

## **Terms of Reference for the Budget Setting 2017/18 Task and Finish Group**

### **Context**

The Budget 2016/17 Task and Finish Group recommended that Scrutiny should be involved in the budget setting process at an earlier stage than it had been previously. This recommendation was agreed by Cabinet at their meeting of the 10 February 2016.

### **Objectives**

- To have earlier involvement in budget setting to provide comment on proposals
- To work proactively and constructively with the service areas that will be changing in 2017/18
- To be able to complete specific pieces of work to identify alternatives to emerging plans (if they exist)
- To provide a mechanism to engage with communities, partners and providers
- To understand any possible risks and impacts on the budget proposals e.g. using one off money to balance the budget
- To consider the direct and indirect impacts of proposals on service delivery across the Council.
- Make evidence based recommendations and alternative proposals for future budget setting.

### **Information required**

- The existing Financial Strategy 2016/17 to 2018/19 reports and subsequent Financial Strategy and other relevant reports approved by Cabinet during the 2016/17 Financial Year
- Confirmation of the service areas which will be the focus of the Budget 2017/18
- Plans and proposals as they develop for those service areas that will be changing
- Learning from other Council's which have made changes to similar service areas
- Other information and evidence will be identified as the Task and Finish Group progresses and plans become clearer

### **Methods To Be Used**

- Understand the plans for service areas that will be undergoing change in 2017/18
- Identification of any learning and best practice from other Councils
- Hearing from service users, communities, current and potential providers, and partners to understand issues, ideas, innovation and opportunities
- Identification and invitation of specific witnesses
- Development of evidence based recommendations

### **Timescales**

- The Task and Finish Group will report to the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee each quarter.
- The development of clear plans to ensure that the Council can balance its budget in 2017/18 are expected to need to be developed during quarter 1 and 2 2016/17.

- Where specific recommendations are identified and evidenced through the year these will be made to Cabinet, taking account the timescales that change plans need to be developed and decisions need to be made in.
- The final report of the Task and Finish Group will be made to the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee when it meets at the end of January 2017

DRAFT