



Report to: Policy and Resources Committee, 6th September 2022

Report of: Corporate Director - Finance and Resources

Subject: PROCESS AND TIMETABLE FOR PREPARATION OF BUDGET 2023/24 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/24 –2027/28

1. Recommendation

1.1 That the Committee approves the proposed process and timetable for preparing the Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan.

2. Background

2.1 The key priority for the Council is to set a balanced budget for the next financial year and a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which is achievable, sustainable, able to withstand financial pressures and can deliver the following outcomes:

- i. a planned balanced budget for the next year, which safeguards Council services through a continuation of the Income and Efficiency Programme to enable the Council to deliver its service requirements in support of the City Plan
- ii. further investment to deliver the agreed cross-party City Plan objectives
- iii. further investment in the capital infrastructure of the Council to ensure good quality service delivery
- iv. minimal reliance on the use of general fund balances, with general fund balances maintained at a minimum of £1.1m to meet risks in future funding levels
- v. continuous improvement in value for money and customer focus, working with staff and our partners to deliver the best possible outcomes.

2.2 Under the Council's Budget and Policy Framework in Part 7 of the Council's Constitution, the development of the budget is based on the principle that the Policy and Resources Committee will develop the Budget in consultation with the relevant committees.

2.3 The Council is under no statutory obligation to consult with the public as part of budget setting, although openness and transparency in decision making are promoted by the Local Government Transparency Code 2015. However, the Council does have a duty to consult with Local Businesses under Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Consultation exercises need to be built into the budget setting process to encourage public and business engagement with the Council and to obtain input into the process of allocating resources to priorities. For the 2023/24 budget setting, this is dealt with in a separate report to this Committee.

3. Preferred Option

3.1 Consultation with members regarding the Budget and MTFP will be achieved through the committee structure and following the same approach adopted in previous years. The following proposed budget timetable has been developed following a review of the 2021/22 timetable and in consultation with relevant officers.

Date	Location	Purpose
Tuesday 6 September	Policy & Resources Committee	Agreement of approach and timetable.
Tuesday 11 October	All Members	Review of major programmes and economic factors, including the budget approach and timelines.
Monday 31 October	Place and Economic Development Committee	Budget consultation
Tuesday 1 November	Environment Committee	Budget consultation
Wednesday 2 November	Communities Committee	Budget consultation
Wednesday 9 November	Income Generation Sub-Committee	Review of Leisure Fees and Charges
Monday 14 November	Health & Wellbeing Committee	Budget consultation
Tuesday 15 November	Policy & Resources Committee	Budget consultation
Tuesday 13 December	Policy & Resources Committee	Draft Budget, Capital Programme & Council Tax base
Wednesday 18 January	Income Generation Sub-Committee	Review of proposed Fees and Charges
Monday 23 January	Place and Economic Development Committee	Review of draft budget and member proposals
Tuesday 24 January	Environment Committee	Review of draft budget and member proposals
Wednesday 25 January	Communities Committee	Review of draft budget and member proposals

Monday 30 January	Health & Wellbeing Committee	Review of draft budget and member proposals
Tuesday 7 February	Policy & Resources Committee	Budget recommendation to Council
Tuesday 21 February	Full Council	Budget setting

- 3.2 Member input to the budget consultation will be through the all-Members meeting in October followed by the various committee meetings in October/November and January.
- 3.3 The draft budget will be prepared taking into account the feedback received from the discussions at the committee meetings in October and will be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee for consideration on 13 December 2022.
- 3.4 The committee meetings for the Environment Committee, Communities Committee, Place and Economic Development Committee, Health and Wellbeing Committee and Income Generation sub-Committee in January 2023 provide the opportunity for members to provide scrutiny of the draft budget.
- 3.5 Any recommendations from the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 13 December and the final financial settlement for 2023/24 advised by DLUHC will be incorporated into the proposed final budget which will be presented to the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 7 February. At this meeting, the chairs of the other policy committees and the Policy and Resources sub-committee will also provide verbal updates of the scrutiny undertaken by the various committees. There is insufficient time between these meetings and the Policy and Resources Committee on 7 February for there to be formal written reports.
- 3.6 The final proposed Budget 2023/24 and the MTFP 2023/24 to 2027/28 will be prepared including addressing any feedback from the scrutiny exercise. This will be presented to the Full Council meeting in February for approval of the Budget and Council Tax resolution. It cannot take place until the Council Tax precepts have been approved by the other relevant authorities.

4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The process of developing the budget within the Committee system has evolved since the introduction of the system in 2017 and has been productive in terms of shaping the budget and building cross-party consensus. One alternative option is to hold two all-member meetings during the process. Only one meeting is planned at present but another will be scheduled if it is deemed necessary to ensure that all Members are able to comment on the final budget to be presented to the Policy & Resources Committee.

5. Implications

5.1 Financial and Budgetary Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5.2 Legal and Governance Implications

Under the Council's Constitution, the development of the budget is to be the responsibility of the Policy and Resources Committee in consultation with the relevant committees. The approach recommended satisfies this requirement.

5.3 Risk Implications

None directly arising from this report.

5.4 Corporate/Policy Implications

Setting a balanced budget for the forthcoming year and having an achievable plan over the medium term enables the Council to plan annual resource requirements over a five-year planning horizon. This provides assurance that policy objectives can be achieved through the application of appropriate levels of resources within an agreed approach.

5.5 Equality Implications

None directly arising from this report.

5.6 Human Resources Implications

None directly arising from this report.

5.7 Health and Safety Implications

None directly arising from this report

5.8 Social, Environmental and Economic implications

None arising directly from this report.

Ward(s):

All Wards

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