

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

11 September 2019

Report of the Director of Finance & ICT

PREPARATION OF BUDGET 2020-21
(STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, CULTURE AND TOURISM)

1 Purpose of the Report

To seek Cabinet approval for the proposed timetable for the Council's 2020-21 budget preparation and procedures and the associated consultation arrangements.

2 Information and Analysis

Preparation of Budget 2020-21

The production of the Council's budget is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Constitution. The Constitution requires that a timetable is publicised by Cabinet for making proposals to the full Council in relation to the annual Revenue Budget, along with arrangements for consultation with stakeholders, which should be for a period of not less than six weeks. The proposed timetable is attached at Appendix 1.

A key element of the Council's budget setting process is consultation with stakeholders.

It is proposed to undertake the following consultation activities, which have been determined by the Director of Finance & ICT and Policy and Research, in consultation with the Leader of the Council:

- Four focus groups to frame the public budget consultation survey questions, highlighting how residents' priorities and areas of Council funding need can differ. Each focus group meeting will be led by an Executive Director, with the Director of Finance and a Cabinet Member also in attendance. The meetings will run with approximately 25 participants and will be held at different times of day, to allow people to attend who may be at work. In the event of there being more interest than available places, participants will be selected, where possible, to align the demographic profile of the meeting to that of the wider Derbyshire population. High Street Vouchers will be offered to participants to cover

their expenses. The focus groups will be held during September, at locations across the county. Locations have yet to be finalised but the proposals are:

- County Hall, Matlock
 - Chesterfield Library
 - Buxton
 - Ilkeston/Long Eaton
- Online Residents Survey, including public budget consultation questions informed by the focus groups alongside the annual survey in respect of the Council Plan. This will align the planning cycle for the budget with that for the Council Plan. The consultation will run for six weeks. Hard copies will be available on request.
 - The consultation will be publicised as follows:
 - E-mail to members of the Citizens' Panel
 - E-mail to respondents to past consultations who have consented to be contacted
 - Articles on Council's internal and external websites and in Our Derbyshire employee newsletter and Derbyshire Now
 - Promotion in employee payroll letter
 - Facebook/Instagram paid-for campaigns
 - E-newsletters to community groups, parish councils, partner organisations and community publications
 - Media releases and blogs
 - Organic social media campaign
 - Statutory consultation with business ratepayers. A request will be made to attend a scheduled Business Ratepayers' meeting for this purpose.
 - Consultation with trade unions.
 - Consultation with Improvement and Scrutiny Committee.

Cabinet will take account of the consultation when drawing up firm proposals to the Council. Results will be communicated after the consultation has ended.

As in previous years an initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be undertaken at a corporate level. It is anticipated that this corporate assessment will help identify areas where there is a significant risk of adverse impact which would then be subject to a full equality impact assessment process. Alongside the budget consultation, the budget saving proposals in the updated Five Year Financial Plan will be considered to assess which proposals will need a separate targeted consultation with staff, the public

and/or with current/potential service users. The outcomes of these processes will be reported to Council/Cabinet as part of the budget process and specific assessments/consultation outcomes reported to Cabinet before decisions are made on individual services.

Five Year Financial Plan

The Council's Five Year Financial Plan 2019-20 to 2023-24 (FYFP) has been updated during 2019-20 and the results are included in a separate report to this meeting.

The FYFP will be updated again as part of the budget setting process, to reflect the Government's Autumn Budget, the outcome of the anticipated Comprehensive Spending Review and the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, which are expected to be announced in November 2019 and December 2019.

Reserves

The Council has in place a Reserves Policy which sets out the framework within which decisions will be made regarding the level of reserves. In line with this framework the balance and level of reserves over the medium term are regularly monitored to ensure they are adequate to manage the risk of the Council. This covers both the General and Earmarked Reserves.

The results of a review of the General Reserves Position is included in the FYFP in a separate report to this meeting. A review of the Earmarked Reserves Position is being undertaken and the results will be included in a report to Cabinet in November 2019.

3 Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: financial, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property, transport and social value considerations.

4 Background Papers

Papers held in Technical Section, Finance & ICT Division, Room 137.

5 Key Decision

No.

6 Officer's Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- (i) Approves the timetable for completion of the 2020-21 budget, including arrangements for consultation with stakeholders and the carrying out of an assessment of the need for full equality impact assessment on budget saving proposals.
- (ii) Notes the proposals for reviewing and updating the Five Year Financial Plan.
- (iii) Notes the arrangements for reviewing Earmarked Reserves and updating the General Reserve projections.

PETER HANDFORD

Director of Finance & ICT

APPENDIX 1

Budget Preparation Timetable

<i>September 2019</i>	Four focus groups across the county to frame the public budget consultation questions.
<i>18 October – 1 December 2019</i>	Public budget consultation forming part of the Residents' Survey.
<i>15 November 2019</i>	Deadline for 2020-21 budget savings proposals alongside any bids to be submitted to the Director of Finance & ICT by Executive Directors for direct inclusion in Revenue Budget Report.
<i>6 December 2019</i>	Results of public budget consultation available for informing the Revenue Budget Report and reporting in the Budget Consultation Report.
November - December 2019	Priorities for revenue and capital spending, budget savings and risks facing the Council are evaluated. Improvement and Scrutiny Committees consulted. Trades Unions consulted. Business Ratepayers consulted. Outcome of the Government's Autumn Budget analysed.
<i>December 2019</i>	Government announces details of Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.
15 January 2020	Deadline for collection fund and business rates figures to be submitted to the Council by district/borough councils.
16 January 2020	Cabinet considers report on final revenue/capital settlements, results of consultation/budget priorities, reserves position and five year financial plan and determines budgets and Council Tax recommendations to Full Council.
31 January 2020	Deadline for taxbase figures to be submitted to the Council by district/borough councils.
5 February 2020	Council debates Cabinet recommendations/results of consultation and determines revenue/capital budgets and Council Tax level for 2020-21.
1 March 2020	Notify district/borough councils of precepts.

* Dates in bold are statutory deadlines. Date in italics is a key milestone in the timetable. These dates must be met. The other dates are for indication only.