

Overview and Scrutiny Board

2025

17th June

Finance and Budget Working Group

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor S. Baxter
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Assistant Director of Legal, Democratic and Procurement Services
Report Author: Jane Oyenuga	Job Title: Trainee Democratic Services Officer Contact email: jane.oyenuga@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Council Priorities	Sustainability
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 for the municipal year 2025/26;**
- b) Agree the Membership of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group for the municipal year 2025/26; 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 2025-26 and to confirm that the terms of reference (updated during the 2024-25 municipal year) remain relevant.

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3. OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Chairman

- 3.1 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 who to appoint as Chairman of this group.

Membership

- 3.2 It has been agreed within the terms of reference that the Working Group be composed of the Chairman of the Audit, Standards and 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.
- 3.3 Members are asked to choose the membership of the Working Group (Cabinet members cannot be represented). It should be noted that the terms of reference for the group state that members must be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, (with the exception of the Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee where s/he is not a member of the Board). 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. Conversely, meetings may be cancelled if there is no business to be considered on the particular date.
- 17th July 2025
 - 5th September 2025
 - 17th November 2025
 - 5th January 2026
 - 6th February 2026
 - 23rd March 2026

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- 3.4 All meetings are due to start at 6.00pm and will be held remotely (on Microsoft Teams). Any meetings held on Friday will commence at 1.00pm.
- 3.5 The Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee will be contacted about his/her membership of the Working Group in due course.

Terms of Reference

- 3.6 The terms of reference are reviewed at the beginning of each municipal year since the inception of the Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group.
- 3.7 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 Member for Finance. It remains at the discretion of the Working Group as to whether they carry out these additional pieces of work.

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 work going forward in respect of scrutinising the budget and finances of the Council.

6. OTHER – IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Reorganisation Implications

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- 6.1 There are no implications for Local Government Reorganisation.

Relevant Council Priority

- 6.2 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

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

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.4 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 and Budget Scrutiny Working Group (updated September 2024).