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## **Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee**

**30 November 2023**

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

**Report by Director of Law and Assurance**

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#### **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.

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 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 review the Capital Programme in terms of its deliverability; to consider the impact of proposed changes
- (5) To establish how public consultation partner engagement will be carried out and how feedback will inform the further development of budget plans both generally and for specific proposals.

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) and including plans for any consultation, engagement or equality impact assessment.

### **Tony Kershaw**

Director of Law and Assurance

### **Contact Officer**

Rachel Allan, Senior Advisor (Democratic Services), 0330 222 8966

### **Contact for financial implications**

Taryn Eves, Director of Finance and Support Services, 033 022 22087

### **Attachment**

Cabinet Report on Council Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy

### **Background papers**

None