

REPORT FOR: HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Date of Meeting: 6 November 2014

Subject: **INFORMATION REPORT – Update on ‘Take Part’ Council Budget Engagement Programme**

Responsible Officer: Carol Yarde – Head of Transformation and Business Support Service

Exempt: No

Wards affected: All

Enclosures: ‘Take Part’ booklet

Section 1 – Summary

This report sets out to inform the Health and Wellbeing Board on the programme of Resident Engagement entitled ‘Take Part’.

All stakeholders are encouraged to formally respond to the engagement and encourage residents to complete the survey.

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

On September 11 2014 the Council launched 'Take Part' the start of a major conversation with residents about the changes that the Council needs to make over the next four years. This part of the engagement will last for eight weeks and the findings will feed into the budget making process for 2015/16 and beyond.

The Council need to save £75 m, which is equivalent to £850 per household, over the next four years and this cannot be achieved without a severe impact on the services that we provide.

Each year, due to an increase in population, the demand for services is growing whilst Central Government funding is reduced. This means that the Council simply cannot keep running services the way we have in the past.

There are many positive things the Council will be doing to make Harrow a better place to live. We continue to bid successfully for funding to allow us to improve the town centre and build more affordable homes. We have identified land for 6,000 new homes and have begun working with residents on Grange Farm Estate regeneration. We have begun work to expand our schools to provide an additional 5,000 places. Major developers are progressing developments sites such as the old Post Office in the town centre. These will help deliver 3,000 new jobs and 500 new apprenticeships. We are working to bring health and social care services together so residents can have a better experience and are encouraging residents to get more active.

A 'Take Part' booklet has been produced which includes a list of proposals for the first round of budget cuts. Following this part of the engagement, and if it is decided to take any of these proposals forward, a more detailed consultation will need to take place.

We are calling on all residents to 'Take Part' and join the conversation about the kind of Harrow we are shaping. All feedback is important and we are striving to ensure that everybody has the opportunity to be involved in decisions about the future of Harrow.

Residents can share their thoughts on the budget by completing a survey, by writing in, by submitting a video message, or in person at one of the road shows or drop in sessions or at one of the many, many meetings that the engagement team will be attending to encourage participation.

As part of 'Take Part' the Council is also hoping to encourage residents to volunteer and will contact identified residents to let them know how they can make a difference.

A similar programme of engagement is running concurrently for staff.

Section 3 – Further Information

Following completion of 'Take Part' a feedback report will be produced, which will be published on the internet and circulated to those who do not have internet access.

Section 4 – Financial Implications

The Budget Planning Process Update report that went to Cabinet in July of this year set out the £75m estimated budget gap for the four year period 2015/16 to 2018/19 and the indicative savings target of £30m for 2015/16. The results of Take Part will inform the budget setting process for 2015/16. The draft budget for 2015/16 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2015/16 to 2018/19 will be recommended to December Cabinet for consultation. The final budget and MTFS will be taken to February Cabinet and Cabinet will be asked to recommend the budget to February Council for approval.

Take Part is being funded from the MTFS Implementation reserve.

Section 5 - Equalities implications

A multi agency group has been established to complete an EqIA on this stage of the engagement. This document will remain open until the engagement closes on 7 November and the findings will feed into the December and February budget reports to Cabinet and Council.

Section 6 – Council Priorities

The Council's vision is 'Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow'.

The aspiration of the Administration is to put engagement and involvement centre stage of the way that the Council interacts with residents, working alongside them every step of the way to make the difficult decisions around funding services which lie ahead. We will seek to empower and inspire local people to build upon the many assets that exist at the heart of all our communities. This change in approach will flow through all that we do and build a brand with residents over the next four years that they will recognise as an authentic and meaningful approach to involving them in important decisions, and where we can, empowering them to deliver community outcomes.

STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE (Council and Joint Reports)

Name: Dawn Calvert

on behalf of the
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 14.10.14

Ward Councillors notified:

YES

Section 7 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Carol Yarde – Head of Transformation and Business
Support Service 0208 420 9660

Background Papers: 'Take Part' Resident Booklet