

# CORPORATE SERVICES AND ECONOMIC GROWTH OSC

## REPORT TO THE CABINET

13 FEBRUARY 2018

### Medium Term Financial Plan 2018-22 and Budget 2018-19

Nick Oliver, Cabinet Member: Corporate Services and Cabinet Secretary and Alison Elsdon, Service Director: Finance presented the report to the Committee (to which all Overview and Scrutiny Members were invited) on 1 February 2018.

Following the presentations the main issues raised by members included:

- reference was made to the proposed efficiency savings in Neighbourhood Services and the impact that may have on the provision of existing services. Members were advised that Town and Parish Councils would be consulted on the Service Level Agreements that they had with the Council to agree a workable arrangement that would ensure a satisfactory level of service;
- members were assured that proposed housing rent increases would be based on the percentage of the current house value. There were no plans to review those valuations. It was further anticipated that the proposed devolution deal would accelerate the delivery of housing by working with a range of partners and through community led projects;
- the schedule of efficiencies referred to a number of reviews and concern was expressed that in previous years, such reviews had not realised the promised savings. Members were advised that many of the reviews were put forward by officers that they believed to be genuinely achievable;
- concern was expressed that the new level of debt would exceed £1b. Members were advised that the proposals would replace the budget agreed by the previous Administration which would have created a debt liability of £1.5b. The Council debt was managed through a package of short and long term borrowing, ensuring that loans would mature at different times. The Administration believed that the new proposals were relatively modest and affordable;
- in respect of loans to external bodies, concern was expressed at the level of delegation being authorised to the S151 Officer/Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council. The Leader confirmed that the level of delegation had been significantly reduced from previous years, but that he was content that this Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an annual report to include details of any approved delegated decisions within the terms of the Medium Term Capital Plan to ensure transparency, and
- in respect of the Section 106 Reserve, members were advised that the administration would be more robust in collecting revenue from developers. Infrastructure plans were being prepared so that collected monies could be allocated to new projects.

The Committee therefore **RESOLVED** that the comments, as set out above, be presented by the Chairman to the Cabinet for consideration when determining the report.

**COUNCILLOR DAVID BAWN**

**CHAIRMAN**