**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Finance**

**To**

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Corporate)**

**On**

**6 January 2022**

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| **RESPONSE OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR CORPORATE AND FINANCE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CORPORATE) RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY** |

**Background**

Cabinet would like to thank the members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate) for their hard and detailed work in reviewing the proposals made for the 2022/23 to 2024/25 Medium Term Financial Strategy.

I have attached your recommendations in Appendix 1.

Since the Committee reported its recommendations to Cabinet the government have announced its draft financial settlement for local authorities. The effects of the Chancellor’s Spending Review on the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy was revealed on Thursday 16th December this has resulted in the Council receiving additional grant for 2022/23 as part of a one year settlement. The outcome has meant an improved position for the Council which has resulted in a change to my original proposals. My full proposal is detailed in Appendix 2.

**Response to recommendations**

I have set out my responses to each of the recommendations and conclusions made as part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s report, below:

1. That the proposed increase of 1.99% in the Council’s element of the Council Tax for 2022/23 be supported.

**RESPONSE –**

**Thank you for your comments regarding Council Tax.**

**The cabinet are proposing recommending no increase in Council Tax in 2022/23 following the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and confirmation of the Chancellor’s Spending Review as detailed in Cabinet response below.**

1. That a 2% increase in fees and charges where the Council is responsible for setting such fees be supported.

**The Cabinet supports this recommendation. This will be reflected in the final budget which will be presented to Council. We thank Overview and Scrutiny for their comments.**

1. That investigations be made into the introduction of a trade glass collection service.

**RESPONSE –**

**Further investigation has identified that a trade glass collection service will deliver and additional £5k income in 2022/23.**

**The Cabinet supports this recommendation. This will be reflected in the final budget which will be presented to Council. We thank Overview and Scrutiny for their comments.**

1. That the day ticket and five day ticket for parking at the Robin Hood line station be increased to £4.00 and £20.00 respectively.

**RESPONSE –**

**Thank you for your comments regarding the parking charge at Mansfield Woodhouse train station, the Cabinets does not support this proposal given grant confirmation for 2022/23.**

1. That charge for the garden waste collection be £31.00 and that the Executive’s proposed discount not be implemented.

**RESPONSE –**

**Thank you for your comments regarding the garden waste charges, the Cabinet does not support this proposal given grant confirmation for 2022/23 and has an alternative proposal under Service Investments within this report.**

1. That Special Responsibility Allowances be reduced by 10% for a further year be supported.

**RESPONSE –**

**The Cabinet supports this recommendation.**

1. That there be no reduction in the level of the Ward Allowance.

**RESPONSE –**

**The Cabinet supports this recommendation.**

1. That a one off use of ear marked reserved be used for 2022/23, to be replaced by savings from the leisure management contract.

**RESPONSE –**

**The Cabinet supports the use of Earmarked Reserves but has amended the value following the 2022/23 grant confirmation.**

1. That the Executive continue to explore opportunities to deliver further savings within the proposed budget.

**RESPONSE –**

**The initial proposed use of Earmarked Reserves was £261.5k in 2022/23. However following the confirmation of Grant Settlement the Cabinet has reviewed various options in conjunction with the Service Investments it is proposing below and this has reduced to value of use of Earmarked Reserves to £100k in 2022/23**

1. That the increase in Council house rents in line with Government rent guidelines be noted.

**RESPONSE –**

**The Cabinet supports this recommendation.**

1. That the Consolidated General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital programmes be supported.

**RESPONSE –**

**The Cabinet supports this recommendation.**

**Service Investments**

The Cabinet requests the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the following proposed service investments following confirmation of 2022/23 Government Grant as shown in Appendix 2 and summarised below.

**(a) Reduction in garden waste charge**

The Cabinet proposes the following charges for Garden Waste in 2022/23

First Bin £26 per annum

Additional Bin £18 per annum

This reduction from the current proposed cost for a first bin of £31 would result in reduced income of £32k in 2022/23.

**(b) Economic Stimulus**

The Cabinet proposes that £30k be allocated to Economic Stimulus Fund in 2022/23 budget.

**(c) Council Tax Hardship**

The Cabinet proposed that an additional £10k be allocated in the 2022/23 budget to Council Tax Hardship.

**(d) Tour of Britain**

The Cabinet proposes that £25k be allocated in 2022/23 to the Tour of Britain cycling event.

**(e) Parks Investment**

The Cabinet proposes that £26k be allocated to investment in parks within the district in 2022/23.

**Additional items for members to note**

The two savings identified earlier in the budgeting process summarised below have been built in to the “Revised Savings Target” in Appendix 1 & 2 (highlighted in light green)

Following further review of the Council’s Tax Base as part of the budget process an increase of £204k has been built into the base budget for 2022/23 with a further £50k in 2023/24 and £100k in 2024/25. This has been included in the tables below.

A review has also been undertaken of interest received by the council in 2022/23 and it is anticipated that interest rates will rise slightly from the current low base during 2022/23 and this should generate an additional £25k income. This has been included in the tables below.

**The table shown in Appendix 2 summarises Cabinet’s proposed budget for 2022/23.**

**4. COMMENTS OF STATUTORY OFFICERS**

(a) Head of Paid Service – It is important for members to consider the 22/23 Overview and Scrutiny’s comments and vital role in the consideration of the budget and financial position of the Council going forward.

(b) Monitoring Officer – No specific comments.

(c) Section 151 Officer – The changes accepted by Cabinet still produce a balanced budget, in line with statutory requirements.

**5. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Budget papers held in the Accountancy section.

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**Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations to Cabinet**.



**Appendix 2 – Cabinet Response to Scrutiny Committee Recommendations**

