

Budget Scrutiny Recommendations

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Your Council Priority				
Ref	MTFS Proposal	Further info requested if appropriate)	Comments/Recommendation	Cabinet Response Req'd (Yes/No)
<u>General Recommendation</u>				
N/A	General Point	<p>That the next year's budget papers separate out each individual area so that, for example, the Your Council section is separated out from the main body of information on the budget when OSC consider the Your Council savings (likewise for the other priorities when they go to the relevant scrutiny panel). This should be placed into Revenue and Capital sections with the MTFS table including the RAG ratings and the savings slippage (as is provided to Cabinet).</p> <p>We would also like to see the revenue budget section have an introduction into how the budget for Your Council sits within the main council budget and any specific risks within this area. The capital</p>	As there is a much greater spend within the capital budget this year, we would like a commitment from Cabinet that the progress of these projects will be rigorously monitored and that OSC will receive ongoing information around progress of these as well as any new proposals in future budget scrutiny reports.	Yes

		budget should include a table with the new capital programmes which includes the slippage, as is already provided in the Cabinet papers.		
<u>Revenue Savings</u>				
YC106	Reduction in legal support Services		That Cabinet reconsider this saving as there is a significant risk to our ability as an organisation to effectively provide legal support to statutory services such as safeguarding.	Yes
YC109	HR Savings	<p>Request for further information to be provided to OSC on the breakdown of the initial investment by the council of £400,000. What proportion of this was on consultant costs and how much was allocated for new technology? Also, what is the per-day rate of these consultancy staff?</p> <p>Assurance is sought around how officers are managing and monitoring the use of agency and</p>		

		<p>interim staff across the organisation.</p> <p>Further assurance is sought around how this proposal will change the reliance of the council on agency or temporary staff, especially in key areas such as social workers.</p>		
N/A	Digital Together Programme	<p>The saving from this proposal is £3M but this requires an initial investment cost of £3.3M.</p> <p>Further information is requested around what these micro projects are and how realistic it is for this programme to achieve its stated savings target.</p>	<p>OSC noted that the risks in the report were identified as high.</p> <p>The Cabinet ensure that quarterly reviews of the Digital Together Programme were brought back to the Committee to provide ongoing monitoring of the programme and the savings being made.</p> <p>Further consideration should be given as to whether this could be adapted into a rolling programme of reporting, with a live spreadsheet of projects and their implementation maintained in order to help facilitate effective scrutiny.</p>	Yes
<u>Pre-Agreed Savings</u>				

YC06	Libraries - Re-imaging our Libraries offer for a better future.	Further assurance is sought around the feasibility of making a £365k saving from libraries, especially in the current climate where libraries have been heavily impacted by Covid-19.	That Cabinet reconsider this savings proposal, especially in relation to the loss of around 7 staff posts and the feasibility of achieving the stated savings given the impact of Covid on libraries. It is felt that this proposal is out of kilter with the recent capital spend on the council's libraries.	Yes
<u>Capital Budget</u>				
N/A	General point.	That OSC receive quarterly monitoring reports on the Your Council revenue and capital savings. It is envisaged that this will include a regular tracker that shows project milestones with reasons and mitigations for slippage		No
N/A	General point.	That projects within the capital programme table are explained more fully in future budget scrutiny reports and the risk of slippage identified. (as per table on page 248 in December Cabinet papers)		No

	General Point	The Committee requested further information within the capital budget around which projects are being funded by the Council and which were self-financing, as these would have different risks attached to them which should be clearly identified. If they are funded by the Council they will have a revenue implication, so the amount of revenue spend on paying for the borrowing on these projects should also be clearly identified.		No
316	Asset Management of Council Buildings	That Asset Management is explained in greater detail in future Your Council budget reports and projects are clearly identified. This is a large area of allocated capital budget spend but the lack of information made scrutinising this difficult.		No
316	Asset Management of Council Buildings	The Committee requested a breakdown of the £33m allocated in the capital budget to schools.		No
330	Civic Centre Works	That further information is provided about the level of contingency set aside within the £21.3m capital		No

		<p>allocation for the Civic Centre Works.</p> <p>The Committee is concerned that projects of this size are often over budget.</p>		
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