

## **Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission**

**Date: 15 November 2017**

Wards: All

**Subject: Reference from the Financial Monitoring Scrutiny Task Group – Business Plan Update 2018-22**

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

Lead member: Councillor Peter Southgate, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

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### **Recommendations:**

- A. That the Commission, in its scrutiny of the Business Plan 2018-22, takes into account the comments made by the Financial Monitoring Scrutiny Task Group at its meeting on 14 November, set out in section 2 below.
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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. To formally set out the reference from the Financial Monitoring Scrutiny Task Group in relation to its consideration of the financial monitoring report and a report on the council's approach to commercialisation. The reference is intended to assist the Commission in its scrutiny of the Business Plan Update 2018-22.

## **2 DETAILS**

- 2.1. The Financial Monitoring Task Group, at its meeting on 14 November, scrutinised the financial monitoring report for the six month period ending 31 March. The Task Group RESOLVED to make a reference to the Commission asking it to note the following points arising from the monitoring report and to take these into account when scrutinising the Business Plan Update 2018-22:
1. The proposed use of £2.9million from the earmarked reserves to balance the budget;
  2. That there is just £0.5million head room left on the General Fund; before it reaches the minimum prudent level set for 2017/18
  3. That the predicted shortfall of savings to be carried forward from previous years will be £860,000 for 2018/19;
  4. That some of the problems experienced in achieving savings are longstanding and persistent, including demographic pressures in Adult Social Care and the unfunded costs of supporting in relation to unaccompanied asylum seeking children and those with no recourse to public funds; and intensifying price competition where council services compete with the private sector eg. building control
  5. The vacancy rate and use of agency staff and number of unfilled vacancies, after allowing for brought forward savings

- 2.2. The Task Group also received a report setting out the council's approach to commercialisation, which members welcomed. The Task Group RESOLVED to ask the Commission to be mindful of income opportunities arising from a more commercial approach by officers, including through examination of the refreshed Target Operating Models in 2018/19.

### **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1. The Commission is requested to take the Task Group's comments into account and decide whether to include these in a reference to Cabinet.

### **4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED.**

- 4.1. The Constitution outlines the requirements for consulting scrutiny on the budget.

### **5 TIMETABLE**

Reference from the Task Group to be discussed by the Commission at its meeting on 15 November.

### **6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. None for the purposes of this report.

### **7 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. The process for developing the budget and business plan is set out in Part 4C of the Council's Constitution. The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and panels with regard to the development of the budget and business plan is set out in Part 4E of the Constitution.

### **8 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engagement.

### **9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. None..

### **10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. None for the purposes of this report.

### **11 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

- None

### **12 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1. None



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