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21st December 2018

Councillor Brian Steele
Chair – Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Dear Councillor Steele

Budget 2019/20 – Interim Response to Savings Proposals

In response to your letter emailed on the 14th November 2018 where you have outlined the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) response to the savings proposals for the Council Budget 2019/20 and beyond.

I note your confirmation that no proposals were formally rejected by OSMB and you have set out the issues raised on some proposals which I will respond to in the order they are set out in your letter:

- **Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

As the council is intending to set a two year budget for the first time it is particularly important that the information in the draft MTFS is as accurate and complete as possible prior to publication of the plan. There were a number of key aspects involved in finalising this, including the Chancellors Autumn Budget and the need to ensure the figures were as robust as possible in advance of final adjustments and confirmation of the settlement figure. Also, the work involved in considering the Children's Services budget in great detail to ensure a robust plan for the future and appropriate level of budget requirement contributed to the delay in the production of the final draft. The MTFS was published on 3rd December for consideration at Cabinet on 17th December. A final version of the plan will be published alongside the detailed budget in February.

- **Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's)**

The council has a very clear framework on completing EIA's which I believe has recently been shared with you and every proposal that requires an assessment will have that completed. There has been further learning around EIA's and you will see a continuous improvement of this process.

- **Public consultation**

As you will know we have now completed the public consultation process and a considerable amount of work has been done in reaching out to our residents including both the Leader and I holding face to face public meetings with our residents and utilising social media in a much more significant way. I have attached to this letter a summary report of the consultation for your consideration.

Your letter then provides feedback on each directorate:

- Assistant Chief Executive – The specific concern around the proposal to delete a post from Scrutiny is noted and the request to consider a full service review of Democratic Services. Your recommendation has been considered and discussed with Cabinet Members and I can confirm that there will now be a full review of Democratic Services.
- Finance and Customer Services – the service would welcome your overview and scrutiny of the Customer and Digital proposal.
- Adult Care, Housing and Public Health –

ACH1 (Proposed ending of funding for the Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind Sight and Sound service) – OSMB heard representations from a Trustee of the society who indicated that they were unaware of the proposal to withdraw funding from the Council. The Strategic Director indicated that she would meet with the society and report back to OSMB on the outcome of that meeting.

The meeting took place on the 8th November between senior officers from Adult Care and Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind trustees (SRSB). SRSB outlined their concerns regarding the funding proposals. The meeting provided clarity on SRSB's financial position and future budget expectations. The details of the lease arrangements for the Ship Hill premises were discussed. There is a break clause for 2019 and if this is not exercised, then SRSB are tied into a longer lease. The differing views as to the ongoing funding after the two years were discussed and both parties now have more clarity as to each other's financial position. SRSB have confirmed that they could not provide a service in Rotherham without funding. This has been fed into the budget consultation for consideration. The directorate has received letters of support for the service and these have all been responded to and fed into the budget consultation feedback. Officers have since also met with users of the service to listen to their views.

Given the various responses to the consultation and all relevant considerations, a revised option is being developed and is expected to be formally presented to Cabinet for consideration as part of the Budget report in February.

- ACH2 (My Front Door) – Members were concerned that this represented a large saving to be achieved over a short period of time. Whilst the proposal was broadly accepted, delivery will need to be monitored by the Health Select Commission.

The delivery of the modernisation of learning disabilities has significant challenges; however, the progress from August 18 is positive. There is a My Front Door project board, membership includes the chair of the ALD Partnership Board, providers, independent advocates, commissioner's health partners and housing which met on 19th November. The board provides oversight, challenge and support. This is then monitored both from a performance and financial monitoring perspective by the Project Assurance Group which

meets fortnightly chaired by the Strategic Director. This particular group monitors all the projects/activity/savings for Adult Care.

- ACH4 (New Target Operating Model (TOM) for Adult Care, Housing and Public Health) – like ACH2, this will require monitoring by Health Select Commission as Members did not consider that there were sufficient performance measures attached to this proposal.

The resourcing model will commence in December to Feb/March with an implementation in October 2019.

- ACH6 (Proposed reduction in the contract value of the Healthwatch Rotherham contract) – Members considered that this was similar to ACH1, with a further meeting required to take place between officers and Healthwatch.

A meeting with the Assistant Directors of Strategic Commissioning and Independent Living and Support was offered soon after OSMB, however, Healthwatch requested a meeting with Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Director of Public Health and this is currently being organised. The outcome of the meeting will be fed back into the final budget considerations and the subsequent Budget report to Cabinet in February.

Officers have spoken to representatives from Healthwatch England about their view as the national oversight organisation. They have provided constructive feedback and voiced their position as to a reasonable level of funding. This will be fed into the final budget considerations.

The directorate has received letters of support for the service and these have all been responded to and fed into the budget consultation feedback.

- Regeneration & Environment – you have requested further detail on three proposals; Riverside House café, Asset Management (retention of records) and Bring Site Removal. These are addressed as follows:
- RE16 (Bring Site Removal) – whilst Members understood the logic behind this proposal, it has subsequently come to our attention that one of the bring sites concerned (at Morrison's Superstore, Bramley) has ceased to operate. Members are keen to understand how this impacts on this particular saving proposal.

The service does not believe that the closure of the site at Morrison's Superstore in Bramley makes a difference to the proposal. The remainder of the network of bring sites is still in place, and will remain so until October 2019, when the Council proposes to cease provision of any bring site for materials that can be recycled through the kerbside service. The costs associated with maintenance and cleansing of the sites will remain until the provision is ceased later in the year.

- Asset Management (retention of records)

The future provision/location of the services currently located in Bailey House is being considered as part of the SCR OPE6 Storage and Archive project, which is at the very earlier stages. The retention of records and where these will be stored in the future will be considered as part of this process.

- Riverside Café

This item has been considered at the December meeting of Cabinet and has been for pre-scrutiny and the issues raised have been noted.

- Children & Young People

There was a concern around the level of detail provided and a further meeting was held on 14 November. Whilst you have indicated your support in principle I hope this session addressed any further queries.

As with previous years I would welcome the continued oversight and governance that OSMB provides and the assurance from Cabinet Members and senior officers that these savings are delivered.

Finally, I just want to thank you and all the members of OSMB for reviewing the proposals and applying oversight and scrutiny in a considered and constructive way and your involvement is central in supporting the budget setting process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sharon Kemp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sharon Kemp
Chief Executive