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3 January 2023

Meetings of Council Committees are broadcast live through the Mid Sussex District Council's YouTube channel. Limited space is available to observe proceedings in-person. Those wishing to do so must reserve a seat by completing a [Registration Form](#) by 4pm on the working day prior to the meeting.

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LEADER, DEPUTY LEADER & HOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICE** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at these offices on **WEDNESDAY, 11TH JANUARY, 2023 at 7.00 pm** when your attendance is requested.

Yours sincerely,  
KATHRYN HALL  
Chief Executive

#### **A G E N D A**

	<b>Pages</b>
1. To note Substitutes in Accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4 - Substitutes at Meetings of Committees etc.	
2. To receive apologies for absence.	
3. To receive Declarations of Interests from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda.	
4. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022.	<b>3 - 6</b>
5. To consider any items that the Chairman agrees to take as urgent business.	
6. Draft Corporate Plan and Budget for 2023/24.	<b>7 - 10</b>
7. Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing and Customer Services Work Programme 2022/23.	<b>11 - 12</b>
8. Questions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10.2 due notice of which has been given.	

To: **Members of Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader & Housing and Customer Service:** Councillors J Knight (Chair), M Pulfer (Vice-Chair), A Bennett, H Brunsdon, P Coote, A Eves, J Henwood, S Hicks, R Jackson, Andrew Lea, C Phillips, S Smith, L Stockwell, C Trumble and R Whittaker

**Minutes of a meeting of Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy  
Leader & Housing and Customer Service  
held on Wednesday, 9th November, 2022  
from 7.00 - 8.05 pm**

**Present:** J Knight (Chair)  
M Pulfer (Vice-Chair)

A Bennett	Andrew Lea	R Whittaker
A Eves	C Phillips	R Clarke
J Henwood	L Stockwell	
R Jackson	C Trumble	

**Absent:** Councillors H Brunson, P Coote, S Hicks and S Smith

**Also Present as Cabinet Members:** Councillors J Ash-Edwards, J Belsey and R Cromie

**1 TO NOTE SUBSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE  
RULE 4 - SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES ETC.**

Councillor Clarke substituted for Councillor Coote.

**2 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from Councillors Coote, Brunson, Hicks and Smith.

**3 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT  
OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.**

With regards to item 8, Councillor Andrew Lea declared a Non-Registrable Interest due to his project on greenhouse gas submissions.

**4 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2022.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**5 TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS  
URGENT BUSINESS.**

None.

**6 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING.**

Louise Duffield, Director of Resources and Organisational Development, introduced the report acknowledging the progress made across the District, the complex nature of programmes, and that, going forward, the funding will be reprofiled across the years of the projects.

Discussion was held on the investment into projects at the Oaklands Campus and the way that aligned with the current staff usage of the site. The Chief Executive noted that staff remain working in a hybrid way, which is both productive and competitive in the recruitment market and a pilot is due to commence shortly on different ways of utilising office space to support collaborative working.

The Committee discussed the rural connectivity programme and the potential for the main 'motorway of data' to run further north than Ardingly. Simon Hughes, Director of People and Commercial Services, confirmed that the Council is working with providers and digital infrastructure as they are looking to invest and expand in rural areas. The Council is also part of a Government Programme to provide Wi-Fi connectivity in rural areas.

The telephony system replacement was also discussed in detail. Simon Jones, Assistant Director Digital and People Services, noted that phase 1 has been completed which focused on the Customer Services Team and Phase 2 is being reprofiled to link with ongoing work on service redesign and service improvements. Work is ongoing to develop meaningful performance indicators and feedback from the Committee is welcome to help shape this.

Members discussed funding allocation for a number of projects. Clarity was also given on the timeframes for the 6 parks identified for improvement over coming years. A Member also welcomed the fact that the Hill Place Farm Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) is live and operational.

Electric car charging points were discussed by the Committee and it was agreed to provide a response in writing giving an update regarding the current issues with the Cyprus Road charging points. It was also noted that money has been allocated for significant repairs to the Bedelands Gypsy and Traveller site. Negotiations are underway with the residents on site to minimise disruption and it has been agreed to delay the ground works until Spring 2023.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendation contained in the report which was agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

The Scrutiny Committee noted the update.

## **7 DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN AND BUDGET 2023/24 - CONSULTATION PROCESS.**

Louise Duffield, Director of Resources and Organisational Development introduced the report noting that it is an annual process, setting out the dates that the Committee will receive papers and the timescales to respond.

As there were no comments from the Committee, the Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations contained in the report which were agreed unanimously.

## **RESOLVED**

The Scrutiny Committee agreed the proposed approach.

### **8 PERFORMANCE MONITORING FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2022/23.**

Louise Duffield, Director of Resources and Organisational Development, introduced the report noting that overall performance was generally very strong.

Members discussed the new electric charging point data. Rob Anderton, Assistant Director Commercial Services and Contracts confirmed that discussions were underway with West Sussex County Council and Connected Kerb with regard to data reporting and a more comprehensive picture should be available in 3-6 months' time.

Ground maintenance online surveys were discussed in detail, action taken at particular sites as a result of the feedback, and ways in which the online survey could be promoted to residents in terms of signage and QR codes. Sally Blomfield, Assistant Director Planning and Sustainable Economy confirmed that the Council has commissioned Visitor Insights to provide granular detail on the three shopping centres and five largest villages within the District and footfall and dwell time are increasing healthily. These have been shared with the Parishes involved and it was agreed to share the details again.

The capacity issues with the Green Waste scheme were discussed. Road cleaning was also discussed. The Assistant Director Commercial Services and Contracts confirmed that the effectiveness of the street cleansing operations is regularly assessed by contract monitoring officers.

The Committee discussed the complaints and compliments indicators noting that the number of complaints had increased. The Director of People and Commercial Services noted that the figures vary during the year dependant on the services involved and that a full report will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in the new year. The Cabinet Member also acknowledged that the volume of work carried out by departments such as Revenues and Benefits should be taken into consideration when reviewing complaint indicators.

Discussion also focused on the number of people who are homeless or in temporary accommodation and those who are listed as High Priority Band A. It was confirmed that there is an Officer in post to assist households into private rental accommodation but that it is very difficult to place people as there are not many properties available within the District. The Director of Resources and Organisational Development agreed to provide details of the percentage of applicants on the housing register who are in the Armed Forces, and the number of Council staff with an Armed Forces connection, in order to assist in promoting the Armed Forces Covenant.

The Committee discussed the income received from the Leisure Centres and how the Council can ensure that the centres remain successful and financially viable against a backdrop of rising energy costs, the impact of the cost of living crisis, and competition from new budget gym facilities opening within the District. A further report on the subject will be presented to the Scrutiny Committee for Leisure and Parking in November.

The target set for Planning Enforcement site visits within 10 days was also discussed and it was noted that although this target has been exceeded in the first two quarters of the year, it does need to be set at a level that is realistically aligned to staff resources.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations contained in the report which were agreed unanimously.

### **RESOLVED**

The Scrutiny Committee:

- (i) Noted the Council's performance in the second quarter of the year and identified any areas where further reporting or information is required;
- (ii) Advised the Cabinet of any issues that the Committee considers should be given particular consideration at the Cabinet meeting on 21st November 2022.

## **9 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LEADER, DEPUTY LEADER AND HOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23.**

The Solicitor to the Council introduced the report noting that it details the reports to be considered in the remaining two scheduled meetings.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendation contained in the report which was agreed unanimously.

### **RESOLVED**

The Scrutiny Committee agreed the indicative Work Programme as set out at paragraph 5 of the report.

## **10 QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2 DUE NOTICE OF WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN.**

None.

The meeting finished at 8.05 pm

Chairman

## DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN AND BUDGET FOR 2023/24

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
Contact Officer: Rachel Jarvis, Assistant Director of Corporate Resources, email: [rachel.jarvis@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.jarvis@midsussex.gov.uk) 01444 477244  
Wards Affected: All  
Key Decision: Yes  
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing and Customer Service  
11 January 2023

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### Purpose of Report

1. This paper sets out the draft proposals for the Council's Corporate Plan and Budget for 2023/24.

### Recommendations

2. The Committee is asked to consider the proposals for 2023/24 set out in the appended Corporate Plan and Budget 2023/24 report and agree any comments or recommendations that it wishes to make to Cabinet on:
  - (a) **The financial outlook facing the Council over the medium term;**
  - (b) **The proposed increase in Council Tax;**
  - (c) **The strategy to use Treasury Management income and then, if needed, General Reserve to balance the budget over the medium term;**
  - (d) **Updates to the Capital Programme and strategy; and**
  - (e) **The service commentaries and supporting summary budget tables for each service area.**

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### Background

3. The Council approves a Corporate Plan and Budget annually which sets out how it will deliver its services and spend its financial resources in the following financial year. The draft proposals for 2023/24 are set out in Appendix A to this report, which the Committee will formally consider at its meeting on 11 January 2023. This includes draft plans for services which propose activities, projects, and levels of performance for the coming year (set out at section 2 of the report). These are supported by a Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) that presents the financial assumptions and makes recommendations to achieve a balanced budget position (set out at section 1 of the report). Together with considerations for the update to the Capital Programme and Strategy (set out at section 3).
4. The draft Corporate Plan and Budget has been produced against a backdrop of significant financial and economic challenges both nationally and locally. With ongoing uncertainty in local government finance across both the short and medium term, particularly in relation to proposed funding reform. We also await the final Local Government Financial Settlement, the impact of which will be included in the report to Cabinet on 6 February 2022.

## **Consideration by Members**

5. The Council has a clear and robust process for Member scrutiny of the draft Corporate Plan and Budget. Its publication on 16 December 2022 marked the start of the six-week consultation period. The Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing and Customer Service has until the end of that period to submit its comments on the proposals to Cabinet, which will review them when they meet on 6 February 2023. Members wishing to seek clarification or further information on the proposals are encouraged to contact the relevant Head of Service and arrange an informal discussion ahead of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing and Customer Service.
6. The Corporate Plan and Budget for 2023/24, with any necessary revisions, will then be submitted for approval by Council at its meeting on 1 March 2023, in the usual way. The final version will be published on the Council's website.

## **Financial Implications**

7. The Council sets its service and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) together with its Council Tax levels each year. Members may wish to scrutinise the Council Tax rise of £4.95 to Band D properties (a 2.75% increase) which is within the allowable limit of 2.99%. Should Members wish to increase Council Tax to the highest allowable level of 2.99%, this would be an increase of £5.40 to Band D properties. Details of this are set out in the report.
8. The report also sets out the financial outlook faced by the Council in 2023/24 and summarises the four-year position in the MTFP, for 2023/24 this is required to be a balanced position. Please note, as with any set of Corporate Plan and Budget proposals, if Members are not supportive of any particular element(s) of the package, alternative item(s), would need to be identified and agreed to achieve a balanced budget.

## **Risk Management Implications**

9. The strategic risks associated with the delivery of the proposals within this Corporate Plan will be considered in full in the usual way as part of the Council's annual strategic risk management process, which identifies key risk areas along with contingency and mitigation plans to alleviate them. These will be reported to this Committee within the usual annual cycle.

## **Equality and Customer Service Implications**

10. As in previous years the various proposals contained within this report would be subject to equalities impact assessments where this is appropriate. The purpose of the assessment is to determine whether it is likely that there would be a negative impact on any protected groups as a result of any service changes and if so to consider whether these can be mitigated or under the proposal should be changed or dropped.

## **Sustainability Implications**

11. None

## **Other Material Implications**

12. None



## **Appendices**

- Appendix A – draft Corporate Plan and Budget 2023/24

## **Background Papers**

- [Service and Financial Planning Guidelines for 2023/24 Cabinet 26th September 2022](#)
- [Draft Corporate Plan & Budget 2023/24 Consultation Process Report to Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing and Customer Service 9 November 2022](#)

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## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LEADER, DEPUTY LEADER AND HOUSING AND CUSTOMER SERVICES WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23.

REPORT OF: Louise Duffield, Director of Resources and Organisational Development  
Contact Officer: Lucinda Joyce, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Email: [lucinda.joyce@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:lucinda.joyce@midsussex.gov.uk) 01444 477225  
Wards Affected: All  
Key Decision: No  
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing and Customer Services  
11 January 2022

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### Purpose of Report

1. For the Scrutiny Committee for Leader, Deputy Leader and Housing and Customer Services to agree its work programme for 2022/23.

### Summary

2. Members are asked to note the attached work programme. The work programme will be reviewed as the final piece of business at each meeting, enabling additional business to be agreed as required.

### Recommendations

3. **The Committee is recommended to agree the indicative Work Programme as set out at paragraph 5 of this report.**
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### Background

4. It is usual for Committees to agree its work programme at the first meeting of a new Council year and review it at each subsequent meeting, to allow for the scrutiny of emerging issues during the year.

### The Work Programme

5. The Committee's indicative Work Programme for 2022/23 is set out below:

Meeting Date	Item	Reason for Inclusion
8 March 2023	Performance Monitoring for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2022/23.	To report on the Council's performance in the third quarter.
	Complaints and Compliments Report & Review of Customer Services across the Council	Annual report
	Equality and Diversity Scheme Progress Report	Annual Report (Moved from Scrutiny Committee for Community, Leisure and Parking due to Portfolio change.)

### Policy Context

6. The work programme should reflect the key priorities of the Council, as defined in the Corporate Plan and Budget.

**Financial Implications**

7. None.

**Risk Management Implications**

8. None.

**Sustainability Implications**

9. None

**Background Papers**

10. None.