

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive	Special Council	28 th February 2013

BUDGET INVESTMENT PACKAGE 2013/14

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To present for approval a package of budget growth items as part of the budget approval process. The report contains 18 budget growth investments in respect of the Revenue Budget and 5 Capital Budget/Programme budget growth schemes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That Members use the results of the budget consultation which highlight the views of residents to inform their decisions on setting the Budget for 2013/14.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. This paper presents:
 - 18 growth schemes in the Revenue Budget the support the budget principles agreed at Executive Cabinet in January, the Council's strategic priorities and the findings of the budget consultation.
 - 5 growth schemes to be included in the Capital Programme to assist in redeveloping key town centres sites to support improving the town centre and a plan to improve Astley Park, plus projects to extend the village hall at Clayton Brook and improve the reservoir at Yarrow Valley Country Park.
4. The investment proposals have been grouped into four categories based on the corporate strategy priorities:
 - **Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all**
Total Revenue Proposals: £0.250m;
Total Capital Proposals: £0.135m.
 - **Clean, safe and healthy communities**
Total Revenue Proposals: £0.284m;
Total Capital Proposals: £0.060m.
 - **An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area**
Total Revenue Proposals: £0.160m;
Total Capital Proposals: £0.280m.
 - **A strong local economy**
Total Revenue Proposals: £0.655m;
Total Capital Proposals: £1.00m

Investment proposal – Revenue Budget	£1.349m
Investment proposal – Capital Budget	£1.475m
TOTAL INVESTMENT PACKAGE 2013/14	£2.824m

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate		No
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	x	A strong local economy	x
Clean, safe and healthy communities	x	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	x

BACKGROUND

6. The budget estimates for 2013/14 includes headroom to allow for investment in priorities. This has been partially achieved as a result of an effective, pre-budget efficiency programme.

BUDGET PROPOSALS

7. The Executive published the outline budget for consultation during January 2013 setting out its overall intention for spending and investment in the borough for the forthcoming financial year 2013/14. The proposals are all focussed on the priorities of the Corporate Strategy, summarised in the project synopses later in this report and set out in more detailed project mandates in Appendix C1.

BUDGET CONSULTATION RESULTS

8. The budget consultation results are attached in Appendix I on the agenda. They show a broad consensus with the areas proposed for investment and in particular recognise town centre development, a strong economy and neighbourhood working as high priorities. The areas for investment outlined below have all been designed to support the achievement of the priorities through targeted activity and a sustainable approach.

REVENUE BUDGET GROWTH SCHEMES

9. The table below identifies the growth schemes for 2013/14:

INVESTMENT AREA	Amount £
Neighbourhood working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive clean up team * • Neighbourhood working pot • Building capacity in local communities ** 	50,000 100,000 70,000
Support to the VCFS Network **	15,000
Chorley Community Bank **	50,000
16/17 year old drop in scheme	15,000
Tree Policy *	30,000
Extension and improvement of street furniture	65,000
Active Generation	31,000
Street Games	50,000
Play area improvements **	100,000
Free Swimming	7,500
Employee health scheme	20,000
Campaigns and events	40,000
Car park pay and display income reduction	75,000
Inward investment delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inward investment fund • Regeneration projects - revenue costs of capital scheme* 	350,000 40,000
Town Centre Masterplan	30,000
Support the expansion of local businesses	110,000
Implement a joint employment initiative with Runshaw College	50,000
Private Property Improvement Scheme Trial	50,000
TOTAL NEW INVESTMENT	1,348,500

* these items are recurring and included in the base budget (seen in Appendix F1).

** these items are recurring for 3 years and therefore have first call on future NHB receipts as per Appendix F1).

CAPITAL PROGRAMME BUDGET GROWTH SCHEMES

10. Five further Capital Programme/Budget investments are proposed:

INVESTMENT AREA	Amount £m
Regeneration Projects	1.000
Astley Hall Development Works	0.250
Astley Hall Farm	0.030
Clayton Brook Village Hall Extension	0.135
Yarrow Valley Country Park reservoir works	0.060
TOTAL NEW INVESTMENT	1.475

Regeneration Projects – Estimated Capital Budget £1.0m

11. This budget will make funds available to pursue a range of options to improve the attractiveness of key potential business premises in the borough with the aim of influencing future development and attracting more quality business growth.
12. This option creates the facility to invest in regenerating key sites up to a total of £1.0m with an estimated revenue cost of £40,000 per year in revenue. Overall the revenue costs are reducing in the budget following the debt restructuring strategy being applied, a revenue savings of £60,000 will be achieved which more than offsets the £40,000 required to facilitate the timely delivery of regeneration, and allow options to be developed in the town centre following the completion of the town centre Masterplan and Inward Investment delivery projects.

Astley Park development – Estimated Capital Budget £0.280m

13. Astley Park Development Works £250k. In line with the Corporate Strategy, work is currently being developed in order to further enhance Astley Park to maximise its use by local people for recreational use as well as major events. £250k will cover a range of improvements that could include, for example, car parking enhancements, additional attractions, lighting, pathway improvements etc. Wherever there is the opportunity to apply for external funding, this will be pursued. In the meantime it is financed in the Capital Programme by means other than borrowing and therefore will have no impact on the on-going revenue budget.
14. Astley Farmhouse £30k. This project will bring the farmhouse into use to add to the offer around the Astley complex. The money will be used to refurbish the building so that it can be used for an alternative use. This will include additional gallery space and it will also include provision for other activities. This may involve a partnership with an external organisation that could bring an income stream into the Council. This scheme is not financed in the Capital Programme using borrowing and therefore will have no impact on the on-going revenue budget.

Clayton Brook Village Hall Extension – Estimated Capital Budget £0.135m

15. Following the demolition of the pub in Clayton Brook, this project will extend the existing Village Hall to provide a base for additional community activities in the area. The intention ultimately is for the project to be managed by local people through a community management arrangement. There is a potential for the Council's investment to be matched via external funding bid for by the local community. The demolition of the pub and the extension of the Village Hall along with working with other property owners in the area will result in a significant improvement to the local environment. This scheme is not financed in the Capital Programme using borrowing therefore will have no impact on the on-going revenue budget.

Yarrow Valley Country Park reservoir works – Estimated Capital Budget £0.060m

16. The Environment Agency has served notice on the Council that improvements need to be made to the reservoir (lodge) at Yarrow Valley Country Park. These improvements are to deal with emergency situations and provide additional capacity to hold water and redirect water away in the event of severe rainfall. This is not due to a lack of maintenance of the existing amenity rather increasing capacity for a severe eventuality in the future. This scheme is not financed in the Capital Programme using borrowing and therefore will have no impact on the on-going revenue budget.

PROJECT SYNOPSES

INVOLVING RESIDENTS IN IMPROVING THEIR LOCAL AREA AND EQUALITY OF ACCESS FOR ALL

Neighbourhood Working - Proactive clean up team **£50,000**

A proactive team to deal with areas that repeatedly fall into disrepair in neighbourhood areas, revisiting areas every six to eight weeks. This will ensure that those areas that are currently cleaned up on an ad hoc basis/when we receive a complaint etc. will be cleaned up on a scheduled basis.

Neighbourhood Working - Projects **£100,000**

This budget would provide additional funding to support works over and above business as usual including specific neighbourhood projects arising from neighbourhood meetings and a further programme of community clean up days.

Neighbourhood Working - Building capacity in local communities **£70,000**

Working with the social enterprise Spice, this would be a three year project that would:

- Develop an extension to the current project (funded by LCC and the Department for Health) to make the time credits system available to the whole of the borough. This would include a training programme for community organisations and schools who want to be involved which would run from April 2013.
- Provide additional community development capacity to support the launch and development of neighbourhood working. This would include increasing the provision for community engagement and developing effective neighbourhood plans for each area.

Linking this work closely with the community development work that will be needed to make neighbourhood working successful will provide additional value to both pieces of work, in encouraging greater community involvement and engagement. It is also designed to encourage a different approach to neighbourhood working than the one that has been previously taken.

Support to the VCFS network to increase volunteering in the borough **£15,000**

This funding will develop further infrastructure and support for third sector organisations in Chorley through support for the VCFS Network. This work will also strengthen provision for volunteering including links into the Lancashire County Council volunteering programme.

16/17 year old drop in scheme **£15,000**

This budget would enable provision of a drop in service for 16/17 year olds to continue for another year. The service provided by 'South Ribble Key' has to date been funded by a CLG grant. The drop in centre provides housing advice, family mediation and counselling for young people.

CLEAN, SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Tree Policy

£30,000

This budget is to enhance the existing tree service. The Council's current tree policy which has been in place since 2010 states that work will only be undertaken on dead, dangerous and diseased trees. Many requests for service are for pruning overhanging branches / topping trees. The policy will be amended to include Council trees overhanging private gardens / houses (including the roots) regardless of tree health.

The estimated cost of this proposal is more difficult to determine as it depends on requests and demand. The work would be undertaken using a specialist tree contractor and £30K would provide additional tree work two days a week during the growing season (over 26 weeks). If demand is less – spare capacity could be utilised on other tree work and if demand was greater this would require further funding or it could be undertaken the following season.

Extension and improvement of street furniture

£65,000

This would extend the current replacement and refurbishment programme of 300 bins by an additional 300 bins (25% of stock) during 2013/14.

Replacement will targeted at the remaining high use sites such as parks, play areas, car parks and to replace the old style red dog bins. The red dog bins offer limited capacity and often appear to be full, when they aren't, due to the opening mechanism trapping bags of dog waste. Litter bin capacity will be improved by 10% and it will also be much easier for residents to dispose of their dog waste

Active Generation

£31,000

This budget would enable the continuation of the Active Generation scheme for a further 12 months. Active Generation provides a variety of activities aimed at encouraging the 50+ age group to be more active physically, and to promote healthier lifestyles. In 2013/14 it is proposed to continue to provide activity opportunities for older people but also to link into the wider neighbourhood working model and seek to establish local community groups that are self-sustaining and able to continue with the provision of local activities and developments.

Street Games

£50,000

This budget would enable the continuation of the Street Games scheme for a further 12 months. Street Games is a specific project aimed at delivering doorstep sport in a low cost way with a key emphasis on the most deprived communities in the Borough. It is aimed towards young people 5 years to 24 years, providing diversionary activity and supporting health and wellbeing.

Improvements to Play Areas

£100,000

To make improvements to the Astley Park play area and four other play areas in the borough such as Coronation Rec and/or Harpers Lane, over a three year programme of work

Free Swimming

£7,500

This budget would provide free afternoon swimming sessions for under 16's during the school summer holidays (Monday – Fridays).

AN AMBITIOUS COUNCIL THAT DOES MORE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND THE LOCAL AREA

Employee Health Scheme

£20,000

This a continuation of the employee health care cash plan for a second year. The council would pay a fixed contribution of £1 per week per employee, enabling employee to claim back money for healthcare costs. The benefits of this scheme include:

- Improved employee health
- Increased staff satisfaction and engagement
- Improvement in staff benefits, more attractive package for potential employees.
- Achieve a reduction in current health and well-being expenditure.

Campaigns and Events

£40,000

This budget is to augment the delivery of key activity planned for the next twelve months around specific priority campaigns including:

- The civic pride campaign, which will link closely with neighbourhood working in particular and take a broader approach to building community resilience and increasing levels of engagement;
- Town centre and inward investment marketing, to link with the work being undertaken to improve and revitalise the town centre as well as encouraging inward ;
- Collective energy switching to support priorities around reducing fuel poverty
- Christmas lights switch on.

Support to Chorley Community Bank

£50,000

In the light of Welfare Reform changes, there is now a need to ensure a source of secure and accessible finance in Chorley which provides a viable alternative to other more high risk options such as pay day lenders and loan sharks. This project will look to establish a high street Bank of Chorley in an extension to the current Credit Union model operated by Unify from the cash office in the Union Street reception.

The Council along with local partners from the advice and housing sectors will look to finance this initiative for a 3 year period after which it is envisaged the facility will become self-sustaining. This project will form a key part of a wider programme of work aimed at mitigating the impact of Welfare Reform in Chorley.

Private Property Improvement Scheme Trial

£50,000

The Council have statutory powers to address issues with privately owned properties in the Borough when they constitute a statutory nuisance, a danger to the public or are sufficiently detrimental to the amenity of the neighbourhood. However there is a gap where the condition of the property is not sufficiently poor to trigger statutory responsibilities but is poor enough to cause issues for neighbours. This budget will support the introduction of a trial scheme for a period of 1 year to provide a process for considering these properties and where appropriate, with the property owner consent, to undertake works to address the issues raised. This initiative supports a wider approach to neighbourhood working and promotes civic pride.

A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

Inward Investment Delivery fund

£350,000

This budget for inward investment delivery is to enable the development of an inward investment plan and subsequent pursuit of a range of options to deliver priority areas of the plan. This may include development of a database of target intermediaries, the development of an inward investment site or may contribute to larger and more ambitious schemes to bring forward key employment sites.

Car park pay and display income reduction

£75,000

It is estimated that continuation of the trial changes to the car parking tariffs will impact on the budget by an annual reduction in income of approximately £75,000. Following the end of the trial in February, a decision will need to be made about whether to continue with the trial tariffs, make additional changes or revert back to the previous tariffs. Allocating £75,000 will enable members the flexibility to continue with the revised tariffs, make adjustments or even to invest in other improvements to car parking.

Town Centre Master Plan

£30,000

This budget will fund the development of a town centre masterplan from an external provider. The plan will provide the foundations for a strategic and planned approach to attract future investment to key development sites, enhance the public realm and improve the town centre offer.

This project will consider whether the size of the retail element of the town centre is fit for purpose, more clearly define land use zones, provide investment-ready locations for future development, identify locations for investment in the public realm, as well as car parking provision.

Support the expansion of local businesses

£110,000

A budget of £10,000 to include:

- Business Advisor budget to cover networking memberships, marketing and guest speakers
- Choose Chorley Business Network and Annual North West Business Insider Event
- Maintaining business data Maintaining business database for the Choose Chorley Business Newsletter

Plus, £100,000 reward scheme for capital expansion of existing businesses. This grant will help existing local businesses to realise their expansion plans by either hastening their decision to expand, which should mean the creation of new jobs, and/or the grant funding could be used as quasi capital investment to leverage funding from mainstream finance sources. SME businesses have to overcome various challenges and bureaucracy to expand and this will provide a vital incentive.

Implement a joint employment initiative with Runshaw College

£50,000

This budget would be used to overcome some of the financial barriers that young people face in accessing and sustaining apprenticeships by allocating £45,000 to Runshaw College to make available a Chorley Council employment support fund from which employers can access support towards costs additional to wages; this may include travel, training, protective clothing, tools and equipment to do the job dependent on the specific needs of the individual. The amount available would be limited per apprentice (e.g. £750 per year) from which employers can access (via Runshaw) as much or as little as they require and this fund will be available for a two year period.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

17. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	X	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	X	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

18. The financial implications of the budget are set out in the main report and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

19. The proposals are in line with legislation.

GARY HAL
CHIEEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Victoria Willett	5348	07 th Feb 2013	Budget growth