

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

17 February 2014



General Fund Medium Term Financial Plan, 2014/15 to 2016/17 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2014/15

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To inform Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) and Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CIOSC) Members of the Cabinet report (12 February 2014) that provides comprehensive financial information to enable Cabinet to agree a 2014/15 balanced revenue budget, an outline Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP (4)) for 2014/15 to 2016/17 and a fully funded capital programme for recommendation to the County Council meeting on 26 February 2014 (full report attached).

Background

- 2 Scrutiny members have been engaged in the development of this year's MTFP, through a series of scrutiny meetings and member seminars. In July 2013, OSMB considered the first MTFP (4) cabinet report and requested that CIOSC take a lead in scrutinising MTFP (4) proposals, with members of OSMB (chairs/vice chairs and minority parties) invited to attend. The following sessions have been held:
 - 25 July CIOSC - scrutiny of July MTFP (4) Cabinet report
 - 19 September CIOSC - consideration of the MTFP consultation process
 - September – drop in meetings for CIOSC members to be briefed on the detail of the MTFP consultation process
 - 14 October CIOSC - scrutiny of the October MTFP (4) Cabinet report
 - 22 October - all members invited to 2 seminars to consider the MTFP and Council Plan for 2014/15 – 2016/17
 - 27 January 2014 - a special joint meeting of CIOSC and OSMB to consider the Cabinet report of 22 January 2014, and to give Members the opportunity for full consideration of the draft savings proposals, with the scrutiny response being fed back to the 12th February Cabinet meeting by the Chair of OSMB.
- 3 The attached Cabinet report of 12th February presents additional information regarding the MTFP for the capital programme, and the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process, and provides a further opportunity for Members to comment prior to full Council.

Recommendation

- 4 Members are asked to:
 - a) note and comment upon the contents of the attached Cabinet report of 12th February 2014, prior to full Council on 26th February 2014.
 - b) put forward final suggestions as part of the scrutiny response to Council on 26th February; the Chair of OSMB is charged with reporting the response to Council.

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Appendix 1: Implications (taken from the 12th February 2014 Cabinet report)

Finance – The report sets out recommendations on the 2014/15 Budget and 2014/15 – 2016/17 MTFP.

Staffing - The impact of the MTFP upon staffing is detailed within the report

Risk - A robust approach to Risk Assessment across the MTFP process has been followed including individual risk assessment of savings plans.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – Full information on equality and diversity is contained within the report.

Accommodation – the council's Corporate Asset Management Plan is aligned to the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan. Financing for capital investment priorities is reflected in the MTFP Model.

Crime and Disorder – It is recognised that the changes proposed in this report could have a negative impact on crime and disorder in the county. However, the council will continue to work with the Policy and others through the Safe Durham Partnership on strategic crime and disorder and to identify local problems and target resources to them.

Human Rights – Any human rights issues will be considered for each of the proposals as they are developed and decisions made to take these forward. There are no human right implications from the information within the report.

Consultation – Full information on the MTFP (4) consultation process are contained in the report.

Procurement – Wherever possible procurement savings are reflected in service groupings savings plans.

Disability Issues - All requirements will be assessed in Equality Impact Assessments

Legal Implications – The council has a statutory responsibility to set a balanced budget for 2014/15. It also has a fiduciary duty not to waste public resources.