

Draft Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2027/28

Supplementary feedback of the Scrutiny Overview Committee following Budget Consultation

Summary of report

This report presents the comments and recommendations from the Scrutiny Overview Committee following consideration of the draft revenue and capital budget proposals for consultation for 2024/25 to 2027/28 to date at the Committee's meeting on 6 February 2024. The Committee previously received draft budget proposals on 11 December 2023 and provided feedback accordingly.

The following subsequent discussion and recommendations will be reported back to Cabinet on 7 February 2024, for them to consider the feedback from Scrutiny Overview Committee in formulating their draft budget proposals at Cabinet on 7 February 2024 for recommendation in the final financial plan to Council on 22 February 2024.

Response to the draft budget options

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and confirmed that the Council had a balanced budget for 2024 which would be presented to Council on 22 February 2024 subject to proposed mitigations. He expressed his gratitude for officers in respect of the finance preparations and the work conducted in accordance with the Proud Programme.

The provisional 2024/25 settlement was received on 18 December 2023 which confirmed referendum principles for the increase in Council Tax of 2.99%. In addition, there was a further 2% precept for Social Care authorities in 2024/25. Therefore, it was proposed that an increase of 4.99% was required for 2024/25. The Council was aware of other local authorities facing financial difficulties such as Birmingham City Council. However, it was highlighted that the Council had worked tirelessly to address budget shortfalls.

The net impact of the settlement was a £830k reduction compared to 2024/25 Medium Term Financial Outlook (MTFO) assumptions. The final settlement announced on 5th February 2024 confirmed an additional £3m for social care across adults and children's and a further £0.4m across services grant, top up grant and Public Health Grant.

There was a consensus from the Committee that there continued to be concerns on future local government funding and the budget for 2025/26 remained a challenge.

A discussion ensued in respect of the funding for social care. Adequate and sustainable funding for social care was required to address the issues within the sector. There was a commitment that no vulnerable adults or children would be put at risk regardless of funding shortfalls within the sector.

A question was raised regarding historic debt with Integrated Commissioning Board (ICB). In this respect, the Leader of the Council confirmed that the Council had come to an agreement with the ICB. A new funding model was being developed and would result in a positive outcome for the Council.

The Committee Resolved:

- 1. That, the draft revenue budget and capital programme for 2024/25 – 2027/28 as presented on 6 February 2024 be noted.**
- 2. To note and thank the Cabinet and Officers on their work to secure a funding agreement with ICB.**

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Signed:

Councillor John Murray

Councillor Murray
Chair, Scrutiny Overview Committee

Signed:



Judith Greenhalgh
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