

**COUNCILLOR PHIL DAVIES****CABINET****Monday 20 February 2017****2017/18 BUDGET PROPOSALS****SCRUTINY REPORT**

Councillor Phil Davies, Leader of the Council - Strategic Economic Development, Finance and Devolution, said:

“As austerity policies continue, the Council’s budget position does not get any easier. We are in fact facing our biggest ever financial challenge, with a requirement to reduce our spending – or raise income – by £45 million just next year, as part of a programme of reductions of more than £130 million by 2021.

“This inevitably requires difficult proposals be put on the table for investigation, review and debate. This Administration has consistently developed budgets in a consultative, collaborative manner – inviting all Elected Members and other stakeholders to provide their views and make their voice heard.

“I am grateful to the Members of our Overview and Scrutiny committees who have once again provided invaluable insight and opinion on the budget proposals this year.”

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the feedback from the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees in relation to the Budget Proposals for 2017/18. This follows a series of budget scrutiny workshops held during January. There is a separate report from each of the committees which are included as appendices to this report. These capture the issues raised and general feedback from Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members at these sessions.

As the report addresses the proposals for the 2017/18 budget, it relates to all Wirral Plan pledges and all wards in the borough.

The report is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Cabinet is requested to consider the content of these reports as part of its deliberations in developing any budget recommendation for Council.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 For Cabinet to consider the feedback of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees in developing any budget recommendation to Council.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The approach taken by the scrutiny function in reviewing the budget proposals is consistent with previous years. No other options were considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The approach to scrutinising the 2017/18 budget proposals is consistent with that adopted in previous years. Each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees prioritised which proposals they wanted to examine in more detail and convened a dedicated session for this purpose.

- 3.2 The sessions, held in January, were attended by relevant Council officers for Committee Members to ask questions about the proposals. Issues raised and comments made were captured in a report following each session. These were presented to the regular January meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees where they were referred on to Cabinet. The three reports are included as Appendix 1, 2 and 3 to this report.

- 3.3 The draft minute extracts from the January Overview and Scrutiny committee meetings are also included as Appendix 4, 5 and 6 to this report.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report.

5.0 LEGAL

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 There are no resource implications arising as a result of this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 There are no risk implications arising as a result of this report.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT / CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This report sets out the engagement of scrutiny in reviewing the Council's 2017/18 budget proposals. Separate consultation activities will be delivered where there is a requirement to do so.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The report is for information and there are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

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APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – 2017/18 Budget Scrutiny – Business O&S Committee
Appendix 2 – 2017/18 Budget Scrutiny – Environment O&S Committee
Appendix 3 – 2017/18 Budget Scrutiny – People O&S Committee
Appendix 4 – Draft Minute Business O&S Committee
Appendix 5 – Draft Minute Environment O&S Committee
Appendix 6 – Draft Minute People O&S Committee

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee	24 January 2017
Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee	31 January 2017
People Overview and Scrutiny Committee	01 February 2017