

Scrutiny Budget Review 2022/23 – Scoping Document

Review Topic	Budget Review 2022/23 and Medium Term Financial Plan to 2025/26
Lead Member Review Group	Councillor James Fry
Other Review Group Members	<p>Councillor Duncan Hall Councillor Amar Latif Councillor Andrew Gant Councillor Tom Landell Mills Councillor Chris Jarvis</p> <p>Members of the Housing Panel will be invited to scrutinise Housing-related budgetary items:</p> <p>Councillor Linda Smith Councillor Nadine Bely-Summers Councillor Lizzy Diggins Councillor Laurence Fouweather Councillor Elizabeth Wade</p> <p>Tenant Ambassadors: Invite up to 2 of the tenant ambassadors who are involved with assessing Housing tenders. Individuals TBC.</p>
Officer Support and allocate hours	Scrutiny Officer support – approx. 2-3 days per week from mid-December 2021 to mid-February 2022. Additional support from the Head of Financial Services, Management Accountancy Manager and other Senior Officers.
Background	<p>The Finance and Performance Panel is responsible for scrutinising finance and budgetary issues and decisions, including the Budget 2022/23 decision.</p> <p>The Budget 2022/23 paperwork will be published for consultation on 07 December 2021 ahead of a final decision by full Council on 16 February 2022. Scrutiny has formed a Budget Review Group to scrutinise the budget proposals in detail before reporting to Cabinet in February.</p>
Rationale	To scrutinise the Council’s draft budget for 2022/23 and medium term financial plan for the following three years, and provide public assurance of the Council’s budget setting processes and decisions.
Key lines of inquiry	<p>Areas of focus for the Budget Review Group this year to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress of financial mitigation strategies arising from Covid and the Council’s overall expectation of what the ‘new normal’ looks like financially • Specific consideration of the Council’s planning regarding macroeconomic factors such as inflation and the growing

	<p>scarcity of workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The robustness of plans and risks to the Council’s anticipated income streams, particularly relating to parking, commercial property and the Council’s companies • The effects of upcoming legislative and regulatory changes such as the Social Housing White Paper and changes to the Minimum Income Provision and Corporate Interest Reduction • Assessment of overall strategy and individual proposals to mitigate lost income and to reduce costs • Planned borrowing levels, contingencies and earmarked reserves • Deliverability of the Capital Programme and its relation to previous iterations of the Medium Term Financial Plan
<p>Indicators of Success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust independent scrutiny of budget proposals; • Detailed consideration of key lines of inquiry; • The production of an evidenced based report with recommendations; • Broad agreement on conclusions and recommendations amongst Review Group members; • The majority of recommendations are agreed by the Cabinet.
<p>Methodology/ Approach</p>	<p>Evidence gathering to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A budget briefing by the Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services; • Reviewing Budget 2022/23 paperwork, including options or bids presented to members; • Submitting written questions to Senior Officers and reviewing their responses; • Meetings with Executive Directors, Assistant Chief Executive and Heads of Service.
<p>Specify Witnesses/ Experts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Member for Finance and Asset Management • Chief Executive • Executive Director – Development; • Executive Director – Housing and Communities • Head of Financial Services; • Head of Housing Services; • Head of Planning Services; • Head of Community Services; • Head of Business Improvement; • Head of Law and Governance • Head of Regulatory Services and Community Safety • Head of Corporate Strategy • Head of Regeneration and Economy • Head of Corporate Property • Management Accountancy Manager.

Out of scope			
Projected start date	07 December 2021	Draft Report Deadline	21 January 2022 for Finance and Performance Panel on 24 January 2022
Meeting Frequency	4 meetings in January 2022	Projected completion date	By 10 February 2021 Cabinet

Draft outline of meetings

Meeting one – 4 January 2022, 6:00 – 8:00pm	
Introduction to the budget and its context (Cllr Ed Turner, Caroline Green and Nigel Kennedy)	
Introductions to service area budget proposals and questions from Review Group:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law and Governance (Susan Sale) • Financial Services (Nigel Kennedy) • Business Improvement (Helen Bishop) • Corporate Strategy (Mish Tullar) 	
Meeting two - 6 January 2022, 6:00pm - 8.00pm	
Introduction to budget proposals and answering Review Group questions from:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development (Tom Bridgman) • Planning Services (Adrian Arnold) • Regeneration and Economy (Carolyn Plosynski) • Corporate Property (Jane Winfield) 	
Meeting three – 10 January 2022, 6:00pm - 8.00pm	
To consider draft recommendations from previous meetings, to consider budget proposals and form draft recommendations for:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Communities (Stephen Gabriel, Stephen Clarke and Ian Brooke) • Regulatory Services and Community Safety (Ian Wright) 	
Members of the Housing Panel will be invited to participate in the Scrutiny of the Housing element of this meeting, with tenant ambassadors also invited.	
Meeting Four – To be agreed, but prior to Finance and Performance Panel on 24 January 2022	
To consider the draft review group report.	

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