

Report of Head of Democratic Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Date: 9th September 2019

Subject: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Board Members with details of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25.

2. Background information

2.1 The 2019/20 budget report to Executive Board in February 2019 included an update of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2021/22. Within a set of assumptions, this identified an estimated budget gap of £37.2m and £28.2m in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively. It also stated the intention to present an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy to Executive Board at its meeting in July.

2.2 The Council's updated Medium Term Financial Strategy was reported to the Executive Board during its meeting on 24th July 2019 for approval.

3. Main issues

3.1 Setting, supporting and monitoring the Council's financial strategy falls within the remit of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Board and therefore a copy of the Executive Board report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2024/25 is attached for Members' consideration.

3.2 Appropriate senior officers have been invited to the meeting to discuss the attached report and address any issues raised by the Scrutiny Board.

4 Corporate considerations

4.2 Consultation and engagement

4.2.1 The Authority's Financial Strategy is driven by its ambitions and priorities as set out in the Best Council Plan 2019/20 to 2020/21, approved by Full Council in February 2019. The Best Council Plan was subject to consultation with members and officers throughout its development with additional extensive stakeholder consultation carried out on the range of supporting plans and strategies.

4.2.2 The proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy has also been informed by the public consultation on the Council's Initial Budget Proposals for 2019/20. Details of this consultation are set out within the attached Executive Board report.

4.3 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.3.1 The Council is fully committed to ensuring that equality and diversity are given proper consideration when we develop policies and make decisions. In order to achieve this, the Council has an agreed process in place and has particularly promoted the importance of the process when taking forward key policy or budgetary changes. Equality impact assessments also ensure that we make well informed decisions based on robust evidence. Further details are set out within the attached Executive Board report.

4.4 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

4.4.1 The refreshed Best Council Plan 2019/20 – 2020/21 sets out the Council's priorities, aligned with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the annual budgets. Developing and then implementing the Best Council Plan will continue to inform, and be informed by, the Council's funding envelope, staffing and other resources.

Climate Emergency

4.4.2 There are no specific implications for the climate emergency resulting from this Medium Term Financial Strategy.

4.5 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.5.1 All financial implications are detailed in the main body of the Executive Board report.

4.6 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

4.7 Risk management

- 4.7.1 The Council's current and future financial position is subject to a number of risk management processes. Not addressing the financial pressures in a sustainable way is identified as one of the Council's corporate risks, as is the Council's financial position going into significant deficit in any one year. Both of these risks are subject to regular review. Further details are set out in the attached Executive Board report.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Council's updated Medium Term Financial Strategy was reported to the Executive Board during its meeting on 24th July 2019 for approval and this report is now appended for the Scrutiny Board's consideration in accordance with its terms of reference.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 That the Scrutiny Board considers the attached Executive Board report and agrees any specific scrutiny actions that may be appropriate.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.