

BUDGET 2016/17 TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Context

The paper to Cabinet on the 9 December 2015 on the Budget 2016/17 will set out the proposals to deliver a legal balanced budget, and in order to achieve this it will need to include where the savings to meet the reduction in funding from Government could be made. Understanding the proposed budget and how it fits with the delivery of the Council's Financial Strategy, and the potential impacts of the decisions to be taken is a key role for Scrutiny.

Objectives

- To consider the budget proposals and identify the priority areas for further consideration and the relevant people to hear from to inform this work.
- To develop lines of enquiry and provide any witnesses with the requests for information to provide sufficient time for responses to be developed and supporting information provided.
- To consider the emerging information arising from the Big Conversation.
- To consider options and evidence of what works that is applied in other areas of the Country and use this to inform the formulation of any recommendations for alternative proposals.
- To identify any likely impacts of the budget proposals and explore how these will be managed with the relevant officers and Portfolio Holders.
- To make recommendations to Cabinet on the proposed 2015/16 Budget
- To identify any topics to be added to Scrutiny Committee work programmes.

Information Required From Officers and Portfolio Holders

- To be identified at the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group

Other Sources of Information

- Research into how other areas of the Country have addressed specific changes to services to deliver savings
- Specific submissions of requested information from local stakeholders and witnesses and experts.

Methods To Be Used

- Hear from relevant Officers and Portfolio Holders
- Receive and consider requested evidence
- Identification of learning and best practice through review of literature/web
- Development of evidence based recommendations (any changes to the Budget proposals will need to evidence that they can deliver the same or more savings that the proposal)

Timescales

- First meeting of the Task and Finish Group to take place on the 10 December or as soon after this day as possible
- Task and Finish Group – 3 meetings with research in between
- Task and Finish Group meeting 1:
 - To confirm the key lines of enquiry based on the priorities identified by the Task and Finish Group
 - Confirm the specific questions and information requests to be sent out
 - Confirm who and/or where the information needs to be requested from including whether it needs to be a written briefing, or people need to be invited to the second meeting of the Task and Finish Group
 - Confirm who needs to attend the second meeting of the Task and Finish Group and what they will be asked to present
 - Allocation of tasks
- Task and Finish Group meeting 2 in Early January 2016:
 - Consider the written evidence provided
 - Hear from any invited witnesses and follow the key lines of enquiry
 - Confirm any additional information requirements
 - Confirm emerging conclusions and recommendations
- Officer report written to be drafted following meeting number 2.

- Task and Finish Group meeting 3 in the third week of January 2016:
 - Task and Finish Group members review and confirm the Officer report
- Report back to Scrutiny Committee 27 January 2016

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