

Budget Proposals 2016-17: Reduction to Healthy Eating Programme in Schools

Summary of Feedback Received and Key Findings

Why we consulted?

Over the last four years we have had to make savings of £23m because we've received less money from central government. We have done this by becoming more efficient at what we do, by reducing some of our administrative functions and increasing our income. Throughout this period we have done our best to protect front line services.

We now have to find another £20m over the next four years, with almost £11m to be found in 2016/17. Much of this will come from further efficiencies within the council, but £4.6m will have to come from services that will impact the public.

In order to inform the budget setting process for 2016/17 we published a list of those proposals which would likely have a direct impact on service users, and sought the views from those affected and interested:

- to understand the likely impact
- to identify any measures to reduce their impact
- to explore any possible alternatives

Approach

All the proposals were published on the council's website on 3 November 2015 with feedback requested by 14 December 2015. Respondents were directed to a [central index page](#), with a video message from the Chief Executive outlining the background to the exercise.

Information relating to this proposal was linked directly from this index page. This contained more detailed information on what was specifically proposed, information on what we thought the impact might be, as well as what else we had considered in developing and arriving at this proposal. Feedback was then invited through an online form and through a dedicated email address.

Each individual budget proposal was placed on our [Consultation Portal](#) which automatically notified those registered that an exercise had been launched. Members of the West Berkshire community panel (around 800 people) and local stakeholder charities, representative groups and partner organisations were also emailed directly, notifying them of the exercise and inviting their contributions.

Heads of Service made direct contact with those organisations affected by any of the budget proposals prior to them being made publically available.

A press release was issued on the same date, as well as publicised through Facebook and Twitter.

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Background

In support of the targets to reduce childhood obesity, the Trading Standards service is commissioned, using its knowledge of food composition and labelling, to provide an education programme to West Berkshire primary schools.

This consists of classroom teaching to Year 6 with a view to raising awareness of food and nutrition and how it can contribute to a healthy lifestyle from a young age. This is a popular programme with schools.

The proposal is to reduce the funding by half, saving £10,000.

Summary of Key Points

At the close of the consultation period a total of one response had been received.

The respondent was concerned that children will not understand about foods leading to a high risk of fatter, unhealthier adults in the longer term

1. Are you, or anyone you care for, a user of this service?

No

2. What do you think we should be aware of, in terms of how this proposal might impact people?

Children not understanding about foods.....high risk of fatter, unhealthier adults, in the longer term.

3. Do you feel that this proposal will affect particular individuals more than others, and if so, how do you think we might help with this?

No response

4. Do you have any suggestions as to how this service might be delivered in a different way? If so, please provide details.

No response

5. Is there any way that you, or your organisation, can contribute in helping to alleviate the impact of this proposal? If so, please provide details of how you can help.

No response.

6. Do you know of any other sources of funding which might be available to maintain the service? If so, please provide details.

No response.

7. Any further comments?

No response

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Conclusion

The funding proposed to be cut, came from Public Health. As this cut in funding is no longer proposed by public health the service will continue unchanged.

***Please note:** In order to allow everyone who wished the opportunity to contribute, feedback was not sampled. Therefore this wasn't a quantitative, statistically valid exercise. It was neither the premise, purpose, nor within the capability of the exercise, to determine the overall community's level of support, or views on the proposals, with any degree of confidence.*

The feedback captured therefore should be seen in the context of 'those who responded', rather than reflective of the wider community.

All the responses have been provided verbatim as an appendix to this report. Whilst this summary seeks to distil the key, substantive points made, it should also be read in conjunction with the more detailed verbatim comments to ensure a full, rounded perspective of the views and comments are considered.

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