Present: Councillor Wrigglesworth (Chair)
Councillors Ahmad (Vice-Chair), M Bashforth, Blyth, Houle,
Judge, McCann, Roberts and Sheldon

Also in Attendance:
Emma Alexander Executive Director Corporate and
Commercial
Councillor Barbara Cabinet Member Neighbourhoods &
Brownridge Co-operatives
Michele Carr AED Neighbourhoods
Paul Cassidy Director of Adults and Children's
Services
Councillor Amanda Cabinet Member Education &
Chadderton Safeguarding
Councillor David Hibbert Cabinet Member Housing, Planning
& Highways
Councillor Abdul Jabbar Cabinet Member Finance &HR
Colette Kelly AED Neighbourhoods
Councillor Jim McMahon Leader of the Council & Cabinet
Member Regeneration & City
Region
Anne Ryans Interim Borough Treasurer
Mark Stenson Head of Corporate Governance
Councillor Jean Stretton Cabinet Member Town Centres,
Culture & Tourism

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Harkness.

2 URGENT BUSINESS
There were no items of urgent business received.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Councillors Wrigglesworth and Roberts declared a personal interest in Item 5 – Administration Budget (1\textsuperscript{st} Tranche), by virtue of their appointment to the Positive Steps Board.

Councillor McCann declared a personal interest in Item 5 – Administration Budget (1\textsuperscript{st} Tranche), by virtue of his appointment to the Unity Partnership Board, Unity Partnership JVCo Board and Oldham Care and Support.

Councillor Ahmad declared a personal interest in Item 5 – Administration Budget (1\textsuperscript{st} Tranche), by virtue of his appointment as Non Executive Director for Pennine Acute.

Councillor M Bashforth declared a personal interest in Item 5 – Administration Budget (1\textsuperscript{st} Tranche), by virtue of her employment at Royton and Crompton School.
PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
There were no public questions received.

ADMINISTRATION BUDGET (1ST TRANCHE)
Consideration was given to a report detailing information relating to the first phase of the proposed Administration budget for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

The Leader of the Council presented the Budget proposal accompanied by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Human Resources, the Executive Director Corporate and Commercial and the Interim Borough Treasurer. The Leader explained that the Council still faced extremely challenging times in reducing the budget, with both jobs and public services affected.

The report provided information setting out the make-up of the budget gap currently calculated for 2015/16 (£35.229m) and 2016/17 (£25.096m) and also the means to address in full the savings target for 2015/16. It was reported that whilst the content of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2015/16 could only be estimated at this stage, it would have a significant impact on determining whether budget proposals already identified were sufficient to address the funding shortfall and budget pressures which the Council was facing. The budget position could not be finalised until the Local Government Finance Settlement had been issued by Central Government. The Provisional Settlement was expected in December.

Concerns were raised over Government Grant funding reductions and adjustments to assumptions had been made. It was highlighted that there was a need to increase housing types/council tax banding, along with increased community working to change behaviours.

The Committee gave consideration to each of the budget proposals, asked a series of questions and made the following comments.

Health and Wellbeing (Cabinet Member for Education & Safeguarding, Director of Adults and Children’s Services & AED Neighbourhoods were in attendance)

B035 Redesigning Services for Children, Young People and their Families (0-19 offer)

- Issues were raised over the current spend profile provided and clarification was sought on the proposals in relation to the Equality Impact Assessments.
- Youth Service - Alternative ways of delivering the Youth Service were being looked at and MAHDLO, amongst others, were critical in providing this. One of the reasons youth workers were being seconded to MAHDLO was to get cross
cutting involvement. It was pointed out that if Districts felt they required additional services, they would have the budget to commission other services.

- **B035C: Targeted Youth Service** – Following concerns it was advised that partners needed to be more flexible and contracts were currently being renegotiated. It was suggested that this be included in the Scrutiny work programme to review service delivery during the first 6 months of the contract.

### C045 Children’s Services Redesign

- Social Workers – Concerns were raised over training social workers but being unable to employ them in higher grade post until a post became available. It was felt that this may lead to the loss of experienced and highly qualified staff; however this would be monitored through supervision to ensure staff were supported and retained.
- The Committee questioned how specialist Foster Carers were identified. It was reported that four had already been identified. Specialist carers were paid at a higher level but this was more cost effective than residential care and was better for the child. It was stressed that children in residential placements outside the borough would only be brought back into the borough if it was safe to do so.

### B039 Review of Public Health Budget

- It was reported that through the implementation of the Public Health Transformation Fund, communities would start to see the emergence of a more explicit public health role from wider Council services, including housing, care services and leisure services. Currently services were delivered in the districts, however as they reduced in size this may be less feasible and more likely to be centralised. Concerns were raised over the centralisation however services needed to be delivered where there was the most demand.
- Making every contact count – It was reported that this initiative would link service users with other services of the Council.

### C046 Adult Social Services – Redesign

- The importance of the Re-ablement Service was highlighted and changing mindsets of people to enable them to care for themselves. It was reported that generally older people wanted to maintain their independence; however there could be issues with family members who want relatives taking care of. Progress was being made by talking to families and certain professional groups to change mindsets.
- Concerns were raised over risks associated with transformational change. Despite a good track record of behavioural change, demographics were an issue. Furthermore it was crucial to achieve a reduction in hospital admissions to avoid a penalty of £1.5M.
Neighbourhoods (Cabinet Members for Neighbourhoods & Cooperatives and Housing, Planning & Highways and AED Neighbourhoods were in attendance)

D020 Legal & Democratic – Registrar Services

Concerns were raised over the proposed day of closure for Registrar Services. This would lessen opportunities for appointments for registrations and despite the use of an answering machine during office closure, it was felt that this was not sensitive or helpful enough to customers wanting to register a death. The impact on Muslim burials was also raised and it was felt that this should be referred back to Cabinet for further consideration.

D040 Review District Arrangements

- Concerns were raised regarding the reduction of core staff at District Level. Commitment to devolution was reaffirmed. As each district was different, each would need to determine how to deploy its resources.
- A central bidding pot was queried and it was reported that this was an option being considered. A ‘Green Dividend’ fund could be utilised for delivering corporate priorities.

A051 Building Control – Income Generation

Council owned Approved Inspector Service – Overall Members felt this was a positive proposal as the Council were a trusted brand and were in support of income generation. A concern was raised over how competitive the Council could be against the private sector. Despite being ambitious and challenging, detailed research had been undertaken and the Cabinet Members and Officers were confident the service would be competitive. New income streams were necessary to plug the gap and congratulations were given to the Cabinet Member and Assistant Executive Director for the work undertaken.

At this stage in the meeting Members requested a short adjournment. Following the short adjournment the Committee reconvened.

Economy (Cabinet Members for Education & Safeguarding and Employment & Enterprise, Director of Adults and Children’s Services and AED Neighbourhoods were in attendance)

A008 Commissioning – Learning and Attainment

Concerns were raised over income generation from penalty fines for non-attendance at school but the Cabinet Member for Education and Safeguarding clarified that this was not utilised as an income generator but was the average income due to non-attendance at school.
A007 Lifelong Learning Service – Income Generation

Members clarified that it was option A which was the preferred option, as this would retain the strong contribution that the service makes to the Council's vision and priorities, especially in relation to Get Oldham Working and the Co-operative Council. It would enable the Council to influence the shaping of services for local citizens.

A009C Income Growth via additional Council Tax Revenue

Members requested figures for the higher value and higher quality homes that were being created. It was advised that Council Tax wasn’t just calculated on the number of houses but also the number of occupants. Furthermore the increased number of properties and conversions would be at various stages throughout the year. An update would be provided in January.

D059C Reserves used to Finance Capital Spending

The Committee asked if the proposal to use £10M reserve left the Council exposed. It was advised that risks had been carefully assessed using the Risk Register and Statement of Accounts. Investment in growth was needed to ensure sustainability and reserves should be used rather than borrowing.

D062C Capital Financing Savings

Members queried the reduction in the capital financing requirement. The Committee were advised that the Council initially agreed a capital programme for 2014/15 totalling £113M financed by £80.1M of prudential borrowing. Programme expenditure and financing for 2014/15 had subsequently increased as a result of slippage in the capital programme for 2013/14. Many of the schemes in the capital programme which were financed by prudential borrowing were expected to have a significant proportion of their expenditure re-profiled into future financial years as a result of delays in schemes and a consequent revisiting of timelines for delivery. This would mean that savings would arise as prudential borrowing costs were not incurred in the financial years in which they had been expected. This generated a one off saving as the prudential borrowing costs would still be incurred but would be slipped to later financial years.

Corporate

D017 Customer and Business Support Redesign

Concerns were raised over the delivery of welfare reform but assurance was given that this proposal would not dilute the ability of frontline staff to deliver.
RESOLVED that:

1. The £35.229m of savings proposals set out in detail in Appendix 2, including the savings proposals totalling £12.405m which are subject to the satisfactory conclusion of the public consultation exercise, be noted.
2. The information contained in the Equality Impact Assessment documents be noted.
3. The savings target, which may need to be revised as a result of further financial developments including changes to Government funding, be noted.
4. The initial proposals for 2016/17 and the allocation of targets to close the 2016/17 budget gap, be noted.
5. Further information and clarification on Reference B035 (Redesigning Services for Children, Young People and their Families (0-19 offer)) and Reference C045 (Children’s Services Redesign) be considered at the next meeting.
6. The review of service delivery for B035C, Redesigning Services for Children, Young People and their Families (0-19 offer): Targeted Youth Service, be included in the Performance and Value for Money Select Committee work programme.
7. Reference D020 (Legal and Democratic – Registrar Service) be referred back to Cabinet for further consideration.

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 9.17 pm