

Cabinet



Date of meeting:	09 February 2021
Title of Report:	Cabinet Response to Budget Scrutiny Select Committee Recommendations
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)
Lead Strategic Director:	Brendon Arnold (Service Director for Finance)
Author:	Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)
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Your Reference:	CabR21
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The Budget Scrutiny Select Committee was convened on the 18/19 January 2021 to consider the Cabinet's approach to 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.

This report sets out the proposed Cabinet response to 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 the Cabinet:

1. Responds to each of the 18 recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Select Committee as outlined within Appendix A.
2. Thanks the Budget Scrutiny Select Chair and Committee for their work on scrutinising the Cabinet's proposed budget and making recommendations to Cabinet.

Reason: In line with the Constitution the Cabinet is obliged to take account of recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Select Committee.

Alternative options considered and rejected

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

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

Cabinet Member approval: *Councillor Mark Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance)*

Date approved: 04/02/2021

APPENDIX A**CABINET RESPONSE TO BUDGET SCRUTINY
RECOMMENDATIONS 2021/22**

No.	Recommendation	Cabinet response
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed
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.	Existing financial management and contingency arrangements are appropriate

No.	Recommendation	Cabinet response
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed: suggest Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is the lead for this recommendation
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed
8a.	That Cabinet recommends Council to approve a 3% ASC precept.	For consideration by Full Council
9.	Scrutiny Management Board to review the Kickstart scheme to ensure it fulfils its expectations.	Agreed
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.	Agreed

No.	Recommendation	Cabinet response
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed
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.	Agreed: suggest collaboration with Cabinet leads for transformation and finance
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.	Agreed

18.	The Deputy Leader to report to the Scrutiny Management Board on the delivery of the accommodation strategy, including home working arrangements.	Agreed: as response to recommendation (16) above
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