

PART 7

BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK PROCEDURE RULES

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1. THE FRAMEWORK FOR DECISIONS

The Council will be responsible for the adoption of its Budget and Policy Framework as set out in Article 4. Once a Budget or a Policy Framework is in place, it will be the responsibility of the relevant committee to implement it.

2. PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK

The development of the Budget and Policy Framework is based on the principle that the Policy and Resources Committee will develop the Budget and Policy Framework in consultation with the relevant committees in accordance with their terms of reference.

3. BUDGET FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The Policy and Resources Committee will publicise a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of the Council's Budget together with the procedure for making comments on the proposals, after their initial publication. All Members of the Council will also be notified. The consultation period shall in each instance be not less than 6 weeks.
- 3.2 At the end of that period, the Policy and Resources Committee will then draw up firm proposals having regard to the responses to that consultation. If the Council's Policy Committees (namely Environment Committee, Communities Committee and Economic Development and Place Sub-committee) wish to respond to the Policy and Resources Committee in that consultation process then they may do so. It is open to the Council's Policy Committees to investigate, research or report in detail with budget recommendations before the end of the consultation period. The Policy and Resources Committee will take any response from the Policy Committees into account in drawing up firm proposals for submission to the Council, and its report to Council will reflect the comments made by consultees and the Policy and Resources Committee's response.
- 3.3 Once the Policy and Resources Committee has approved the firm proposals, it will refer them at the earliest opportunity to the Council for decision.
- 3.4 In reaching a decision, the Council may adopt or amend the Policy and Resources Committee's proposals.
- 3.5 Any Councillor who is considering proposing an amendment to the Policy and Resources Committee's proposals must obtain information from a relevant officer of the Council to assist the Councillor in the preparation of their amendment.
- 3.6 A Councillor wishing to move an amendment to the Policy and Resources Committee's proposals shall give written notice setting out details of the

amendment and putting forward alternative proposals to ensure a balanced budget to the Democratic and Civic Services Manager at least 55 hours (excluding Saturday and Sunday) before the Council meeting at which the proposals are being considered (e.g. for a Council meeting taking place at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, notice would have to be given by 12 noon on the previous Friday).

- 3.7 Any amendments made under paragraph 3.5 will be sent to all members of the Council in advance of the Council meeting, together with advice from the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer on the financial and legal implications for the Council's Budget. This information will also be published on the Council's website in advance of the Council meeting.

4. **MATTERS RELATING TO THE POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- (a) This paragraph applies only to the plans and strategies in the Policy Framework.
- (b) Before the Council amends approves or adopts the draft plan or strategy it must inform the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council of any objections which it has to the draft plan or strategy or the Budget and must give to them instructions requiring the Policy and Resources Committee to reconsider, in the light of those objections, the draft plan or strategy submitted to it.
- (c) When the draft plan or strategy has been reconsidered by the Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with paragraph (b), the Council must, when amending, approving or adopting the draft plan or strategy take into account the views of the Policy and Resources Committee.

5. **DECISIONS OUTSIDE THE BUDGET OR POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- (a) Subject to the provisions of paragraph 7 (virement) the Committees of the Council, individual Members of the Council and any Officers, area committees or joint arrangements discharging functions on behalf of the Council may only take decisions which are in line with the Budget and Policy Framework. If any of these bodies or persons wishes to make a decision which is contrary to the Policy Framework, or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget approved by full Council, then that decision may only be taken by the Council, unless it is urgent
- (b) If any Committee of the Council, individual Members of the Council or any Officers, area committees or joint arrangements discharging functions on behalf of the Council want to make such a decision, they shall take advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer as to whether the decision they want to make would be contrary to the Policy Framework, or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget. If the advice of either of those Officers is that the decision would not be in line with the existing Budget and Policy Framework, then the decision must be referred

by that body or person to the Council for decision, unless the decision is urgent

6. **URGENT DECISIONS OUTSIDE THE BUDGET OR POLICY FRAMEWORK**

(a) The Committee of the Council, an individual Member of the Council or Officers, area committees or joint arrangements discharging functions of the Council may take a decision which is contrary to the Council's Policy Framework or contrary to or not wholly in accordance with the Budget approved by full Council if the decision is a matter of urgency. However, the decision may only be taken:

(i) if it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the full Council;

and

(ii) if the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee agree that the decision is a matter of urgency.

The reasons why it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of full Council and the consent to the decision being taken as a matter of urgency referred to in paragraph 6(a)(ii) above must be noted on the record of the decision.

(b) Following the decision, the decision taker will provide a full report to the next available Council meeting explaining the decision, the reasons for it and why the decision was treated as a matter of urgency.

7. **VIREMENT**

(a) The Council shall have budget heads which are set by full Council when approving the Council's Budget in accordance with the Financial Regulations set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

(b) Steps taken by a Committee of the Council, an individual Member of the Council or Officers, area committees or joint arrangements discharging functions of the Council to implement Council policy shall not exceed those budgets allocated to each budget head. However, such bodies or individuals shall be entitled to vire across budget heads in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

(c) In approving the Budget and Policy Framework, the Council will also specify the extent of virement within the Budget and degree of in-year changes to the Policy Framework which may be undertaken by the Policy and Resources Committee under these Rules (virement and in-year adjustments). Any other changes to the Policy and Budgetary Framework are reserved to the Council.