



Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held at The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Monday 7 February 2022 at 6.00 pm

Agenda

1.	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitute Members
2.	Declarations of Interest Members are asked to declare any interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.
3.	Minutes To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 January 2022.
4.	Chair's Announcements To receive communications from the Chair.
5.	Urgent Business The Chair to advise whether they have agreed to any items of urgent business being admitted to the agenda.
6.	Report from the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group The Committee to receive a report detailing the findings of the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group. ** Please note that this report will be to follow**
7.	Review of Committee Work Plan To review and note the Committee Work Plan.

Catherine Whitehead
Proper Officer
28 January 2022

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members:

Councillor Danielle Stone (Chair)	Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Sally Beardsworth	Councillor Michael Brown
Councillor Paul Clark	Councillor Maggie Clubley
Councillor Rupert Frost	Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
Councillor Mark Hughes	Councillor David James
Councillor Koulla Jolley	Councillor Ian McCord
Councillor Colin Morgan	Councillor Ken Pritchard
Councillor Azizur Rahman	Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms
Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz	

Information about this Agenda

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence and the appointment of substitute Members should be notified to democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk prior to the start of the meeting.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare interests at item 2 on the agenda or if arriving after the start of the meeting, at the start of the relevant agenda item

Local Government and Finance Act 1992 – Budget Setting, Contracts & Supplementary Estimates

Members are reminded that any member who is two months in arrears with Council Tax must declare that fact and may speak but not vote on any decision which involves budget setting, extending or agreeing contracts or incurring expenditure not provided for in the agreed budget for a given year and could affect calculations on the level of Council Tax.

Evacuation Procedure

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Queries Regarding this Agenda

If you have any queries about this agenda please contact Tracy Tiff, Democratic Services via the following:

Email: democraticservices@westnorthants.gov.uk

Or by writing to:

West Northamptonshire Council
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Angel Street
Northampton
NN1 1ED

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Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at The Guildhall, St Giles Street, Northampton, NN1 1DE on Wednesday 12 January 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Present Councillor Danielle Stone (Chair)
 Councillor Andrew Grant (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor Sally Beardsworth
 Councillor Michael Brown
 Councillor Paul Clark
 Councillor Maggie Clubley
 Councillor Rupert Frost
 Councillor Keith Holland-Delamere
 Councillor Mark Hughes
 Councillor David James
 Councillor Koulla Jolley
 Councillor Ian McCord
 Councillor Colin Morgan
 Councillor Ken Pritchard
 Councillor Richard Solesbury-Timms
 Councillor Walter Tarasiewicz

Also Councillor Jonathan Harris
 Present:

Apologies Councillor Azizur Rahman
 for
 Absence:

Officers Martin Henry, Executive Director - Finance (Section 151 Officer)
 Tracy Tiff, Deputy Democratic Services Manager
 Richard Woods, Democratic Services Officer

36. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

37. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 December 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

38. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair made the following announcements:

1. That proposals for budget scrutiny by way of a whole-committee Task and Finish Group on 27 January 2022 would be put forward following the Committee's discussion and identification of priority areas of the draft budget for additional scrutiny.
2. A formal meeting of the Committee would be held on 7 February 2022 in order to consider the findings of the Task and Finish Group.
3. Additional training on Overview and Scrutiny had been scheduled for 1 February 2022 and that diary invites had been circulated to Members of the Committee.

39. **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

40. **Budget Scrutiny**

By way of introduction, the Chair explained that the intention of the Committee was to identify at least three priority areas of the budget for additional scrutiny, in order to ensure its robustness and to identify any recommendations to Cabinet that may arise.

The Executive Director – Finance provided a headline summary of the Draft Budget 2022-23 with the central point being that the Council was on course to set a balanced budget for the upcoming financial year, though the Council had received an additional £3.8m more than expected in the settlement from central government. The Executive Director – Finance explained that a higher settlement than expected from central government could not be guaranteed in future years therefore further work was required on how additional income from central government would be factored into base funding in future budgets.

At the invitation of the Chair, Councillor Jonathan Harris addressed the Committee and thanked the Executive Director – Finance and the wider finance team for all of the hard work that had gone into delivering a balanced budget. Councillor Harris asked a number of detailed questions regarding the draft budget which were duly answered by officers.

Following the address from Councillor Jonathan Harris, the Chair opened up the floor for Committee members to participate in a detailed Q&A session with the Executive Director – Finance in relation to various aspects of the draft budget. Following a detailed discussion, the Committee came up with the following priority areas of focus for additional detailed scrutiny:

- The mapping of the business plan to the budget – Section 151 Officer and Deputy Section 151 Officer to provide details to the Task and Finish Group.

- The achievability of the Council's commitment to carbon neutrality and Highways – The Executive Director – Place and Economy and the Assistant Director – Highways and Waste to provide information to the Task and Finish Group.
- The Children's Trust Budget Director of Children's Services, Chief Executive of the Children's Trust and the Director of Finance and Resources, Children's Trust to provide details to the Task and Finish Group.
- Strength Based Working Model and financial savings associated within it – Executive Director – Adults, Communities and Wellbeing and the Assistant Director – Safeguarding to provide information to the Task and Finish Group.

Members of the Committee agreed that the best way to focus scrutiny activity on the identified priority areas of the budget was to hold a whole-committee Task and Finish Group, with breakout groups to discuss the individual areas identified.

Resolved

- (1) That a whole-committee Task and Finish Group be convened on Thursday 27 January 2022 in order to discuss the identified priority areas of the draft budget.
- (2) That it be agreed that scrutiny of the draft budget by this committee be commenced as soon as practicable in future municipal years

41. **Review of Committee Work Plan**

The Chair advised the Committee that following the decision to hold a whole-committee Task and Finish Group on 27 January 2022, a formal meeting of the Committee would be convened on 7 February 2022 in order to discuss the findings of the Task and Finish Group, and make any recommendations to Cabinet as necessary.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the addition of a whole-committee task and finish group on 27 January 2022 and an additional formal meeting of the Committee on 7 February 2022, the Committee Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.49 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____

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