

BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Public Sector Engagement Exercise 29th November 2011

Report of Head of Community Engagement

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise members of the outcomes from the recent public sector engagement exercise.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

1 That members note the outcome of the exercise and consider whether they wish to make any comments at this stage to feed into the budget setting exercise for 2012/13.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 It is anticipated that the impact of the government's public expenditure reductions will continue for the foreseeable future and that this will continue to have an impact upon public services within the district.

1.2 There is recognition that the issues facing this district can be best addressed by public services working even more closely together with local communities.

1.3 As a result an engagement exercise took place during October and early November. The exercise aimed to develop '*a conversation*' with local people and organisations to:

- Share the realities we all face
- Discuss options and opportunities
- Encourage a shift in public thinking, expectation and behaviour, with local people considering the role can play not only in shaping their district and its services but in delivering them too.
- Use that information to work together and ensure the public services that are available in this district in the future are those that are most important to local people.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 The engagement programme was managed and co-ordinated by Lancaster City Council.
- 2.2 The engagement programme included a mixture presentations, workshops and information for a range of groups including:
 - Residents
 - Lancashire Association of Local Councils (Lancaster District)
 - Voluntary Sector representatives
 - Community Leaders Group
 - Lancaster District Local Strategic Partnership Management Group
 - Lancaster (District) Arts Partnership
 - Business Sector

Overview Summary from Feedback

- 2.3 The aim of the events was to consider how, in these difficult financial times, the district can work better together to ensure we are able to maintain those services that matter most to people.
- 2.4 It is clear from the conversations held that:
 - people and organisations understand there are reductions in public expenditure and changes will need to be made
 - there is an appetite from across the groups to work more closely together, to re-examine what services the district needs and how they can be provided in the future
 - there is an understanding of the need to and a willingness to share responsibilities
- 2.5 As a result of these conversations a number of overarching themes have emerged.
- 2.6 There is a broad recognition of the need for public services to join together, to share assets (building, back office function, shared services) - the efficiency agenda.
- 2.7 There is the need to acknowledge that at a very local level, individuals, families, voluntary groups and communities will request more in the way of support from the public sector. Demand will inevitably continue to grow.
- 2.8 At the time of change, organisations can be inward looking rather than maintaining the necessary external focus required by the other two themes.
- 2.9 Finally, the landscape is already changing quickly and unpredictably, not only for individual public sector organisations, but also others who rely heavily on public expenditure, such as community, voluntary sector and arts organisations.
- 2.10 Many of the services which people value greatly and make this place special and make people feel good about living here are at risk.

- 2.11 Attached as Appendix A are a broad summary of the themes that emerged across all of these conversations.
- 2.12 Accordingly, Members are requested to note the responses and consider whether they wish to make any comments at this stage. There will also be further opportunity to consider and make comments on Cabinet's budget proposals later during the budget and planning exercise. Typically this is scheduled for January or February time.

<p align="center">CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p> <p>Not applicable</p>	
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report</p>	
<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report</p>	
<p>OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</p> <p>Human Resources: None Information Services: None Property: None Open Spaces: None</p>	
<p>SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p> <p>The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.</p>	
<p>MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments</p>	
<p>BACKGROUND PAPERS</p>	<p>Contact Officer: Richard Tulej Telephone: 01524 582079 E-mail: rtulej@lancaster.gov.uk Ref:</p>