

COUNCIL
1 FEBRUARY 2022

OVERVIEW OF ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

Customer Services and Digital Strategy

2. Our views were sought on the draft Customer Services and Digital Strategy for 2021-24, prior to its consideration by Cabinet.
3. The strategy sets out the Council's vision for delivering excellent services for its customers, and, in particular, how more of these services will be delivered through digital channels in future, whilst also recognising the need to continue to support those customers who, for a number of reasons, are unable to use the on-line services.
4. The seven key aims of the strategy were referenced and we will be receiving an update on the expected outcomes at a future meeting of our Scrutiny Committee.

Performance Indicators Quarter 2 – 2021/22

5. Performance information against the key performance indicators for quarter 2 which are within the remit of our Scrutiny Committee have been provided.
6. We will be undertaking some further work to look at all the reportable indicators within our remit and agree an indicator set which we feel will provide us with the most relevant data information.

Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 – 2025/26

7. As with all Scrutiny Committees, we have had the opportunity to respond to Cabinet on its proposals contained within the Medium- Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2025-26.
8. Following a detailed discussion at our meeting on 6 January, 2022, our comments to Cabinet were as follows :-
 - (i) the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Resources should continue to lobby the Government in relation to the need for increased funding;
 - (ii) Cabinet should provide evidence of the work it is undertaking to plan for the projected budget deficit over the four-year period of the MTFP, including details of what steps and actions might need to be taken; and
 - (iii) a comprehensive communication strategy should be developed to better inform residents of the Borough of the reasons for the proposed increase in Council Tax

and how the funding is being spent to deliver services

A further meeting of our Scrutiny Committee was held on 20 January 2022, where we considered the above and made a couple of further amendments to our proposal. A final response, on behalf of all Scrutiny Committees, as agreed by all Members of our Scrutiny Committee who were present at this meeting, has been submitted to Cabinet.

Work Programme

9. We have given consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee for the Municipal Year 2021/22 and to any additional areas that Members would like to be included.
10. We will be receiving briefings to update us on the Markets and the outcomes of the employee survey which has recently been undertaken. If there are any particular issues arising from either of those topics, we will discuss them formally at a future Scrutiny meeting.
11. Arrangements are also in hand for the Tees Valley Combined Authority to brief us and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the funding allocation as it relates to this Council and where spend (adult education up to 28 years) is being focussed.

Councillor Mike Renton
Chair Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee