
Communities, Highways and Environment Scrutiny Committee

17 November 2023

Council Plan, Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Preparations for 2024/25 Draft Budget

Report by Director of Law and Assurance

Summary

During November 2023 all scrutiny committees have the opportunity to review the budget proposals which support the Council Plan. This includes consideration of pressures faced by services and plans to manage those and to deliver a balanced budget. The proposals were endorsed for scrutiny and public consultation at the meeting of Cabinet on 17 October 2023.

The attached Cabinet report sets out proposals for the full budget to ensure each committee considers those relevant to its portfolio areas in a whole Council context. The relevant portfolio plans for contributing to the need to ensure a balanced budget are set out in the appendix to the attached report as are any proposed capital programme changes.

Scrutiny committee comments will be reported to the Cabinet for consideration alongside feedback from public consultation on the budget being carried out in the autumn. Final proposals will be settled in January for consideration by the Cabinet after scrutiny by Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee.

Focus for Scrutiny

The Committee is asked to scrutinise the budget proposals in the context of the Council Plan commitments and service pressures relating to its areas of responsibility and within the context of the overall budget position of the County Council.

Key lines of enquiry for scrutiny include:

- (1) To consider and test out the information about service pressures and the plans to address them; whether these are realistic and achievable
- (2) To examine the savings proposals and understand what may be the impact on residents, communities and service users
- (3) To establish whether and which other options have been or could be considered to deliver a balanced budget
- (4) To establish how public consultation partner engagement will be carried out and how feedback will inform the further development of budget plans

The Chairman will summarise the debate for consideration by the Committee.

Details

The attached report was agreed at Cabinet on 17 October 2023 and includes the following information:

- Priorities for the Council Plan and the financial position of the County Council over the next four years
- Proposals for the draft 2024/25 revenue budget and preparations for the updated Capital Programme ahead of County Council in February 2024
- Steps to be taken for public and partner engagement
- At Appendix A – details of known service spending pressures
- At Appendix B – balancing the budget (details of the proposals for reducing or realigning funding to council priorities and known pressures)

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Appendices

Appendix A: Update on Council Plan, Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Preparations for 2024/25 Draft Budget

Appendix B: Service Pressures

Appendix C: Balancing the Budget

Appendix D: Current Approved Capital Programme 2034/24 to 2027/28

Appendix E: Household Waste Recycling Site Booking System - Briefing Note

Background papers

None