



REPORT TO: Cabinet 4 February 2020

LEAD MEMBER: Councillor Grenville Chamberlain, Chairman, Scrutiny and Overview Committee and Councillor Brian Milnes, Vice Chairman, Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Purpose

1. This report is to inform Cabinet of the discussions and recommendations agreed by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at its meeting of 21 January 2020, which Cabinet may wish to consider in its decision making.

2020-25 Business Plan

2. The committee considered and commented on the proposed 2020-25 Business Plan and action grid. Committee members suggested some changes and subject to the incorporation of these, supported the Business Plan's onward submission to Cabinet for consideration and to Council for approval.

Property Investment

3. The committee considered this item in confidential session. The committee heard representations from the local members and Town Clerk. The committee had no specific recommendations. The committee supported the continuation of negotiations and for the final decision on this matter to be taken by full Council.

Review of Reserves & Provisions

4. The committee considered and commented on the review of the Council's Revenue Reserves and Provisions as part of the 2020/21 budget setting process.
5. Committee members thanked officers and the Lead Cabinet Member for the very clear reports, all of which were easy to understand.
6. The committee endorsed the recommendations to Cabinet.

Capital Strategy

7. The committee considered the updated Capital Strategy.
8. Accessibility of the document was queried for those with visual impairment in relation to the design of the front cover which had text against colour. The inclusion of a glossary was suggested. At paragraph 9.3 of the Strategy, the committee suggests that wording be changed from 'The Council accepts higher risk on commercial property investment', to 'the Council acknowledges/recognises the higher risk on commercial property investment'.
9. The committee endorsed the recommendations.

Capital Investment Programme

10. The committee considered and commented on the Council's Capital Programme for the financial years 2020/21 to 2024/2025.
11. The committee had no specific comments to make on this and endorsed the recommendations to Cabinet.

Treasury Management Strategy

12. The committee considered and commented on the Treasury Management Strategy.
13. As with the Capital Strategy, the accessibility of the document for those with visual impairment was queried in relation to the design of the front cover.
14. Some concern was raised by committee members regarding the potential risk to the Council of future interest rate rises. Members were reassured that the Council was doing all it reasonably could to balance the risks.
15. The committee endorsed the recommendations to Cabinet.

Summary General Fund Revenue Budget 2020/21

16. The committee considered and commented on the summary General Fund Revenue Budget for 2020/21.
17. Concerns regarding the economic outlook were discussed, as was the economic resilience of the district. The anticipated impact of the fair funding review on the Council was also discussed.
18. The committee endorsed the recommendations to Cabinet.

Report Author:

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