

# Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee Agenda



9.30 am Thursday, 31 January 2019  
Committee Room 2, Town Hall,  
Darlington, DL1 5QT

**Members of the Public are welcome to attend this Meeting.**

1. Introductions/Attendance at Meeting.
2. Declarations of Interest.
3. Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2019/20 –  
To consider a response to Cabinet on the plan taking into account the views of all the Council's Scrutiny Committees
  - (a) Place Scrutiny Committee - Minutes of a meeting held on 13 December 2018 (Pages 1 - 2)
  - (b) Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee - Minutes of a meeting held on 18 December, 2018 (Pages 3 - 4)
  - (c) Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held on 19 December, 2018 (Pages 5 - 6)
  - (d) Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 20 December 2018 (Pages 7 - 8)
  - (e) Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 21 January, 2019 (Pages 9 - 10)



**Luke Swinhoe**  
**Assistant Director Law and Governance**

**Wednesday, 23 January 2019**

**Town Hall**  
**Darlington.**

**Membership**

Councillors Haszeldine, Carson, Cossins, Coultas, Crichlow, Johnson, Marshall,  
Mrs H Scott and C Taylor

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact Shirley Burton, Democratic Services Manager, Resources Group, during normal office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. Fridays E-mail: [shirley.burton@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:shirley.burton@darlington.gov.uk) or telephone 01325 405998

## PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2018

**P28 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN** - Submitted – A report (previously circulated) of the Chief Officers Executive which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 11 December 2018, in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2019-20 to 2022-23 and proposing a 2019/20 to 2022/23 capital programme for consultation.

The Assistant Director, Finance and Human Resources reported that the Local Government Finance Settlement (LGFS) which was due to be announced on 6 December 2018 was still awaited, however, any amendment in relation to the LGFS was not expected to be significant.

It was reported that the delivery of the core offer which was agreed in 2016 remained extremely challenging with some significant pressures arising in children's social care, however, through innovative financial investments and increased income from economic growth, the Council could still deliver the agreed balanced plan, extend the MTFP. A further £0.600 million had also been identified which could be used to bolster the Futures Fund themes or be returned to reserves.

Discussion ensued on the significant work which had been undertaken to achieve economic growth within the Borough, particularly in relation to Symmetry Park, which had been rewarded with a positive net increase in the projected National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected over the coming MTFP. It was reported that the Council currently retained 49 per cent of the NNDR collected, however, the business tax base was much more volatile than the Council Tax base and required very close monitoring. In addition to the potential to lose income due to business closures, the Council also carried the risk of losing appeals by businesses against valuations.

It was reported that there were no proposed reductions in service levels within the 2019/20 MTFP and there were some only minor changes to the proposed schedule of fees and charges.

Members questioned whether the revenue reserves should be used to reduce the proposed Council Tax increase, however the Assistant Director Finance and Human Resources reported that the reserves were being used to balance the MTFP going forward and the Officers view was that the Council Tax needed to be increased.

**RESOLVED** - That this Scrutiny Committee has no comment to make on the proposed schedule of fees and charges for those services within its remit and supports Cabinet's proposal in relation to those fees and charges and the proposed Council Tax increase of 2.99 per cent for the next financial year.

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## ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2018

**AH32 – MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN** - Submitted – A report (previously circulated) of the Chief Officers Executive which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 11 December 2018, in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2019-20 to 2022-23 and proposing a 2019/20 to 2022/23 capital programme for consultation.

It was reported that the delivery of the core offer which was agreed in 2016 remained extremely challenging with some significant pressures arising in children's social care, however, through innovative financial investments and increased income from economic growth, the Council could still deliver the agreed balanced plan, extend the MTFP and a further £0.600 million had also been identified which could be used to bolster the Futures Fund themes or be returned to reserves.

Discussion ensued on the significant work which had been undertaken through the Adult Social Services transformation project to ensure people received the right level of care and were able to stay in their homes longer, which had reduced the reliance on residential care placements and subsequent savings exceed the estimated target for that area.

Reference was also made to the winter pressures funding of 0.501 million which had also been received for adults in 2018/19 and 2019/20, and it was reported that how this funding was utilised must be agreed in a plan with the NHS.

The submitted report outlined a number of risk pressures which had been identified, however, it was not clear at this stage whether they would definitely come to fruition and the Assistant Director Resources reported that if they did, they would be of significant value and, given the potential impact, it had been considered prudent to recognise them in the budget and, following a review of those risks, it had been recommended that a prudent level would be to include 60 per cent of the total value of the risk contingency line.

**RESOLVED** - That this Scrutiny Committee has no comment to make on the proposed schedule of fees and charges for those services within its remit and supports Cabinet's proposal in relation to those fees and charges and the proposed Council Tax increase of 2.99 per cent for the next financial year.

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## HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

19<sup>TH</sup> December, 2018

**HP43 – MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN** - Submitted – A report (previously circulated) of the Chief Officers Executive which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 11 December 2018, in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2019-20 to 2022-23 and proposing a 2019/20 to 2022/23 capital programme for consultation.

It was reported that the delivery of the core offer which was agreed in 2016 remained extremely challenging with some significant pressures arising in children's social care, however, through innovative financial investments and increased income from economic growth, the Council could still deliver the agreed balanced plan and extend the MTFP. A further £0.600 million had also been identified which could be used to bolster the Futures Fund themes or be returned to reserves.

It was noted that the Council had allocated £4.1 million to the futures fund in 2018/19, £2.5 million of which was allocated between the five community themes. To date £1.063 million had been committed to the futures fund themes with a balance of £1.437 million remaining.

Discussion ensued on the significant work which had been undertaken to achieve economic growth within the Borough, particularly in relation to Symmetry Park, which had been rewarded with a positive net increase in the projected National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected over the coming MTFP.

It was reported that there were no proposed reductions in service levels within the 2019/20 MTFP and there were some only minor changes to the proposed schedule of fees and charges.

Members noted the additional monies identified for winter pressures amounting to £501,000 this year and for next year to be divided between residential and domiciliary care and requested an update to this Scrutiny on the spend in due course.

**RESOLVED** - That this Scrutiny Committee has no comment to make on the proposed schedule of fees and charges for those services within its remit and supports Cabinet's proposal in relation to those fees and charges and the proposed Council Tax increase of 2.99 per cent for the next financial year.

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## EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20th December, 2018

**ER21 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN - Submitted** – A report (previously circulated) of the Chief Officers Executive which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 11 December 2018, in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2019-20 to 2022-23 and proposing a 2019/20 to 2022/23 capital programme for consultation.

It was reported that the delivery of the core offer which was agreed in 2016 remained extremely challenging with some significant pressures arising in children's social care, however, through innovative financial investments and increased income from economic growth, the Council could still deliver the agreed balanced plan and extend the MTFP. A further £0.600 million had also been identified which could be used to bolster the Futures Fund themes or be returned to reserves.

Particular reference was made to a number of risk pressures which had been identified, however, it was reported that it was not clear at this stage whether they would definitely come to fruition. The Assistant Director Resources advised us that, given the potential impact if they did, it had been considered prudent to recognise them in the budget and, following a review of the risks, it had been recommended that a prudent level would be to include 60 per cent of the total value in the risk contingency line.

Discussion ensued on the savings which had been achieved in Adult Social Care; the current position in relation to school transport which was currently overspending and which was subject to a review with the aim of reducing the current projected overspend; the use of reserves to balance the MTFP; and the risk contingency going forward.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That Members notify Officers of specific areas they would like to look at further within the MTFP and a further special meeting be arranged if necessary.

(b) That a meeting of this Scrutiny Committee be held, prior to Cabinet on 12 February, 2019, to formulate a response on behalf of all Scrutiny Committees to Cabinet on its proposals in relation to the MTFP.

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## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY, 2019

**CYP32 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN** - Submitted – A report (previously circulated) of the Chief Officers Executive which had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 11 December 2018, in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2019-20 to 2022-23 and proposing a 2019/20 to 2022/23 capital programme for consultation.

It was reported that the delivery of the core offer which was agreed in 2016 remained extremely challenging with some significant pressures arising in children's social care, however, through innovative financial investments and increased income from economic growth, the Council could still deliver the agreed balanced plan and extend the MTFP. A further £0.600 million had also been identified which could be used to bolster the Futures Fund themes or be returned to reserves.

It was noted that the Council had allocated £4.1 million to the futures fund in 2018/19, £2.5 million of which was allocated between the five community themes. To date £1.063 million had been committed to the futures fund themes with a balance of £1.437 million remaining.

Discussion ensued on the significant work which had been undertaken to achieve economic growth within the Borough, particularly in relation to Symmetry Park, which had been rewarded with a positive net increase in the projected National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collected over the coming MTFP.

It was reported that there were no proposed reductions in service levels within the 2019/20 MTFP and that fees and charges had been reviewed and increased where appropriate.

Members noted the additional monies identified for winter pressures amounting to £501,000 this year and for next year to be divided between residential and domiciliary care and to be agreed with our NHS colleagues.

Members also noted the significant pressures arising in Children's social care and the demand pressures on external residential placements and independent fostering placements in Children's Services and additional one off finance to be used to offset some of the pressure on Children and Adult social care.

**RESOLVED** - That this Scrutiny Committee has no comment to make on the proposed schedule of fees and charges for those services within its remit and supports Cabinet's proposal in relation to those fees and charges and the proposed Council Tax increase of 2.99 per cent for the next financial year.

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