



Mayor and Cabinet

Public Accounts Select Committee comments on the draft 2022-23 budget

Date: 9 February 2022.

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1.

Wards affected: All.

Contributor: Public Accounts Select Committee

Outline and recommendations

This report informs Mayor and Cabinet (M&C) of the comments and views of the Public Accounts select committee, arising from discussions on the Council's draft 2022-23 budget.

Mayor and Cabinet is asked to consider the views of the select committee as part of its overall consideration of the budget and, where applicable, ask the relevant officers to provide a response.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

9 December 2020 – budget cuts report to Mayor and Cabinet

3 February 2021 – budget cuts report to Mayor and Cabinet

3 March 2021 – budget report to Council

14 July 2021 – 2021/22 financial monitoring report to Mayor and Cabinet

14 July 2021 – medium term financial strategy to Mayor and Cabinet

6 October 2021 – 2021/22 financial monitoring report to Mayor and Cabinet

27 January 2022 – budget reduction proposals and draft budget 2022-23 report to Public Accounts Select Committee

2 February 2022 – budget reduction proposals to Mayor and Cabinet

9 February 2022 – draft 2022-23 budget report to Mayor and Cabinet

1. Summary

- 1.1. On Thursday 27 January 2022, the Public Accounts Select Committee considered a report on the Council's draft 2022-23 budget ([Public Accounts Select Committee agenda 27 January 2022](#)). The Committee heard from the Executive Director for Corporate Resources and following discussion members agreed to refer their views to Mayor and Cabinet.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Mayor and Cabinet is asked to consider the committee's comments, and where applicable, ask the relevant officers to provide a response.

3. Select committee comments

- 3.1. The Committee wishes to place on record its thanks and appreciation for the hard work and dedication of Council officers. In particular, it recognises the level of dedication, professionalism and determination demonstrated by officers in the Corporate Resources Directorate, led commendably by Kathy Freeman (Executive Director for Corporate Resources) and supported by the Directors of Finance and the Head of Strategic Finance. Members recognise the difficult task facing officers in producing a well-considered and balanced budget in the context of uncertainty and ongoing austerity. The Committee asks Mayor and Cabinet to recognise and thank all of the officers who contributed to the delivery of the budget report.
- 3.2. The Committee recommends that further detail should be provided to Mayor and Cabinet on the possible unallocated budget pressures arising from the Council's response to the pandemic (and its associated consequences). It notes that there is the potential for significant overspending across a number of services. And, whilst officers' intended approach to monitoring and managing these risks is acknowledged – the Committee believes that the budget report should further highlight and delineate the potential for significant in-year pressures and overspending, should the ongoing impact of the pandemic be greater than anticipated or healthcare partners unable to assume responsibility for the costs.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. However, there may be implications arising from them implementation of the committees' recommendations. These will need to be considered as part of the response.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1. The Constitution provides for select committees to refer reports to the Mayor and Cabinet, who are obliged to consider the report and the proposed response from the relevant Executive Director; and report back to the Committee within two months (not including recess).

6. Equalities implications

- 6.1. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.2. The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

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- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.3. There may be equalities implications arising from the implementation of the committees' recommendations – these will need to be considered in the response.

7. Climate change and environmental implications

7.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. There may be climate change and environmental implications arising from the implementation of the committees' recommendations – these will need to be considered in the response.

8. Crime and disorder implications

8.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. There may be implications arising from the implementation of the committees' recommendations – these will need to be considered in the response.

9. Health and wellbeing implications

9.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. There may be implications arising from the implementation of the committees' recommendations – these will need to be considered in the response.

10. Background documents

10.1. [Public Accounts Select Committee agenda 27 January 2022](#)

Report author and contact

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