

**To: Finance Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)**

**Date: 21 January 2015**

**Report of: Chair of Finance Panel**

**Title of Report: Budget Review – key themes and additional information**

## **Summary**

**Purpose of report:** To summarise key themes emerging during the 2015/16 Budget Review

**Key decision:** No

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Ed Turner

**Report author:** Andrew Brown

**Policy Framework:** Corporate Plan and Budget

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Summary of key themes from the Budget Review
- Appendix 2 – General Fund Budgets 2013/14 and 2014/15
- Appendix 3 – Workforce composition
- Appendix 4 – Earmarked reserves schedule
- Appendix 5 – Aggregate fuel and energy costs
- Appendix 6 – Community Services – additional information
- Appendix 7 – Fees and charges overview
- Appendix 8 – Budget Consultation Results
- Appendix 9 – Trading Income
- Appendix 10 – Consultant spend 2014/15
- Appendix 11 – Breakdown of SLA charges

## **Background**

1. The Finance Panel has held meetings with the City Council's Head of Finance, three Executive Directors and their supporting officers as part of its annual Budget Review.

2. This paper is intended to summarise the key themes that have emerged during the Budget Review (Appendix 1), and provide additional information that the Panel requested (Appendix 2-11).

### **Requests for additional information**

3. The Panel requested the following information. With the exception of the Educational Attainment request, responses to these requests have been appended:
  - Figures for previous 1-2 years included in Appendix 1 to provide some historical perspective and comparison.
  - Composition of the workforce by pay grades.
  - Reserves and balances data.
  - The number of landlords in Oxford and the number of HMO properties currently covered by the scheme.
  - Aggregate fuel and energy costs.
  - A paper setting out what flexibility we have in setting fees and charges.
  - How the remaining Educational Attainment budget will be used (to follow).
  - Consultation responses.
  - Total revenue the City Council receives from successful competitive bids.
  - Consultants spend.
  - A list of recharges.

### **Further consideration**

4. The Panel identified the following issues for further scrutiny:
  - HMO licensing and plans to extend this regime to Scrutiny in June 2015.
  - The overall number of apprenticeship opportunities created to be monitored quarterly by the Scrutiny Committee.
  - Regular update reports on external trading accounts to Finance Panel.
  - Educational attainment to be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2015.

### **Nest steps**

5. The Panel is asked to reflect on the evidence received and begin to identify recommendation areas.
6. The Panel aims to publish its final Budget Review report and recommendations by 6 February 2015.

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**List of background papers:** None

**Version number:** 1