

Appendix 8

Leadership Team 12 February 2020

Report from Councillor Marie-Therese Rossi, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Budget Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report contains recommendations relating to the budget proposals that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee wishes to make to the Leadership Team.
- 1.2. In its 26 November 2019 meeting, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a Budget Scrutiny Working Group to examine the budget, savings, and capital proposals in detail, and to report back to the Committee's 28 January 2020 meeting.
- 1.3. The Working Group met three times, and heard evidence from a wide range of Officers. The Final Report of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group is included with this paper as Addendum A.
- 1.4. The Working Group report contains recommendations relating to both the Scrutiny process and the Leadership Team. Recommendations four, five, and six of that report are direct recommendations to Leadership Team. These recommendations were accepted by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and are made in this report.
- 1.5. In addition to the recommendations made by the Working Group, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made additional recommendations to Leadership Team at its 28 January 2020 meeting. These are also included in this report.
- 1.6. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is grateful for the time and cooperation of all the Officers and Lead Members it has spoken to in this budget scrutiny process.
- 1.7. Leadership Team members are asked to adopt the recommendations set out in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Leadership Team is recommended to:

- 2.1. Closely monitor the savings proposals relating to CREST 2, especially monitoring whether resident feedback has ramifications on the level of anticipated savings.
- 2.2. Note that the Committee supports the reduction of the savings proposal relating to housing registered providers from £960,000 over three years to £600,000, as this is more realistic and achievable, and to and to support the proposals to further enhance liaison and communication with registered providers.
- 2.3. Consider the long-term effects when choosing by what percentage to increase fees and charges.
- 2.4. To continue to begin the budgeting process earlier in the year, and to expand the involvement of Scrutiny in this process.
- 2.5. Consider whether the proposed levels of borrowing for both the general and the HRA Capital Investment programme are prudent, and to note the concern that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has with the high levels of proposed borrowing.
- 2.6. Maximise the proportion of Electric Vehicles in the 'procurement of vehicles for the Waste and Cleansing Services Contract' capital item, and to use this procurement process as an opportunity to work towards meeting the Council's ambitious Air Quality and Climate Change targets.
- 2.7. Maintain and grow any risk management processes that are currently in operation, especially regarding the Housing Revenue Account.
- 2.8. Look closely at the rationale and evidence base for the large amounts of capital investment being put into School building and expansion, and to think sensibly about whether the money is being put to best use, given the falling school rolls at the primary level.
- 2.9. Consider whether increased investment is needed in Adult Social Care, given the known demographic pressures the Council faces, and to note and support Scrutiny's upcoming work examining the financial sustainability of Adult Social Care.

FOR COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

Cllr Marie-Therese Rossi, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Background papers used in the preparation of this report: none other than previously published papers.

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