

OVERVIEW & BUDGET SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

BUDGET SUB-GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

To carry out detailed scrutiny of budgets and costs of services across the Council, review proposed options for service change and identify, where possible, a range of evidence-based options for budget savings.

Membership of the Group

Membership to be drawn from the Overview & Budget Scrutiny Committee, with the option to appoint Members from other committees where appropriate.

The core membership to be as follows:

- Nick Harrison (Chairman)
- Ayesha Azad
- David Harmer
- Tim Evans
- Chairman of the Overview & Budget Scrutiny Committee (ex-officio)

Roles/Functions

- To work with Finance and service officers to develop a good understanding of the Council's budgets and identify any further information which might be required.
- To scrutinise current service financial performance and budget management with regard to the savings plan outlined in the current MTFP and to review and contribute to preparations for next year's budget.
- To consider and appraise officer proposals for changes to service delivery, offering feedback and an opportunity for public acceptability testing.
- To identify a range of evidence-based options for reducing costs of service delivery, generating income and improving performance: if appropriate, this could include options which initially appear challenging or potentially unpopular, either for the public or politically.
- To regularly report the Sub-Group's activity and key findings to the Overview & Budget Scrutiny Committee
- To brief the Leader and Cabinet Members on emerging findings as appropriate.

Principles

Open and honest conversations about the pressures services are experiencing and the impact on service users and residents.

Information and proposals are shared at an early stage to allow the Sub-Group members to inform Cabinet decisions and add most value to the budget-setting process.

A consistent approach across the Council's services in terms of the timeliness, level and quality of information provided, with confidentiality guaranteed by the Member Code of Conduct.

Information is provided in advance of the Sub-Group meeting.

Frequency of Meetings

The Sub-Group will meet monthly, with additional meetings as required. The meetings will be held in private, and Members will be bound by the Code of Conduct to ensure that information discussed remains confidential.

Reporting & Recommendations

The Sub-Group will report its activity, key findings and proposed recommendations at each meeting of the Overview & Budget Scrutiny Committee.

Officer Support

Officer support will be provided by the Deputy Chief Finance Officer and Democratic Services. Other service officers will be called upon as appropriate.

All reasonable requests for information by the Sub-Group will be met by officers in a full and timely manner.