

WIRRAL COUNCIL

TRANSFORMATION & RESOURCES POLICY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

5 November 2014

SUBJECT:	<i>FUTURE COUNCIL BUDGET OPTIONS SCRUTINY REVIEW</i>
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>ALL</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>MEMBERS OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL</i>

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report presents the findings of the scrutiny review of the Future Council Budget options that fall under the remit of this committee. Members are requested to consider the contents of this report alongside the outcome of the Future Council Public Consultation in referring any comments or formulating any recommendations to Cabinet.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Future Council programme has been developed to enable the Council to respond to the on-going financial challenges it faces. On 10 April 2014, a report was presented to Cabinet setting out the engagement process in support of the programme. Cabinet resolved that the report and the engagement process for the Future Council Programme be referred as a priority for inclusion in the work programmes of each of the Policy and Performance Committees. As such the scrutiny of the Future Council budget options has been undertaken during September and October.

2.2 In order to ensure a consistent approach to scrutinising the budget options, the Chair of the Coordinating Committee convened a meeting of all Policy and Performance Committee Chairs and vice chairs on 3 September. Consideration was given to a review of last year's budget options undertaken by the Regeneration and Environment Committee. The review was consistent with the standard task and finish format and was well received by Members. As such the principles underpinning this approach have been replicated for scrutinising the Future Council budget options.

3.0 APPROACH

3.1 This scrutiny review falls into the category of pre-decision scrutiny, providing non-executive Members with the opportunity to understand and evaluate the Future Council budget option proposals in advance of any decisions by Cabinet or Council. The review has been time limited in order to meet the schedule for decision-making and as such has been concentrated into a number of focussed question and answer sessions with officers.

- 3.2 The methodology has involved the establishment of scrutiny review panels to scope out and undertake a series of detailed question and answer sessions with the relevant officers responsible for producing the budget saving proposals. Discussions have focussed on the rationale behind the proposals, their deliverability and the impact and possible mitigation.
- 3.3 The report of the scrutiny panel is included as Appendix 1 to this report. Each of the budget options examined in detail is presented in terms of the service context, the details of the proposal, the impact proposal and the observations of the review panel.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 4.1 Members are requested to note the contents of this report and highlight any comments or recommendations to Cabinet.

REPORT AUTHOR: Michael Lester
telephone (0151) 691 8628
email michaellester@wirral.gov.uk