

Our Reference CDT budget proposal 2024
Date 16th January 2024

Public Health
Glebe Street
Civic Centre
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 1HH

Dear Stakeholder,

Re: Community Development Team Budget Proposal 2024/25 (ASCHIW2425-E).

On 8th January the Council commenced its budget consultation to set out a balanced budget. In setting a balanced budget we have had to look at all options available to us. The proposals represent some hard choices and new approaches needed to improve wellbeing of residents and reduce inequalities whilst increasing prosperity of local residents and businesses.

This is an open letter to all stakeholders who have an interest in the budget proposal regarding the Community Development Team (CDT).

Background to the Community Development Team Budget proposal

The Council's proposed new Corporate Strategy sets out a new and different approach for the city. The Council wants to work more closely with residents and community organisations as we know we need to build more trusting and joint relationships to deliver this ambition. Therefore, the Council has been reviewing its approach to Community Development and how best to implement this new way of working.

A new approach to community development for the City

The budget proposal is one of three key elements to the way in which we wish to deliver community development for the City. The first element is to invest in VAST to be the voluntary, community and faith (VCF) sector support organisation. They will provide leadership and advocacy for the sector, further develop partnerships and collaborations across the city, volunteering support and build capacity in the VCF sector by supporting organisations.

The second element will be the development of a joint strategy with the VCF sector so we have a clear focus on what we jointly want to achieve over the next few years. This will be developed later this year.

The third element (budget proposal) is deleting the current CDT and then investing in the VCF sector to deliver community development across the four localities across the city.

Please tell us if you need this letter in an alternative format

contacting the council:

Telephone: 01782 23 4234 **Text:** 07786 200 700

Email: Enquiries@stoke.gov.uk

stoke.gov.uk

Implications

Although we are proposing to remove the current CDT, this is not about withdrawing support for the sector. This is about a change in approach by building up the VCF sector. There are a number of reasons for this, including that the sector knows our communities better and has a greater ability to bring in external resources to the City as well as strengthening the sector to support other programmes including family support, addressing hardship, cultural activity, environmental improvements as well as many other projects. For example, this was shown in the strong networks of support created during our City response to the Covid pandemic.

During this transition we do not want to leave any organisation without needed support, so if you are worried about losing a specific form of support, please let us know.

How can I provide feedback on this budget proposals?

We are listening and if we need to adapt and adjust our budget proposals through the consultation, we will do so.

If you wish to provide feedback on this proposal (or any other) please contact the Council via the Budget Consultation email; budgetconsultation@stoke.gov.uk All feedback will be acknowledged and used to inform the budget process.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Gunther
Director Public Health
stephen.gunther@stoke.gov.uk

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