

Stanford in the Vale Parish Council

Clerk: Mike Dew, 9 Glebe Road, Stanford in the Vale, SN7 8NB

Chairman: Peter Lewis, 1 Church Green, Stanford in the Vale, SN7 8LQ



29 November 2015

Oxfordshire County Council budget saving options (2016/17) consultation

Item	Name	Comment(s)
1.	Patching Works	Agree with principal of capitalising this expense, but Council <u>must</u> assure the delivery of this service, given the generally poor condition of a number of the roads. This should include verifying the quality of a number of repairs, as well as ensuring that best value is obtained in carrying out the works i.e. in a timely manner (before issues get worse), using the most appropriate repair/method for the issue to provide a long term solution
2.	Subsidised Buses	This has been the subject of a separate consultation exercise and therefore this <u>should not</u> be under consultation here. Please refer to our detailed response previously provided to the consultation on this matter.
3.	Surveys & Other Works	Agree in principal, however Council should employ use of the latest technology in order to deliver more with less funding.
4.	Maint. Street Lighting	As part of this, a clear Service Level Agreement (SLA) should be agreed with the contractor, performance should be monitored against this and potentially a sum of the contract only awarded upon meeting/exceeding a suitable KPI.
5.	Area Stewardship	We agree with the concept of encouraging further use of Fix My Street, however, believe that a telephone contact for urgent issues is still relevant. Parish Council's already identify and report areas of concern, but do not have the appropriate resources to undertake the work (as suggested) & in the case of statutory repairs this would be completely inappropriate. Furthermore, we firmly believe that Parish (& District) Councils still have a requirement for an Area Steward with local knowledge in order to achieve the optimum use of the County's resources.
6.	More effective working with supply chain	Agree entirely – best value (both in terms of quality and cost) should be sought from all suppliers when engaged by OCC
7.	Highway Drainage	Agree
8.	Grass Cutting & Maint.	We do not believe that further reductions in the budget for grass cutting and tree maintenance are appropriate. A number of Parish Councils already undertake this work for OCC and fund additional work above and beyond that required/paid for by OCC. Tree cutting requires the use of specialist contractors and OCC should be able to demand use benefits of scale to demand great value for money from supply chain. Additionally, were Parish Councils to undertake (or fail to undertake such maintenance) there is the potential for significant liabilities to be imposed upon those councils. No detailed proposals have been given to Parish Councils and we

		believe it would be a dereliction of your statutory duties to impose such a change without significant and robust consultation/agreement.
9.	Traffic Signals Maint.	Agree
10.	Property Contract	We believe this may impact on OCC, and therefore any contract renegotiations should include an appropriate SLA with a premium paid where the provider exceeds a pre-defined KPI in order to ensure best value is obtained
11.	Gully Emptying	Agree
12.	Sharing Expertise	Agree
13.	New HWRC Strategy	This should not be consulted on here, as a separate, detailed consultation has already been undertaken. Please refer to our response to that consultation which sets out why we oppose this proposal and also includes suggestions that would enable OCC to generate revenue (circa £1.1mil) from this valuable facility
14.	Closer Partnership	Agree
15.	Winter Maintenance	Insufficient detail has been provided in order to comment suitably, however, we remain severely concerned by this proposal and believe that, combined with the growing population and associated increase in road traffic, OCC will not be able to maintain a safe highway under these proposals. Once again, OCC should ensure the best use of technology (both in terms of forecasting when gritting is required as well as thermal mapping/modelling of the road network).
16.	Increased income	This isn't a saving, but nevertheless is a welcome addition
17.	Locality team	Agree
18.	Utilisation of assets	Agree
19.	Real time information	Incredulous that this was funded by OCC in the past. Agree with it's removal and firms should be encouraged to provide information directly (potentially via mobile friendly web sites).
20.	Increase fee income	Agree, although insufficient detail provided for full comment
21.	Incident response	Agree
22.	Safety fence repair	Agree
23.	New innovation and research partnership	Agree
24.	Reduce policy & strategy capacity	Agree, also greater use of technology to deliver achieve greater efficiencies even with reduced staff
25.	Join working	Agree
26.	Public rights of way	Significant numbers of new developments within Oxfordshire at this time, majority carry a \$106 contribution to the public rights of way network. Given this fact, reducing this element of the budget seems inappropriate. Furthermore, savings are minimal and do not reflect the needs of a growing population.
27.	Streetworks/Event Mgt	Agree, although Council should look to offer a "cheap" option to facilitate the closure of minor roads for such events at minimal costs.
28.	Predict demand for Service	Council should work to address needs in the most effective way possible, with immediate effect (also as part of a wider remit to ensure great value is delivered through all services). The earlier that this is implemented, the sooner the savings can be realised.
29.	Review funding allocations	Agree, however Council should ensure value for money is demanded from Supply Chain (i.e. due to the benefit of scale, it should be impossible to buy the same item for less elsewhere)

30.	Tier 2 Day Services	Whilst not a statutory provision, it is nevertheless a service relied upon by the individuals concerned. Assessments should already be in place for each individual, so it would seem better to use these funds to provide a reduced level of support to the existing organisations, rather than a repeated assessment. This should also provide the organisations concerned with sufficient notice to consider how best to deliver their services, with the reduced funding available to them, which could include a modest charging model for users.
31.	Tier 3 Day Services	It is staggering that each centre costs, on average £¼ million to run per annum, when you consider that a reasonably sized community centre can be operated for between £10-20K per annum. Costs are clearly out of control, yet the services provided are important. More work should be done to identify savings within operational costs/contracts in order to find the required savings (another example where a centralised supply chain should realise significant cost reductions) – to meet the timescales involved, this would need to be undertaken with immediate effect. This may include a reduction in staff numbers, seeking volunteers (possibly even amongst attendees), and it is likely that non-essential services (such as hairdressing) would need to be privately paid for by the individual. Assessments of each individual should already be in place and therefore council does not need to fund re-assessment for every existing attendee, which should free further funding to meet costs whilst savings are realised.
32.	Transport to day services	<p>“No direct impact on the public” - Your consultation statement is incorrect and therefore misleading. Of course removing this service will impact those that currently use it (and may well depend upon it). Furthermore, your consultation simply states that you provide transport for “a number of people”. This does not even begin to provide sufficient information in order to make an informed decision – albeit Council should ensure that value for money is obtained, regardless of the service concerned.</p> <p>Crucially however, surely each centre should undertake a simple study in order to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people using these services, per centre • Demography of the users concerned, particularly with regards to distance/location relative to the centre <p>With this information, it is then possible to understand the true impact that ceasing this service would have. It should also be possible to consider whether any existing public transport routes could accommodate the individuals concerned and a retained/combined service may be the most appropriate solution in such cases.</p> <p>Finally, if this were to be fully/partially withdrawn, Council should work with the centres to promote volunteer car pool schemes.</p>
33.	Land and Property	Agreed
34.	Housing related support	Agreed
35.	Intermediate care beds	Agreed
36.	Care Homes	Agreed

37.	New models of delivering care	Agreed
38.	Prescription/retail model	Agreed – however Council should ensure value for money is demanded from Supply Chain (i.e. due to the benefit of scale, it should be impossible to buy the same item for less elsewhere). Furthermore, it should be possible to generate income from sales moving forward.
39.	Planned Support	Agreed
40.	Intermediate Care – Discharge Pathway	Agreed
41.	Intervention & preventative services – Dementia	Information available online suggests that these services are currently provided by AgeUK & also that these services are available through Day Centres. There is therefore an element of concern as to whether these are genuine savings in addition to those indicated through stopping funding to Day Centres as indicated earlier in your consultation. Furthermore, we believe it is essential for Council to prepare and share a wider picture of how these services would be offered if both funding for this and Day Centres is withdrawn, since there is insufficient detail within the existing consultation. In addition to the points above, all contracts should ensure best value for money is obtained and provide clear Service Level Agreements as part of the negotiations.
42.	Adult Social Care Money management	We cannot believe that it costs £390,000 to deliver this service. Believe Council needs to ensure that this is genuinely the best way to provide such services and work with AgeUK in order to ensure that best practice is used and deliver a service that offers value for money.
43.	Oxfordshire Support Fund	We agree with cutting the amount shown from the budget, but recommend that Council does more than signpost – believe Council could liaise with voluntary support groups, as well as charity furniture suppliers and applying for grant funding ahead of these cuts being implemented to ensure that those vulnerable individuals are not left trying one avenue after another. Handled effectively, this would create a service to meet such needs, at no cost to the council.
44.	Intermediate Care	Agreed
45.	Intervention & Preventative services	Agreed, but Council must place greater emphasis on ensuring that assessments are both correct and swift – 1 st time, every time.
46.	Adult social care support	Agreed
47.	Emergency response	Agreed
48.	Carers charging	Agreed
49.	Carers grants	Agreed
50.	Carers Oxfordshire	Agreed
51.	Information and advice	Agreed
52.	Carers – respite	Agreed
53.	Review of contracts	Agreed – however Council should ensure value for money is demanded from Supply Chain (i.e. due to the benefit of scale, it should be impossible to buy the same item for less elsewhere).
54.	Revised model of care	Agreed
55.	Change in admission criteria	Agreed

56.	Intervention and preventative services	Agreed
57.	Land and property – print unit buildings	Agreed
58.	Intervention and preventative services	Agreed
59.	Early intervention hubs	Agreed
60.	Schools, education and learning	Agreed – however Council should ensure value for money is demanded from Supply Chain (i.e. due to the benefit of scale, it should be impossible to buy the same item for less elsewhere). Furthermore, it should be possible to generate income from sales moving forward.
61.	Management and Central costs	Agreed
62.	Services for disabled children and families	Agreed – however Council should ensure value for money is demanded from Supply Chain
63.	Youth offending service	Agreed
64.	School organisation and planning team	Agreed
65.	Early years SEN	Agreed
66.	SEN	Agreed
67.	SENSS	Agreed
68.	School organisation and planning	Agreed – although Council should make greater use of technology to deliver the planning in question without impacting on service
69.	School Organisation & planning	Agreed
70.	Admissions and transport	Agreed
71.	Non-delegated schools costs	Agreed
72.	Trading Standards	Agree with need to review, but integration with Fire & Rescue appears illogical. From an external perspective, it would seem to be better to investigate a partnership arrangement with Thames Valley Police and District Councils (who already have both Planning & Environmental Health enforcement teams), where a consolidated service may well produce savings for all concerned.
73.	Station managers	Agreed
74.	Group managers	Agreed
75.	Thames Valley Fire Control	Agreed
76.	On-call budget	Agreed
77.	Chipping Norton fire cover	Agreed
78.	Fire & Rescue Service cadet scheme	Agreed – although we believe the service itself should continue and see no reason why there is any cost associated with it. Other youth organisations appear to manage purely on modest subscriptions from their members
79.	Strategic leadership team	Agreed
80.	Library Savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Agreed b) Item of last resort, as no rural bus services and mobile service has already been reduced. If this element of budget cannot be protected, consider alternative charging models/volunteers to assist/offer services in conjunction with local traders. c) Agreed

		<p>d) Agreed – fully support, indeed this should already be in place.</p> <p>Believe Council should investigate expanding existing e-book facility. Offer as a subscription model, which can be signed up online. This would significantly enhance service offering and possibly lead to income generation (additionally, a slick solution could be offered to other councils).</p>
81.	Arts grants	Agreed
82.	Increase tax base	<p>Agreed – NB there is no indication as to number of dwellings expected to be completed in order to meet this amount of income, nor whether they would all be complete by 01 April. Additionally, significant sums are due to Council from S106 arrangements on a large number of developments. These amounts do not appear to have been captured anywhere else. Council should take great care that these funds can be used to deliver services required, to avoid having to return funds to developers.</p>
83.	Local pay award	Agreed
84.	Contract Inflation	Agreed
85.	Strategic measures	Agreed
86.	Ending of national insurance rebate	Agreed
87.	Insurance contract	Agreed
88.	Senior mgt review	Agreed
89.	Organisational development	<p>Agreed – although believe this budget should be subject to significant further cuts. Staff numbers have reduced and this is a time of austerity, with other proposed cuts significantly impacting on public services. We believe it would be better to maintain other public services, whilst having a significantly reduced budget (if any) available for training at the present time.</p>
90.	Finance and internal audit	Agreed
91.	Communications	<p>Agreed – however, greater use of technology should be used to enhance communications, thus delivering more with less resources.</p>
92.	Reduce senior HR staff	Agreed
93.	Unison	<p>Agreed – however, believe it is necessary to remove all funding from Unison, due to the impacts on public services elsewhere. Staff should pay their membership fees direct to the Union, if they choose to do so and there should be no need for full time secondments, indeed at such times as these, Council can ill afford to provide secondments at the expense of public services. Union Reps should only be needed to have a part-time function around their union member's concerns and managers should have sufficient discretion to permit them a sensible proportion of their time to dealing with such matters on an as-needed basis.</p>
94.	Change admin arrangements	Agreed
95.	Chairman's budget	<p>Agreed – believe it is necessary to remove full budget from Chairman at present, given that current cuts are impacting public services (which is also in keeping with many other smaller Councils policies).</p>