

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

9th January 2014

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

14th January 2014

Healthier Communities & Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

15th January 2014

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

30th January 2014

Agenda item:

Wards:

Subject: Business Plan Update 2014-2018

Lead officer: Caroline Holland

Lead member: Councillor Mark Allison

Contact officer: Paul Dale

Forward Plan reference number:

Recommendations:

1. That the Panel consider the latest information in respect of the Business Plan and Budget 2014/15, including draft revenue savings proposals, draft service plans, draft equalities assessments and latest amendments to the capital programme.
2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission considers the comments of the Panels and provides a response on the issues raised to Cabinet when it meets on the 17 February 2014.

1. Purpose of report and executive summary

- 1.1 This report requests Scrutiny Panels to consider the latest information in respect of the Business Plan and Budget 2014/15, including draft revenue savings, draft service plans, draft equalities assessments and latest amendments to the capital programme and feedback comments to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission will consider the comments of the Panels and provide a response on the draft proposals to Cabinet when it meets on the 17 February 2014.

2. Details - Revenue

- 2.1 The Cabinet of 9 December 2013 received a report on the business plan for 2014-18. This included details of draft savings proposals, latest amendments to the draft Capital Programme 2014-18 and agreed the council tax base for 2014/15.
- 2.2 At the meeting, in response to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, the Director of Corporate services indicated that draft service plans would be available to the scrutiny panels in January and final service plans would be presented to the commission in April 2014.

Cabinet resolved:

1. That Cabinet agrees the amendment to savings and alternative proposals put forward as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
 2. That Cabinet reviews the savings proposals put forward by officers, refers them to the Overview and Scrutiny panels and Commission for consideration in January 2014 (Appendix 3) and requests officers to produce equalities impact assessments for each proposal.
 3. That Cabinet agrees the latest amendments to the draft Capital Programme 2014-2018 which was considered by Cabinet on 21 October 2013 and scrutiny in November 2013.
 4. That Cabinet NOTES the feedback from the Scrutiny Panels and Overview and Scrutiny Commission on the previous information referred to them by Cabinet in October 2013, particularly the draft Capital Programme 2014-2018.
 5. That Cabinet notes the latest draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2014-18 (Appendix 6).
 6. That Cabinet agrees the Council Tax Base for 2014/15 set out in paragraph 2.7 and Appendix 10.
- 2.3 Since the Cabinet meeting on 9 December 2013, draft service plans 2014-18 (Appendix 3) and draft equalities assessments for each of the new savings proposals (Appendix 4 – TO FOLLOW) have been prepared for the panels and commission to scrutinise.
- 2.4 Additional Information
- Since Cabinet on 9 December 2013 some additional information was requested and is presented on the following issues:-
- Funding for Free Schools (Appendix 5 refers)
 - Housing Benefit Expenditure (Appendix 6 refers)

3. Alternative Options

3.1 It is a requirement that the Council sets a balanced budget. The Cabinet report on 9 December 2013 sets out the progress made towards setting a balanced budget. This identified the current budget position that needs to be addressed between now and the next report to Cabinet on 20 January 2014, with a further report to Cabinet on 17 February 2014, prior to Council on 5 March 2014, agreeing the Budget and Council Tax for 2014/15 and the Business Plan 2014-18, including the MTFs and Capital Programme 2014-18.

3.2 Demographic data

Demographic information is provided as a context to the business plan report and sets out analysis of key demographic trends and their likely impact on service delivery (Appendices 2a and 2b).

4. Capital Programme 2014-18

4.1 Details of the draft Capital Programme 2014-18 were agreed by Cabinet on 21 October 2013 and subject to scrutiny in November 2013. The latest amendments were included in the report to Cabinet on 9 December 2013 which is attached as Appendix 1.

4.2 However, additional information and further work has been undertaken on the draft programme and details are attached as Appendix 7.

5. Consultation undertaken or proposed

5.1 Further work will be undertaken as the process develops.

6. Timetable

6.1 The timetable following this round of Scrutiny is set out in Appendix 1 of the 9 December 2013 Cabinet report.(Appendix 1)

7. Financial, resource and property implications

7.1 These are set out in the Cabinet report for 9 December 2013.

8. Legal and statutory implications

8.1 All relevant implications have been addressed in the Cabinet reports. Further work will be carried out as the budget and planning proceeds and will be included in the Business Plan update reports to Cabinet.

8.2 Detailed legal advice will be provided throughout the budget setting process further to any proposals identified and prior to any final decisions.

9. Human Rights, Equalities and Community Cohesion Implications

9.1 All relevant implications will be addressed in Cabinet reports on the business planning process.

10. **Crime and Disorder implications**

10.1 All relevant implications will be addressed in Cabinet reports on the business planning process.

11. **Risk Management and Health and Safety Implications**

11.1 All relevant implications will be addressed in Cabinet reports on the business planning process.

Appendices – the following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report

- Appendix 1: Cabinet report 9 December 2013: Business Plan Update 2014-18
- Appendix 2a: Merton 2017 Report “An analysis of key democratic trends and their likely impact on service delivery” – Overview and Scrutiny Commission requested that this document is provided to scrutiny panels as context for their scrutiny discussions.
- Appendix 2b: Merton 2017 Presentational Slides
- Appendix 3: Draft service plans 2014-18
- Appendix 4: Draft Equalities Assessments (TO FOLLOW)
- Appendix 5: Funding for Free Schools
- Appendix 6: Housing Benefit Expenditure
- Appendix 7: Draft Capital Programme Update

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Budget files held in the Corporate Services department.