

# Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee: Holding the Executive to Account

Scrutiny Monitoring – 13 October 2022

Date	Portfolio	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
08/09/22	Finance & Change	Financial Monitoring for the period to the end of June 2022	1) That a detailed plan is circulated to the Committee outlining how the Executive are seeking to address the current projected overspend against the 2022/23 General Fund budget.	<p>The regular budget monitoring process we have identified the overspend issue and this process continues to be applied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A monthly budget monitoring report, detailing the forecast position in year compared with budget is prepared each month during the year. This provides an update by service area and in detail on all significant variances, with explanations for anything over more than £50k compared with the previous month.</li> <li>• This is discussed at the Executive Management Board each month and the relevant portfolio is also shared with Cabinet Members for discussion at the respective Cabinet Member Briefings(CMB).</li> </ul> <p>In the light of the forecast, in early August the Chief Executive gave a clear instruction that only 'essential spend' should apply to future budget commitments. The criteria used is as follows: (i) Service Failure - Linked to a service area's ability to deliver essential services in a time critical manner, (ii) Legal Requirement - Relating to statutory or regulatory obligations imposed on the Council and (iii) Contractual Obligation – a pre-existing contractual obligation to spend.</p> <p>To enforce spend against this criteria, the council's procurement team have been set up to scrutinise the spending justification and Purchase Orders (which are used to procure goods and services) will only be released if the justification is in line with the essential spend criteria. Equally, budget holders</p>	

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				<p>have been clearly informed any recruitment of staff needs to meet this essential spending criteria also, and it is a routine part of budget control that a check is made on budget provision when recruiting. Recruitment is expected to be signed off at Executive Director level.</p> <p>As highlighted in the forecast, Children &amp; Learning Portfolio (at £9.2M) is the main element of the £15.2M overspend forecast. Monthly meetings are being held on the service budget with the following attending: Executive Director – Children and Learning, Deputy Director – Children’s Social Care, Chief Executive, Executive Director – Finance and Commercialism, the Head of Financial Planning and Management and others, who discuss budget issues in detail.</p> <p>The Executive Management Team have been looking at options for in-year efficiencies to counter the overspend forecast.</p> <p>A review has been made of the capital programme, and in particular taking account of the phasing of the programme over a number of years. This will lead to a number of adjustments that will be captured in future monitoring reports to Cabinet, generally reflecting a more realistic picture of when items will be delivered and will result in savings in capital financing in the short term.</p>	
			<p>2) That, reflecting the budgetary pressures created by the existing and forecast economic challenges, the Cabinet Member provides the Committee with the current anticipated budget shortfall for 2023/24.</p>	<p>The forecast as reported to Council at the time the budget was agreed, which showed a budget shortfall of £23.4M for 2023/24 continues to be the estimation. However, in light of budget pressures experienced arising out of the forecast overspend and national economic pressure re: energy costs and pay awards, the reality is this will have</p>	

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				<p>increased but a full update is needed factoring in all issues.</p> <p>A full update will therefore be presented to Cabinet in the Autumn, which will also factor in any financial support arising from Government, including as part of its Energy support package following expected announcements and under the fiscal event statement by the Chancellor in late September.</p>	
08/09/22	Transport & District Regeneration	Introduction of Evening Parking Charges	1) That the Executive reconsider the proposed introduction of evening parking charges at the September 2022 Cabinet meeting.	Due to the cancellation of the Cabinet meeting on 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2022 the decision is scheduled to be taken at the Cabinet meeting on 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2022.	
			2) That, if Cabinet agree to introduce evening parking charges, the findings from the proposed 4 month post implementation review are presented to the Committee.	Due to the cancellation of the Cabinet meeting on 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2022 the decision is scheduled to be taken at the Cabinet meeting on 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2022.	
			3) That, if Cabinet agree to introduce evening parking charges, the proposed post decision analysis includes metrics that seek to measure the impact on city centre trade as a result of the introduction of evening parking charges.	Due to the cancellation of the Cabinet meeting on 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2022 the decision is scheduled to be taken at the Cabinet meeting on 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2022.	