

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 09 April 2024

Cabinet's response to MTFS Working Group report

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Background

On 18 December 2023 Corporate O&S Committee agreed the [MTFS Working Group Report](#). The recommendations were referred to Cabinet on 24 January 2024 when considering the [Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2029.pdf \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](#).

Current Position

1. The Executive response to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the recommendation(s) of the MTFS Working Group report are appended to the report (Appendix 1).
2. Cabinet considered the report and recommendations of the MTFS Working Group at the Cabinet meeting 24 January 2024 when the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-2029 was agreed and referred to Council on 8 February 2024.

Key Considerations

3. Cabinet have considered the risks and financial uncertainties and have set a Contingency budget at £15m for 2024/25 which is a reasonable sum to set aside to meet unknown pressures, should they emerge.
4. In considering the level of reserves and their use to support the MTFS, the risks have been taken into account and the use of reserves is sustainable in the medium term.
5. In the longer term, Cabinet are recommending that services begin to identify savings and transformation in order to ensure the budget can be balanced in future.
6. Cabinet are closely monitoring the Children's Transformation programme, dashboard monitoring performance is shared with the Children's Improvement Board and Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny where an overview of performance is provided and corrective actions being taken. The additional items requested by the Working Group will be considered for inclusion within the reports.

7. Cabinet are monitoring the financial forecast and progress against reviewing the SEND Transport service closely. Actions to increase efficiency of route planning, increasing vehicle occupancy have been supported and impact is being monitored.
8. Lobbying the government over guidance surrounding EHCPs will be considered and may be incorporated into future lobbying undertaken by Cabinet

Conclusion

9. Cabinet has taken into account the recommendations and has provided its response. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to receive quarterly Integrated Performance Reports to maintain overview of the MTFS 2024-2029.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – MTFS Working Group recommendations and Executive Response

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