trading to increase the income for the Carnival. (Working Group)

**Response:** There is a delicate balance to be struck between delivering income from street trading, preserving the character of the Carnival and supporting the safety of the event. Following feedback from committee and a review of opportunities we are seeking to provide the opportunity to provide

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two additional areas of street trading. These will be subject to the wider event management plan delivered with partners. In parallel officers are working with partner authorities and organisations to determine a fairer funding model.

6. Manage and Bi-annual report on the pace of the £100m investment in Council Net Zero 2030 and develop a hypothecated RBKC financial provision mechanism for non-performance post 2030. (Environment Select Committee and Working Group)

**Response:** A meeting has been set up with the Chair of the Budget Working Group to discuss the recommendation and further information will be provided in the next update.

7. Brief the Environment Select Committee and Budget Working Group on transformation programmes within the next six months, especially regarding the two per cent staff savings to ensure minimal impact on frontline services. (Environment Select Committee)

**Response:** The 2% savings target is an element of the corporate approach to delivering a balanced budget. Officers updated Overview and Scrutiny at the March meeting. Within Environment & Neighbourhoods no impact on front line services is envisaged from the 2% saving being taken. The 2% will be delivered using vacancy factor and vacant posts.

8. Review the detail of the contract to refurbish Chelsea Bridge and for the Council to continue its approach of proactive maintenance to minimise disruption to residents. (Environment Select Committee)

**Response:** Officers provided Environment Select Committee members with a briefing document on 18 March 2024 of the planned refurbishment of Chelsea Bridge with an outline of what was likely to be involved, including the costs and risks associated with the planned refurbishment.

9. The Council quarterly report back to the Family Services Select Committee on progress with transforming and redesigning the delivery of children's and family services within to address expected budget gaps from 2025/26 onwards, including NHS funding. (Family Services Select Committee and Working Group)

**Response:** Family and Children's Services will produce a report for Family Services Select Committee on current and future financial position, updates against our savings programmes and NHS funding. We suggest that a decision on appropriate frequency is made Family Services Select Committee when the first report is presented.

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10. A report to be produced on the first year's activities of the 0-5 Strategy, as soon as possible after the first year had ended, and included in the Family Services Select Committee's Work Programme for discussion at a public meeting at a suitable time. (Family Services Selected Committee)

**Response:** This is in progress to be with Family Services Select Committee's working group on 0-11 service provision and will inform the conclusions of the review to be presented on 27th June 2024.

11. The Working Group were in support of the North Kensington Social Justice Archive. Members requested that the Lead Member provide a report to the Family Services Select Committee on the outcome of the Discovery Phase including information on revenue and capital costs and outcome measures. (Working Group)

**Response:** The Lead Member for Employment, Culture and Economy will provide a report to Family Services Select Committee on the outcome of the Discovery Phase. The report to Family Services Select Committee will inform the governance process for agreeing and implementing the recommendations for the creation of the archive. This will be available once the discovery phase has been completed, likely from Spring 2025.

12. The Family Services Select Committee receive a detailed report on budget proposals relating to efficiencies in running costs and in particular the reduced number of mini-cabs for looked after children to facilitate scrutiny of the potential impacts on vulnerable children. (Family Services Select Committee)

**Response:** FCS propose to combine the information requested in the quarterly budget report agreed in recommendation 9.

13. The issue of temporary accommodation in the borough and its effect on the budget be monitored and addressed by the Leadership Team and regular updates be provided to the Housing and Communities Select Committee accordingly. (Housing and Communities Select Committee)

**Response:** Regular updates will be scheduled as part of the Housing and Communities Select Committee Work Programme.

14. A report setting out progress and impacts of the budget proposal for VCS consolidation be provided to the Housing and Communities Select Committee. (Housing and Communities Select Committee)

**Response:** Accepted by the Lead Member.

15. A policy approach, complementing Adult Social Care's duty to provide statutory services under the Care Act is developed across the Council and

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working with partners that focuses on general needs and early intervention and prevention services to promote assisted independence. (Working Group)

**Response:** Accepted by the Lead Member.

16. Investigate with the NHS better in Borough provision to assist discharge, possible both services and accommodation to free up acute beds. (Working Group)

**Response:** Accepted by the Lead Member.

17. Urgent attention is paid to NHS funding issues, including the content and management of the Better Care Fund. (Working Group)

**Response:** Accepted by the Lead Member.

18. The Leadership Team consider the implications for the Borough once consultation on changes to mental health services in inner-west London, including the proposals relating to the Gordon Hospital, is complete and a decision has been made. (Working Group)

**Response:** Accepted by the Lead Member.