

BRIEFING PAPER

SUBJECT: GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2015/16 TO 2017/18
DATE: 13 NOVEMBER 2014
RECIPIENT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THIS IS NOT A DECISION PAPER

SUMMARY:

This report, which is to be published on 10 November 2014, will be presented to Cabinet on 18 November 2014 for decision. The purpose of this report is to outline the development of the General Fund revenue budget for 2015/16 to 2017/18 in response to the financial challenges facing Local Government whilst recognising the priorities of the Executive.

The report summarises the current budget position and outlines the initial draft budget and council tax proposals of the Executive for 2015/16 which will be used as the basis for extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders over the coming months. The results of the consultation will be reported alongside the Executive's final proposals which will be presented to Cabinet in early February and recommended to Council on 11 February 2015.

The report deals with general fund revenue services only and there is a separate timetable and consultation process for the Housing Revenue Account which deals with services to council tenants. Proposals for capital expenditure will be presented early in the new year.

BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:

1. The recommendations have been put forward to summarise the current budget position and outline the initial draft budget and council tax proposals of the Executive for 2015/16 which will be used as the basis for extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders over the coming months.
2. The production of a financial forecast and an outline timetable are a requirement of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

Consultation & Communications

3. Consultation on the proposals will commence on 10 November 2014. This will include meeting with trades unions, affected staff and any people or organisations affected by the proposals to ensure all options have been considered. An on-line questionnaire, which will also be available in hard copy, will be published following the 18th November 2014 Cabinet meeting.
4. Cabinet Members are keen to listen to new ideas and to receive feedback on the proposals to help to finalise the Executive's budget to be recommended to Full Council in February 2015.

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Resource and Policy Implications

5. The budget is in itself a major policy exercise dealing with resource allocation within the Council and is supported by the Council's Management Team (CMT), together with specific legal and financial advice.

Options

6. There are almost limitless options that can be applied to budget changes in the year most of which are driven by political priorities. In formulating the draft options to present in this paper the Executive have taken into account the relevant impact of all options that were under consideration and as a result some have not been progressed.
7. Alternative options may be presented to Council at the meeting in February at which a decision will be taken after the end of the consultation process

Appendices/Supporting Information:

8. Report and appendices to be published on 10 November 2014

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