

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 11 December 2017

Wards: All

Subject: Reference from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission – pre decision scrutiny of the Business Plan 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 Cabinet, in taking decisions relating to the Business Plan 2018-22, takes into account the reference made by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (set out in paragraph 2.3 below).
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. To inform Cabinet of the recommendations and comments resulting from pre decision scrutiny of the Business Plan 2018-22 by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Overview and Scrutiny Panels at their meetings in November 2017.

2 DETAILS

- 2.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Commission and each of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels have examined the budget and business plan proposals relating to the service areas within their remit. There were no references from the Scrutiny Panels to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission relating to round one of the budget scrutiny process this year.
- 2.2. The Commission received a reference from its financial monitoring task group arising from its scrutiny of the six months financial monitoring report at its meeting on 14 November 2017.
- 2.3. The Commission discussed the reference from the task group and **RESOLVED** to make a reference to Cabinet asking Cabinet to be mindful of the financial monitoring task group's discussion when reviewing the draft Business Plan 2018-22. In particular, Cabinet is asked to note:
- a) the proposed use of £2.9million from the earmarked reserves to balance the budget;
 - b) that there is just £0.5million head room left on the General Fund; before it reaches the minimum prudent level set for 2017/18
 - c) that the predicted shortfall of savings to be carried forward from previous years will be £860,000 for 2018/19;
 - d) 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 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

e) the vacancy rate and use of agency staff and number of unfilled vacancies, after allowing for brought forward savings

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1. Cabinet is required under the terms of the constitution to receive, consider and respond to recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny.

4 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED.

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

5 TIMETABLE

5.1. Round one of scrutiny of the 2018-22 Business Plan was undertaken as follows:-

- Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Panel: 8 November 2017
- Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel: 2 November 2017
- Healthier Communities & Older People Scrutiny Panel: 7 November 2017
- Overview and Scrutiny Commission: 15 November 2017

5.2. Comments and recommendations from round one will be reported to Cabinet on 11 December 2017.

5.3. Round two of scrutiny of the Business Plan is planned as follows:-

- Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel: 10 January 2018
- Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Panel: 17 January 2018
- Healthier Communities & Older People Scrutiny Panel: 11 January 2018
- Overview and Scrutiny Commission: 25 January 2018

5.4. The responses from round two will be presented to Cabinet on 19 February 2018. A meeting of Budget Council will then take place on 7 March 2018.

6 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. These are detailed in the substantive reports elsewhere on this agenda.

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.

7.2. The legal and statutory implications relating to the budget and business plan are contained in the reports elsewhere on this agenda.

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. These were examined by the Commission and were taken into account in making their recommendations to Cabinet.

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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