

Report of: Corporate Director of Resources
Meeting of: Audit and Risk Committee
Date: 29 January 2024

Covering Report – ‘Draft Budget Proposals 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (Post Settlement)’

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The report ‘Draft Budget Report 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (Post Settlement)’ was considered by the Executive on 11 January 2024. The Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee reviewed the budget proposals on 18 January 2024 and its comments will be considered in finalising the budget proposals and proposed level of council tax, for consideration by the Executive on 8 February 2024, and onward recommendation to Full Council on 29 February 2024. In addition, the Council invited comments from residents and business rates payers (and representatives) in Islington on the draft 2024/25 budget proposals set out in the 11 January Executive budget report. The consultation period ran from 4 January 2024 to 24 January 2024.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the report ‘Draft Budget Report 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (Post Settlement)’ considered by the Executive on 11 January 2024, and included with this covering report.
- 2.2 To consider how in future budget processes the observations and comments of the Audit and Risk Committee could be formally reflected in the budget process and report.

3. Discussion Points

- 3.1 Audit and Risk Committee are asked to note the report ‘Draft Budget Report 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (Post Settlement)’ as considered by the Executive on 11 January 2024. In line with the formal process, the budget report was reviewed by the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee on 18 January 2024 for its comments to be considered in finalising the budget proposals and proposed level of council tax, for consideration by the Executive on 8 February 2024, and onward recommendation to Full Council on 29 February 2024. In addition, the Council has invited comments from residents and business rates payers (and representatives) in Islington on the draft 2024/25 budget proposals, with the consultation period running from 4 January 2024 to 24 January 2024.
- 3.2 Particular attention is drawn to the following key financial sections and components of the budget report:
 - 3.2.1 The summary of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy position in **Section 3** and **Appendix A**, and the savings proposals at **Appendix B**.

- 3.2.2 The Reserves and Balance Sheet Strategy in **Section 4**, with reference to the schedule of Earmarked General Fund Reserves at **Appendix C**, the CIPFA Financial Management Code Compliance Assessment at **Appendix E1**, the balance sheet analysis at **Appendix E2** and the proposed Minimum Level of General Fund Balance and Earmarked Reserves set out in **Figure 1 (paragraph 4.7)**.
- 3.2.3 The Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme in **Sections 5 and 6**.
- 3.2.4 The Comments of the Section 151 Officer in **Section 9**.
- 3.3 Audit and Risk Committee are asked to discuss and consider how in future budget processes, observations and comments of the Audit and Risk Committee could be formally reflected in the budget process and report.

Appendix : Draft Budget Report 2024/25 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (Post Settlement)

Final report clearance:

Signed by:		
	David Hodgkinson, Corporate Director of Resources	Date

Responsible Officers:

David Hodgkinson, Corporate Director of Resources
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