

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

13 February 2015



General Fund Medium Term Financial Plan, 2015/16 to 2017/18 and Revenue and Capital Budget 2015/16

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 (11 February 2015) that provides comprehensive financial information to enable Cabinet to agree a 2015/16 balanced revenue budget, an outline Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP (5)) for 2015/16 to 2017/18 and a fully funded capital programme for recommendation to the County Council meeting on 25 February 2015 (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 2014, OSMB requested that CIOSC take a lead in scrutinising MTFP proposals, with members of OSMB (chairs/vice chairs and minority parties) invited to attend. This process has continued. The following sessions have been held:
 - 12 September 2014 OSMB – scrutiny of July MTFP (5) Cabinet report
 - 19 September 2014 CIOSC – scrutiny of Medium Term Financial Plan (5), Council Plan, Service Plans 2015/16 – 2017/18 and Review of the Council's Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme
 - 4th December 2014 and 12th February 2015 - Members Seminars
 - 23 January 2015 – a joint meeting of CIOSC and OSMB to consider the Cabinet reports of 18 December 2014 and 14 January 2015, and to give Members the opportunity for full consideration of the draft savings proposals, with the scrutiny response being fed back to the 11 February Cabinet meeting by the chair of OSMB
- 3 The attached Cabinet report of 11th 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 11 February 2015, prior to full Council on 25 February 2015.
 - b) put forward final suggestions as part of the scrutiny response to Council on 25 February; the Chair of OSMB is charged with reporting the response to Council.

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Appendix 1: Implications (taken from the 11th February 2015 Cabinet report)

Finance – The report sets out recommendations on the 2015/16 Budget and 2015/16 – 2017/18 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 (5) 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 2015/16. It also has a fiduciary duty not to waste public resources.