

Overview and Scrutiny Board 2024

25th June

Finance and Budget Working Group

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor S. R. Colella
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services
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Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	N/A
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to:-

- a) Appoint a Chairman of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group;**
- b) Agree the Membership of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group; and**
- c) Confirm the Terms of Reference of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group was set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Board a number of years ago to carry out detailed scrutiny of a number of Financial Reports (listed in the Terms of Reference) and to assist in scrutiny of the Council's budget setting.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is to formalise the membership of the Group for 2024-25 and to confirm that the terms of reference (updated during the 2022-23 municipal year) remain relevant.

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3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

3.1 Chairman

Historically the Chairman of the Working Group has been the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Members are asked to consider whether they are happy with this arrangement to continue for the forthcoming municipal year. If this is not the case, then consideration needs to be given as to how a Chairman would be appointed.

3.2 Membership

It has been agreed within the terms of reference that the Working Group be composed of the Chairman of the Audit, Standards & Governance Committee and 6 Members of the Board with a quorum of 3. Working Groups are not required to be politically balanced, although it would be good practice to have each political group represented.

Members are asked to choose the membership of the Working Group (Cabinet members cannot be represented). For any Member wishing to sit on the Working Group, meetings have been scheduled for this year as per below, although there may be a need for extra meetings when the need is identified, particularly during the budget setting period.

- 18th July 2024
- 5th September 2024
- 18th November 2024
- 2nd January 2025
- 10th February 2025
- 19th March 2025

All meetings are due to start at 6.00pm and will be held remotely (on Microsoft Teams).

The Chairman of the Audit, Standards & Governance Committee will be contacted about his membership on the Working Group in due course.

3.3 Terms of Reference

The terms of reference are reviewed at the beginning of each municipal year since the inception of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group.

Members are asked to consider whether they feel that these continue to be relevant or whether there is a need for any amendments to be made. The terms of reference are not exhaustive and from time to time the Working Group have considered a number of items at the request of the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Finance. It remains at the discretion of the Working Group as to whether they carry out these additional pieces of work.

Last year, the Overview and Scrutiny Board has requested that the final Medium Term Financial Plan – Tranche 2 Budget report be considered as an item at a regular meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Board.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications in respect of this report. Although it should be noted that there are resource implications in respect of officer time in attending and preparing for the meetings.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications relating to this report, other than those in respect of the Overview and Scrutiny function as a whole. The Working Group is currently not constituted, but merely an arrangement set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Board to improve its working going forward in respect of scrutinising the budget and finances of the Council.

6. OTHER - IMPLICATIONS

Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 6.1 The work of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group contributes towards ensuring that the Council continues to provide sustainable services to its residents.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.2 There are no climate change implications in respect of this report.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

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- 6.3 There are no direct customer/equalities and diversity implications in respect of this report.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 No specific risks have been identified.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference of the Finance & Budget Scrutiny Working Group (updated January 2023).