

BUDGET SCRUTINY APPROACH 2022/23



Overview

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.

Following agreement from Scrutiny Management Board this document outlines the proposed enhanced approach for scrutiny of the 2022/23 Budget.

Scrutiny Management Board will be asked to consider the endorsement of the following principles:

- An opportunity to enhance the role of scrutiny committees covering the breadth of the council services to participate in budget scrutiny sessions in December. Recommendations and advice to be fed into the formal Budget Scrutiny process.
- Individual scrutiny committees would discuss and identify lines of questioning for their particular area and have detailed access to budget information to allow them to scrutinise the budget effectively and provide recommendations for in year budget issues.
- Budget Scrutiny would run over one day in January 2022 date TBC;
- An informal session would take place following formal Budget Scrutiny to formalise recommendations for Cabinet;
- A risk-informed approach would be taken utilising the strategic risk register and informed by the committee sessions, with time allocated to areas for discussion at budget scrutiny based on risk level;

The suggested approach acknowledges feedback from previous years that budget scrutiny when held as a single two day event: does not allow sufficient scrutiny of service specific areas ,where scrutiny panels have existing expertise and knowledge, has not always delivered scrutiny outcomes that reflect the resource and preparation that go into a two day event.. We therefore believe that a revised approach that divides the process and papers release between the Autumn and January will provide greater opportunity for service specific further consideration and reflection on the issues by scrutiny members culminating in a comprehensive one day scrutiny session that draws all the elements together.

A draft Select Committee Review Plan is provided at Annex I.

Membership

Budget Scrutiny Committee is politically balanced; it will therefore comprise five Conservative and four labour scrutiny members including the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Scrutiny Panels:

- Councillor Chris Penberthy (Chair)

- Councillor David James (Vice-Chair)

Timeline of key meetings

In respect of the Budget Scrutiny Committee, key dates are as follows:

Date	Event
20 Oct 2021	Scrutiny Management Board meeting
w/c 29 Nov 2021	Budget Scrutiny Committee Pre-Meet
Dec TBC	<p>Scrutiny Budget Sessions.</p> <p>Each scrutiny committee will decide areas of focus and relevant officers and Cabinet Members required to attend. Areas to be covered will be agreed at Scrutiny Management Board following input from Directors. Potential areas of focus for each committee are shown below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education and Children's Social Care OSC covering Children, Young People and Families Services. ▪ Health and Adult Social Care OSC covering the People Directorate and Public Health (excluding ▪ Brexit, legislative change and infrastructure OSC covering the Place Directorate (excluding Street Services). ▪ Performance, Finance and Customer Focus OSC covering Customer and Corporate Services, Executive Office, Community Connections, Bereavement Service and Register Office and Street Services. <p>Papers to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget structure by Directorate ▪ Directorate monitoring position at period 6 ▪ Briefing from Strategic Director on service pressures. ▪ Strategic Risk Register ▪ Operational risks (red) ▪ Performance reports ▪ Service Business Plan progress updates/draft service budgets
06 th Dec 21	Draft Budget published to Cabinet and to Budget Scrutiny
14th Dec 2021	Cabinet
16 th /17th Dec 2021	<p>Issue of available papers to Budget Scrutiny Committee to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate plan • Outcome of MTFP/Budget Consultation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital Programme Summary• Treasury Management Strategy• Overarching Cabinet Paper• Reports from scrutiny sessions.
Jan 2022 TBC	Budget Scrutiny Committee Pre-Meet
Jan 2022 TBC	BUDGET SCRUTINY
Jan 2022 TBC	Budget Scrutiny Wash-up
24 Jan 2022	Full Council
08 Feb 2022	Cabinet <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final budget report to be recommended to full Council
28 Feb 2022	Full Council <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve Budget 2022/23• Set Council Tax 2022/23