

Summary Sheet

Advisory Cabinet Report

Advisory Cabinet Meeting – 15th February 2016

Title

Budget 2016/17 – Update Report

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Stuart Booth – Interim Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

All

Executive Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the Budget for 2016/17 and also provides initial feedback from the public and partners on the Directorate Budget proposals currently out for comment on the Council's website.

Recommendations

Advisory Cabinet Members and Commissioner Myers are asked to:

- Note that if the Final Local Government Settlement, when received, is different to Provisional Settlement received on 17th December 2015, an update will be provided to the Advisory Cabinet at its meeting on 15th February 2016.
- Note the initial public and partner feedback received in respect of the Budget Proposals currently out to comment. (See Appendix 1)

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Initial feedback (to 4th February 2016) on Directorate Budget Proposals 2016/17 – 2018/19

Background Papers

Provisional Local Government Settlement – 17th December 2015
Financial and service changes – proposals for consideration and public consultation prior to Budget-setting for 2016/17 – Report to Advisory Cabinet 18th January 2016.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Budget 2016/17 – Update Report

1. Recommendations

Advisory Cabinet Members and Commissioner Myers are asked to:

- 1.1 Note that if the Final Local Government Settlement, when received, is different to Provisional Settlement received on 17th December 2015, an update will be provided to the Advisory Cabinet at its meeting on 15th February 2016.
- 1.2 Note the initial public and partner feedback received in respect of the Budget Proposals currently out to comment. (See Appendix 1)

2. Background

Local Government Settlement

- 2.1 On 17th December 2015 the Council received notification of its Provisional Settlement for 2016/17 in addition to information about an opportunity to subscribe to a '4 year offer' settlement. More information about the latter will be made available on publication of the Final Local Government Settlement.
- 2.2 The Provisional Settlement indicated that Rotherham's assumed level of funding would be £349k worse than had been assumed for 2016/17 in its budget planning process.
- 2.3 Commissioners, Members and Officers have been considering options to address this additional pressure and proposals will be included in the Budget Setting Report. This report will be considered by Advisory Cabinet on 23rd February and subsequently by Council on 2nd March 2016 to set the Council's 2016/17 Revenue Budget.
- 2.4 At the time of publishing this report, the Government had still not published the Final Local Government Settlement. The timing of the announcement is now expected between the 5th and 9th February 2016.

Feedback on Directorate Budget Proposals

- 2.5 Directorate Budget Proposals have been developed during 2015 and early 2016. Those supported by Members have been published on the Council's website for public and partner comment. The closing date for feedback is 12th February 2016.
- 2.6 Any further feedback on the budget proposals received between 4th and 14th February will also be provided by way of an update to the Advisory Cabinet Meeting on 15th February 2016.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The Final Local Government Settlement is a key determinant in setting the Council's Budget. At the time of publishing this report the Government had not yet published its Settlement. The announcement is now expected between the 5th and 9th February 2016.). Details of the Settlement and the implications for the Council's Budget will be provided by way of an update to Advisory Cabinet Members at its meeting on 15th February.
- 3.2 The implications of any change in the Provisional Settlement announced in the Final Settlement figures will be included in the final 2016/17 Budget Setting report to Advisory Cabinet on 23rd February 2016.
- 3.3 This report also provides initial feedback from the public and partners on the Directorate budget proposals for 2016/17 to 2018/19 that were published for Commissioner and Member consideration.

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 4.1 This report is provided to update Members of the current position in respect of setting the revenue budget for 2016/17.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Directorate Budget Proposals are currently out for public and partner comment with a deadline for feedback of 12th February 2016.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 6.1 This is an update report which will ultimately lead to preparation and presentation of the 2016/17 proposed revenue budget for Advisory Cabinet consideration on 23rd February and subsequently Full Council approval on 2nd March 2016.

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1 No direct implications

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 No direct implications.

9. Human Resources Implications

- 9.1 No direct implications

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 10.1 No direct implications.

11 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

11.1 No direct implications.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

12.1 No direct implications.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 If the 2016/17 Final Local Government Settlement is different to the Provisional Settlement a review of options to propose the final Revenue Budget for 2016/17 by the required deadline (report deadline 15th February) must be undertaken.

13.2 Any feedback from the public and partners which could impact on the budget savings as currently proposed will also require a review of options to propose the final Revenue Budget for 2016/17.

14. Accountable Officer(s)

Pete Hudson – Chief Finance Manager

Approvals Obtained from:-

Interim Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Stuart Booth

Interim Director of Legal Services:- Catherine Parkinson

This report is published on the Council's website or can be found at:-

<http://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories=>

APPENDIX 1

BUDGET 2016/17 - Public and Partner comments – Initial feedback to 4th February 2016

1. Listed below is a summary of the feedback received in respect of the Budget Proposals considered at the Advisory Cabinet/Commissioners public meeting on 18th January subsequently issued for final public and partner comments with a deadline of 5pm on Friday 12th February.
2. Any further comments received will be provided to the Advisory Cabinet meeting on 15th February and will be included in the Final Revenue Budget Setting Report to be considered by the Advisory Cabinet on 23rd February 2016.
3. As at 4th February 25 direct responses have been received (mostly via the online form or email, with one written submission). Emerging themes include the following (though please note that, in many cases, these relate to comments within a single response, rather than a consistent message). The numbers in brackets represent the number of submissions commenting on a particular budget proposal or issue:
 - a. Some criticism that the proposals as published are hard to navigate and fully understand from the public's perspective (1)
 - b. Eagerness to know when/whether specific service level consultations will take place (e.g. libraries, youth services), where the answer is "yes" (2)
 - c. Concern about ending of the Biological Records Officer post (ref. EDS26-I, a £19k saving in 2017/19, impacting on a 0.6FTE post) is subject to a number of targeted responses (both to the budget process and direct to the service) (3)
 - d. Concern about proposals to reduce the number of rangers at Ulley Country Park (2)
 - e. A call to end Area Assemblies, which do not feature in the current proposals and seen by respondent as not a good use of scarce resources (1)
 - f. The need for a more efficient home to school transport service (1)
 - g. A number of responses to support continued help for bowls clubs in parks (ref. EDS27-O proposes to stop paying utility bills for such sports clubs) (3)
 - h. A call to end funding for the Rotherham Mayor's vehicle (2)
 - i. A call to cut councillors wages by 40%; and also reduce numbers of Councillors by a third (2)
 - j. A call to make better use of the council's "£30m" of reserves (1)
 - k. Some general points about cutting management costs to preserve the front line (1)
 - l. Some comments on better use of adult day centres, asking for more detail of the proposals set out (1)
 - m. Some further support for free Saturday parking (suggesting the "Views from Rotherham" report emphasised the need to support the town centre) (1)
 - n. Support for school crossings to be funded by academy schools (1)

- o. Theatre – self funding seen as a good idea (1)
- p. Council Tax should be frozen (1)
- q. Recreate District Councils (1)
- r. Stop putting money into (named) area of the Borough (1)
- s. Don't reduce Street cleaning (1)
- t. Increase recycling centre hours of opening (1)
- u. Time wasting staff (1)
- v. Need for a hostel to support homeless people, especially those with mental health problems (1)
- w. Reduce lighting at Riverside House (1)
- x. Improve roads (1)
- y. Concern over contracted out services including Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) (1)