

# Cabinet



Date of meeting:	09 February 2021
Title of Report:	<b>Budget Scrutiny Recommendations</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor Glenn Jordan (Chair of Budget Scrutiny Select Committee)
Lead Strategic Director:	Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)
Author:	Andrew Loton (Head of Governance, Performance and Risk)
Contact Email:	Andrew.Loton@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	BudR21/22
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## **Purpose of Report**

This report sets out the recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Select Committee following its review of the Council's budget preparations for 2021-2022.

## **Recommendations and Reasons**

That Cabinet consider each of the 18 recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Select Committee.

Reason: The recommendations were made after careful consideration of the Cabinets budget proposals, the Local Government Finance settlement and accompanying documentation and stakeholder feedback.

## **Alternative options considered and rejected**

Cabinet is obliged by the Constitution to take account of recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Select Committee.

## **Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan**

The Select Committee considered the themes within the Corporate Plan to ensure that proposals within the budget and business plans deliver against the council's vision.

## **Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:**

The recommendations directly relate to the Councils Medium term financial plan.

## **Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

Recommendations 14 to 18 relate to the Council's Climate Emergency and Carbon Reduction Action Plan.

**Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:**

\* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

**Appendices**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Budget Scrutiny Select Committee Recommendations.							

**Background papers:**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
See Appendix A							

**Sign off:**

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 04/02/2021											
Chair of Scrutiny approval: Councillor Glenn Jordan											
Date approved: 04/02/2021											

## APPENDIX A.

### BUDGET SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE 2021/22

#### INTRODUCTION

The Budget Scrutiny Select Committee was convened on the 18/19 January 2021 to consider the Cabinet's approach for setting the budget for the 2021/22 financial year, taking into account the Medium Term Financial Plan which sets out how the Council will fund its services and invest in buildings and infrastructure.

Budget Scrutiny provides the opportunity to test assumptions, examine risks and challenge priorities; this is with a view to establishing and maintaining resources that are fit for purpose, meet the council's obligations and priorities and address the needs and aspirations of the people of Plymouth.

The Select Committee for Budget Scrutiny was comprised of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Council's four Overview and Scrutiny Committees, along with an additional member from the Labour Group to satisfy political proportionality.

#### METHODOLOGY/APPROACH

In-order to effectively scrutinise the budget the committee considered written evidence and verbal representation from Cabinet Members and Officers of the Council. The written evidence provided included the following:

- **Draft Budget 2021/22**

This report sets out the latest information available in respect of the 2021/22 budget. The budget complements the overarching vision, values and priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

- **Draft Budget 2021/22 Equalities Impact Assessment**

This draft equality impact assessment and associated briefing has been drafted to help ensure that the organisation is giving due regard to equality considerations through the setting of our budget

- **Council Tax Base Setting and Council Tax Support Scheme**

Provides the 2021/22 Council Tax base and Council Tax Support Scheme details in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

- **Revenue Monitoring Position November 2020**

The revenue finance monitoring position of the Council November 2020

- **Treasury Management Strategy**

This report sets out the Treasury Management Strategy for 2021/22 and includes the Annual Investment Strategy, the Non-Treasury Management Investment Strategy and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement.

- **Capital Programme Summary**

This report sets out the Capital Financing Strategy for 2021/22 and is a requirement of The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services.

- **Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report 2020/21 Q2**

Outlines the capital and revenue finance monitoring position of the Council as at the end of September 2020. Sets out the capital budget 2020-25, taking into account changes to the capital programme and adjustments to income assumptions as a result of the pandemic.

- **Budget Scrutiny 2019/20 Recs**

Provides the Budget Scrutiny recommendations from the 19/20 budget scrutiny process and gives an overview of actions taken.

- **Corporate plan**

The Corporate Plan outlines the strategic direction of the council for the next four years (2018-2022).

- **Performance reports**

This is the Corporate Plan Performance report that details how the Council is performing against its priority performance indicators that were agreed at the inception of the Corporate Plan.

- **Strategic Risk Register**

Provides the Strategic Risks showing the current status of each risk and the movement in risk score, together with four new risks identified as a result of Covid-19.

- **Operational risks (red)**

This report now outlines the continuing progress being made across Services in delivering Operational Risk and Opportunity Registers in line with the Council's shared vision and priorities.

- **Workforce Report**

Provides analysis of workforce and sickness levels to ensure oversight on spend, trends and forecasting future spend to inform business needs.

- **Brexit papers (November Cabinet and December BILCO papers)**

To outline the work completed by the BILCO Committee in identifying the economic impact of Brexit and to ensure that research is undertaken and made available to the public as set out in the Council's Pledge 11. To highlight the current preparedness of the City's business sector for the end of the Brexit transition period.

- **Climate Emergency Action Plan**

The report introduces the Climate Emergency Action Plan for 2021 and the planned specific actions to address climate change issues during 2021.

- **Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan**

The Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan contains 24 actions, to be delivered within existing budgets and through existing staff

**PROCESS**

The scrutiny of the 2021/22 budget took place over two days during seven sessions. During each Session the Cabinet Member outlined priorities and challenges for the forthcoming year to include main changes from 2020/21 and highlight impact/risk. At the close of each day the recommendations of the panel were recorded. An outline of day one and day two sessions is shown below along with the recommendations to Cabinet made each day.

**DAY ONE**

**Session One:** Opening of Budget Scrutiny & Plymouth City Council Financial Position

**Session Two:** Children's Services Directorate (Children Young People & Families and Education Participation & Skills)

**Session Three:** People Directorate (Adult Social Care Service including caring and vulnerable)

**Day One Recommendations:**

No.	Recommendation
1	That the Chief Executive and Leader seek support from the Local Government Association in seeking clarity from Government regarding the timeliness of future Local Government Finance Settlements. In addition, to request that a 3 year settlement including grant funding be considered to improve the budget setting process, and that revenue support grant continues until the replacement business rates scheme is finalised.
2	The Cabinet member for Children and Young People work with the Director of Children's Services to continue to reduce the use of independent fostering placements in favour of in house fostering placements.
3	The Cabinet member for Finance creates a specific reserve to ensure that contingencies are in the budget in case the number of children in care placements increases due to COVID-19. Regular reporting is recommended to the Education and Children's Scrutiny Committee
4	The Cabinet member for Children and Young People work with the Director of Children's Services to ensure that financial savings made through alternative methods of school transport do not adversely affect pupils who would use the service. Regular reporting is recommended to the Education and Children's Scrutiny Committee ensuring arrangements for pre-decision scrutiny of the consultation for the School Transport review.
5	The Cabinet member for Health and Adult Social Care and the Director of People to work with partners to ensure that there is adequate provision for Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), ensuring that the work with young people who benefit from this support is more effective and manageable within the budget.
6	The Cabinet member for Housing and Co-operative Development ensures that adequate provision is made in the budget to continue to prevent homelessness and, if necessary, support those finding themselves homeless following the lifting of the evictions ban. Reporting into the Performance, Finance and Customer Services Scrutiny
7	That the Leader of the Council writes to the Home Secretary to ensure that the value of Health Care Workers from overseas is recognised in future policy making.
8	The Leader of the Council to write to the Local Government Association in order to ask the Government to set out a clear timetable and road map for reform of Adult Social Care funding in order to meet the challenges of an ageing population and to provide a long term sustainable financial settlement.

8a	That Cabinet recommends Council to approve a 3% ASC precept.
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**DAY TWO**

**Session Four:** Place Directorate (Economic Development Service incl. Brexit impact and Employment & Skills)

**Session Five:** Place Directorate (Street Services and Strategic Planning & Infrastructure)

**Session Six:** Customer and Corporate Services (Transformation)

**Session Seven:** Customer Services (outward facing including bereavement and registration services)

**Day Two Recommendations:**

9	Scrutiny Management Board to review the Kickstart scheme to ensure it fulfils its expectations.
10	The Leader of the Council to write to the Local Government Association in order to ask the Government to work with the sectors most affected by the new trading arrangements with the EU and formulate an action plan to address issues e.g. our local fishing industry.
11	The Leader write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government asking that restriction on accessing Public Works Loan Board loans be removed for councils pursuing sound investments within their travel to work area in order to offset the reduction central government funding.
12	The Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene to prioritise improvements on playgrounds and multi-play areas which are not currently compliant with the Equalities Act 2010.
13	The Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene to work with the Service Director for Street Services to explore the reasons for the use of agency staff and where possible work to reduce it within the service. Reporting into Performance, Finance and Customer Services OSC by November 2021.
14	The Cabinet member for Environment and Street Scene and Cabinet member for strategic planning and infrastructure to provide a detailed update on the impacts and benefits to savings proposals and maintenance costs arising from the carbon reduction measures. Reporting to the Brexit Infrastructure and Legislative Change OSC by November 2021.
15	The Cabinet member for strategic planning and infrastructure to review the policy for walking and cycling infrastructure to ensure increased levels of distinct and well defined walking and cycle pathways. Reporting to the Brexit Infrastructure and Legislative Change OSC by November 2021.
16	The Deputy Leader to work with the Strategic Director for Customer and Corporate Services to embed future working from home arrangements (The Way We Work), focusing on wellbeing, and realising savings from a rationalisation of resources and accommodation. Reporting to the Finance and Customer Services OSC by November 2021.
17	That Cabinet consider how to maximise all financing opportunities to support the city's growth agenda and the capital programme pipeline to ensure that the necessary investment in the city's infrastructure including supporting the Council's climate emergency action plans is made.
18	The Deputy Leader to report to the Scrutiny Management Board on the delivery of the accommodation strategy, including home working arrangements.