



Report from Manchester City Council Briefing on Budget Options held on 8 January 2015

Headlines for the Voluntary and Community Sector

Sir Richard Leese presented an outline of the thinking of the Council Executive. The big changes are a review of Council reserves and the £11million airport dividend. This has led the Executive to conclude that some of the options may no longer be required and others could be modified. The Council is therefore sharing the Executive's view on which options they are "minded to take" and extending the consultation to allow time for more views on these revised options.

This is an initial briefing by Macc. We will be releasing a more detailed report when we have analysed the papers. **Remember that nothing mentioned below has been decided upon yet.** Everything is simply an option until it is signed off by the full Council meeting in early March. The consultation is still going on.

There weren't a lot of surprises: broadly, the Executive are inclined to favour the less severe budget options. They are keen to concentrate on efficiency savings rather than service reductions where possible. However, this still means a large amount of voluntary and community sector organisations are going to face crippling cuts that will affect the viability of services, organisations, buildings and jobs.

Key Points

The Council are mindful that there is a General Election in May 2015 and so they are focusing on what they would need to do to save £59million in 2015-2016 rather than balance the budget to the end of 2017. This is an important shift: it may mean less pain in the short term but it might also mean that, if the next Government doesn't increase Manchester's funding there will be at least £90million of savings to find in 2016-17.

So these are new / revised options of which the Executive are "mindful"

- To invest in areas such as Looked After Children and Neighbourhood Services. Some of this might come from reserves and the Airport Dividend
- To continue funding for refuges while a review is conducted of domestic violence spending in Manchester.
- To continue the Youth and Play Fund at the same level.
- To cut young people's information advice and guidance.
- To cut £615,000 from advice services and move from a universal to a targeted system, but not to make the additional £300,000 cut which would remove provision to everybody except people who live in private rented accommodation.
- To reduce CASH grants by around 33% rather than 100%.
- To reduce funding to cultural organisations by £200k.
- To cut VCS infrastructure funding by £60k in 2015/16 (not originally an option) and thereby avoid the need to cut it by 100% in 2016/17.

What next

Remember these are still only options and although there is some more hopeful news for some organisations, this is not the time for complacency or defeat. All voluntary and community sector organisations still need to be talking to Councillors, attending scrutiny and consultation meetings, filling in impact assessments. We must carry on campaigning until the final budget is produced.

The full report is available at: <https://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org/report-manchester-city-council-briefing-budget-options-held-8-january-2015>

Regular updates and resources available on our voluntary sector cuts pages
<https://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org/policy-and-influence/voluntary-sector-cuts>

About Macc

Macc is Manchester's local voluntary and community sector support organisation. We exist to encourage support and develop voluntary and community groups and individuals to have a real influence over the places and communities in which they live. We do that by

- supporting voluntary and community groups to develop and improve
- lobbying, campaigning, influencing and representing the voice of groups
- supporting local people to get involved with groups through volunteering, giving and employment

Macc provides a number of services that support the voluntary and community sector in the city of Manchester:

- **Capacity Building Team** - supports and strengthens voluntary and community groups in the city. We provide training, telephone support, online resources and face to face meetings to assist groups in building their skills, knowledge and practice.
- **Policy and Influence Team** - supports a strong, collective voice from Manchester's voluntary and community sector. Our aim is to ensure that the voluntary and community sector has opportunities to influence public affairs and is supported and engaged in order to make the most of its contribution to the life of the city. We share information, linking organisations and providing opportunities for people to come together and network. We build relationships between the voluntary and community sector with other sectors including the private and public sectors, working with elected members, officials, the City Council, NHS, GM Police, business leaders and other relevant stakeholders.
- **Volunteer Centre Manchester** - helps people who live in Manchester to find suitable and relevant volunteering opportunities. We also support voluntary and community groups to find, manage and support volunteers.

All our services can be accessed through our Manchester Community Central website www.manchestercommunitycentral.org which includes a wide range of free resources, news, events, job and volunteering opportunities from across the city.

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