

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13TH 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.