

6. DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN AND BUDGET 2017/18 – CONSULTATION PROCESS

REPORT OF: HEAD OF CORPORATE RESOURCES
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Wards Affected: All
Key Decision: No
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Resources and Economic Growth
9th November 2016

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the proposed consultation process for the Corporate Plan and Budget 2017/18.

Recommendation

2. **The Committee is requested to agree the proposed approach.**
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Background

3. In accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, this Committee has an important role in the service planning and budget making process. The Committee has the opportunity to consider the service and budget proposals and to make any recommendations to Cabinet prior to the proposals being finalised for submission to Council. Cabinet is required to have regard to the recommendations when finalising their proposals.
4. The budget process continues to be challenging for local government with the Autumn Statement being announced on 23rd November. Whilst we have accepted the offer of a 4-year settlement, meaning that we know our projected Revenue Support Grant decreases, it is still possible that there may be further decreases in overall sector funding which may impact on other grant income. We have however, been prudent in our assumptions regarding how this may affect Mid Sussex.
5. The process of consultation for the draft Corporate Plan and Budget for 2017/18 will follow a similar time-line to last year. Further details are set out below.

Process of Consultation for Corporate Plan and Budget 2017/18

6. As is usual, there will be a six-week consultation period, which will commence 19 December 2016 when the Cabinet has agreed to submit the draft Corporate Plan and Budget for consideration by Members. At the start of the consultation process the draft report will be circulated to Scrutiny Committee Members.
7. It should be noted that Cabinet will not, at this stage, have adopted the draft in formal session, and the Committee will have a period of six weeks from the commencement of the consultation period to submit comments to Cabinet. This period of consultation will conclude on 30 January 2017.

8. A special meeting of this Committee on 18 January 2017 has been arranged to discuss the draft proposals. The Committee's comments, suggestions and recommendations will be reported to Cabinet on 13 February 2017. The draft Corporate Plan and Budget will be presented for recommendation to Council on 1ST March 2017.
9. The service and budget proposals will have been drafted by the Business Unit Leaders and the appropriate Heads of Service and Cabinet members. The entire Management Team will be present to deal with the overall budget and strategic issues.

Context for the 2017/18 Plan

10. The proposals have been put together in line with the Council's robust approach to service and financial planning and will follow the model adopted in previous years. The draft Corporate Plan will not contain the detailed Service Plans for each Business Unit, but these can be provided to Members electronically or in hard copy, on request. Whilst previously the emphasis has been focussed on balancing the budget in response to recent Government indication around reductions in RSG the thrust of this year's budget is on achieving financial investment through enhancing income generating opportunities and prudent investment to generate an increased return.
11. In keeping with previous years there has been Member involvement in the Corporate Plan and Budget process, through a Service and Financial Planning Working Group made up of councillors from the Administration. This informal Member involvement has enhanced the process of preparing robust draft service plan and budget proposals for review by this Committee in December /January.
12. In considering the Corporate Plan and Budget proposals, the Committee will need to address the effects of any recommended proposals. If, for example, the Committee proposes that increased spending in a certain area should be made, the Committee should have regard to how the resultant shortfall in the overall budget will be addressed. The Council can only agree a balanced budget.

Financial Implications

13. This report does not have any financial effects.

Risk Management Implications

14. It is not considered that this report carries any particular risks to be reported.

Equality and Customer Service Implications

15. There are none associated with this report.

Other Material Implications

16. There are no legal implications as a direct consequence of this report.

Background Papers

Service and Financial Planning report to [Cabinet](#) 6th September 2016.