

Buckinghamshire County Council

Budget Scrutiny Inquiry Report for 2018-19

**A report of the Finance, Performance and
Resources Select Committee**

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Introduction

- The Finance, Performance and Resources (FPR) Select Committee carries out scrutiny of all policies and services relating to these areas.
- Cabinet agreed the draft budget at its meeting on 18th December 2017.
- Budget Scrutiny Inquiry meetings were held on 9th, 10th and 11th January 2018 to scrutinise the draft budget and make recommendations to Cabinet.
- The public were able to submit questions via email or twitter.
- Cabinet will respond to the recommendations on 12th February 2018.
- The final budget will be presented to full Council on 22nd February 2018.
- The budget scrutiny meetings were webcast and can be found at <https://buckscc.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts>



Buckinghamshire County Council

Membership of the Budget Scrutiny Inquiry

Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee

Mr David Watson (Chairman)

Mr Charlie Clare (Vice-Chairman)

Mr Bill Bendyshe-Brown

Mrs Anita Cranmer

Mr Steven Lambert (substituting for Martin Farrow)

Mr David Martin

Mrs Julie Ward

Additional Members

Mr David Carroll, Chairman, Transport, Environment and Communities Select Committee

Mr Brian Roberts, Chairman, Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee



Executive Summary

- The Committee recognises that the County Council has faced another challenging year with further financial pressures.
- Other Local Authorities are struggling to deliver balanced budgets but the County Council anticipates that cost pressures will be managed to produce an underspend of £825k for 2017/18. The Committee welcomes this news and are pleased that Council reserves should be back up to £25m by the end of this financial year.
- The Committee would like to extend their thanks to all staff of the County Council for their hard work and dedication on behalf of the residents of Buckinghamshire.
- During the course of the Budget Scrutiny meetings the Committee heard about pressures and challenges, but we also heard about savings and innovations and we have included commendations at the end of the report to celebrate some of the positives.



Recommendations

1. That all Business Units across the Council should switch to timely monthly management accounting on an accruals basis including meaningful variance analysis/reporting.
2. That there should be improved level of visibility in individual budget lines across all portfolios for future Budget Scrutiny Inquiries. The financial data submitted should clearly identify the major costs of running the Council e.g. Home to School Transport, the EfW plant income and costs, on street parking revenue, Skills budget, number of Full Time Equivalent(FTEs) staff, costs of agency staff/interims, key drivers of demand in Social Care and associated unit costs. A high level Budget Book to enable more transparency for Members and the Public is proposed.
3. That where there are figures in the County Council budget which will also be reflected in a District Council's budget, there should be liaison between financial colleagues to ensure that the relevant figures agree e.g. recycling credits, S106 funding.



Recommendations

4. That mandatory face to face exit interviews should be undertaken for all staff on Range 10 or above, and where deemed appropriate, staff below that range and that the online exit interview process should be promoted more effectively to capture feedback from staff at other levels.
5. That Cabinet ensures that there is clear and effective leadership and programme management in the area of ICT and Digital to ensure that the Council's systems are robust, fit for purpose and can share data, where appropriate. This should include a centralised approval system for ICT procurement to ensure value for money and an improved customer experience.
6. That a realistic figure is included in the final Children's Services budget for legal fees.



Recommendations

7. That the Fostering Service undertakes a benchmarking exercise on foster carers allowances and a best practice review of independent fostering agencies to better inform the Council's approach to recruiting additional in-house foster carers.
8. That there should be a detailed independent review of the assumptions and cost drivers used to develop the Children's Services and Health and Wellbeing budgets, as well as a comprehensive review of processes and financial modelling to ensure more accurate forecasting of spend.
9. That the provision of Home to School Transport, both mainstream and Children with EHC Plans, by the Council meets national statutory guidelines only, that discretionary transport should be phased out and that parents/guardians are provided with reasonable notice for any policy changes.



Recommendations

10. That as part of the Strategic Options Appraisal for redelivering Library Services, an e-book pilot study should be undertaken.
11. That, within existing resources, a comprehensive gully survey is undertaken throughout the County to identify accurately the number of gullies and locations and use this to inform the creation of an effective maintenance programme.
12. That sufficient budget is set aside to enable the introduction of a programme of weed management on footways across the County.



National Context

Local Government Finance Settlement:

- **Council Tax Referendum Limit** – increased from 2% to 3% (in line with inflation)
- **Business Rates Retention** – increase local share **from 50% to 75%** from 2020.
- **Negative Revenue Support Grant** – review in spring to find a ‘fair and affordable solution’ (£10.949m in 2019/20).
- **Transitional Grant** – no continuation into 2018/19.
- **Adult Social Care** – Green Paper due in Summer 2018. No new funding announced.



Local Context

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Assumptions

- The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) extends to 2021/22. The following points should be noted:
 - In 2018/19 the Revenue Support Grant will cease.
 - In 2019/20, a proportion of locally retained business rates will also be lost, a revenue reduction of approximately £11 million.
- A Council Tax increase of 4.99% has been assumed in the draft budget.




Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

- The Leader reported a significant deterioration in the forecast outturn for 2017/18 financial year. At the end of November, Children's Services had forecast £0.8m overspend and Health and Wellbeing £1.4m overspend for year end.
- In December, this was revised to £1.8m overspend for Children's Services and £4.1m for Health and Wellbeing.
- These portfolios had been identified as risk areas in the budget and therefore contingencies were released to reduce the forecast overspends to £0.7m for Children's Services and £1.3m for Health and Wellbeing for year end.



Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

- The Leader acknowledged that this deterioration had been a surprise and in Health and Wellbeing in particular, the reasons for the increased overspend had not yet been fully explained.
 - Both portfolios were demand led, but there could also be a systems issue – perhaps delays in inputting client data might have contributed to a lack of sight of financial implications. A spike in spend might also reflect a sudden increase in care plan changes following annual renewals.
 - The Section 151 Officer was conducting a review into why there had been such a shift in the financial position in a relatively short period of time and weekly budget meetings were being held with the Adults Leadership Team to ensure close scrutiny of the financial position going forward and to identify improvements that could be made in financial management. Regular meetings were also being held with all Finance Directors.
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Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

- The Budget Scrutiny Inquiry 2017 made a recommendation to improve corporate oversight, particularly around change projects. Members were therefore concerned to hear that overspends in Children's Services and Health and Wellbeing had only just come to light and could not be fully explained.
- Although news that the S151 officer was meeting weekly with the Adults Leadership team and other key staff was welcomed, the Committee believed this was not sustainable.
- We ask that the root causes of the Children's Services and Health & Wellbeing 2017/18 outturn overspends are fully understood to enable the 2018/19 final budget to be adjusted accordingly.
- In addition, we do not believe that a reliance on forecasting is sensible, particularly when financial resources are limited and therefore recommend a change in the way the Council prepares its management accounts.

Recommendation 1 – That all Business Units across the Council should switch to timely monthly management accounting on an accruals basis including meaningful variance analysis/reporting.



Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

- In 2017, the Committee highlighted a lack of clarity in budget lines which meant that it was difficult for the public to fully understand the Council's plans and made effective scrutiny more challenging.
- Although we were pleased to see a detailed and comprehensive budget pack with all Equality Impact Assessments included, there remained a number of key areas where spend was not explicit.
- For example, there was a lack of visibility around the costs or income associated with the Energy From Waste Plant (Efw) and Home to School transport.



Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

- The Committee would also like to see:
 - a clearly defined budget line for agency staff and interims to enable progress in this area to be monitored.
 - that the key drivers of Children's Services and Health & Wellbeing demand and their associated average unit costs are included within the final budget.
- The Committee propose a high level budget book should be produced to increase transparency for Members and the Public. The Committee is happy to work with officers to help to shape what a Budget Book might look like.


Recommendation 2: That there should be improved level of visibility in individual budget lines across all portfolios for future Budget Scrutiny Inquiries. The financial data submitted should clearly identify the major costs of running the Council e.g. Home to School Transport, the EfW plant income and costs, on street parking revenue, Skills budget, number of Full Time Equivalent(FTEs) staff, costs of agency staff/interims, key drivers of demand in Social Care and associated unit costs. A high level Budget Book to enable more transparency for Members and the Public is proposed.

Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

- The Committee heard that in a number of areas, the Council's budget included assumptions or figures that have been agreed with the District Councils, such as recycling credits and S106 funding.
- However, to ensure the Council's budget is accurate, we ask that these figures are fully agreed with other authorities.

Recommendation 3: That where there are figures in the County Council budget which will also be reflected in a District Council's budget, there should be liaison between financial colleagues to ensure that the relevant figures agree e.g. recycling credits, S106 funding.

We heard from the Leader that he hoped to reopen dialogue with the District Councils with a view to reaching an agreement to bid for a Business Rates Retention pilot for Buckinghamshire in 2019/20. The Committee wish to register our support for the Leader in this endeavour.



Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

Corporate/Cross-Cutting Issues

- As a Committee, we were concerned about a high level of turnover amongst senior managers and the number of interim appointments at the Council, as this could impact the delivery of extensive transformation programmes, which are aligned to substantial budget savings.
- We heard that overall staff turnover was currently at 13%. However, further investigation identified that the current figure was actually 16%, (4%-6% higher than the ideal rate) and it was 19% for Senior Managers and Children's Services staff.
- Although good work had been done in refreshing the Council's recruitment website and onboarding process for new recruits, the Committee was concerned about the level of senior staff turnover and what action was being taken to understand why experienced staff had left the Council.



Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

- Leavers were invited to undertake an exit interview online and line managers were encouraged to have a face to face discussion to understand the reasons for staff moving on.
- Currently, 57% of leavers completed the online exit interview.
- We were advised that the reasons for Senior Managers leaving were usually known and sometimes it was simply unfortunate circumstances. The Council also moved quickly to recruit to senior posts.
- However we remain concerned about retention issues and believed that the first step in addressing this is to capture and analyse the reasons why staff choose to leave.

Recommendation 4: That mandatory face to face exit interviews should be undertaken for all staff on Range 10 or above, and where deemed appropriate, staff below that range and that the online exit interview process should be promoted more effectively to capture feedback from staff at other levels.

Overall Budget & Leader's Portfolio

Council Tax Increase

The Committee noted the new flexibilities around a possible additional 1% increase to Council Tax, which were announced in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement on 19th December 2017.

We recognise that this decision is a matter for Cabinet, however the majority of the cross-party Committee are sympathetic towards an additional 1% increase in Council Tax given the risks in the budget and this year's unexpected overspends. Should Cabinet propose to increase Council Tax by an additional 1% in the Council's final budget, we believe that the additional funding should be mainly ring-fenced for Adults and Children's Social Care.



Capital

The Cabinet Member outlined the three objectives of the Council's capital programme:

- To own fit for purpose, well-maintained assets
- To ensure that assets generate income where possible
- To address the capital maintenance backlog, including roads

Priorities for the £417m capital programme for the next 4 years included:

- Education and Skills – £156m allocated for School Places
 - Property Maintenance - to tackle a backlog in this area
 - Legionella and Asbestos - survey programme which was progressing well.
 - ICT – to aid the Transformation Programme and to ensure all infrastructure is resilient and robust.
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- The programme was frontloaded for 2018/19 and 2019/20 mainly due to a demand for new school places.



Capital

- The Cabinet Member for Resources reported that income was generated through assets e.g. rental income from the investment property portfolio, energy income from the Solar Photo-Voltaic programme.
- However, the Cabinet member did highlight the generic risks involved with the successful implementation of a number of Capital projects, including planning delays (particularly in schools) and securing any match funding requirements (Flood Schemes and Transportation projects).

The Committee would like assurance that the delivery of the Capital programme is realistic, as it appeared that a large proportion of the budget was front loaded. We suggest that the phasing of the draft budget capital spend should be aligned to the period when the relevant planning permissions and match funding are likely to be granted.



Resources Portfolio

- The Cabinet Member reported a forecast underspend of £170k. The portfolio had delivered £4 million of permanent savings and had benefitted from £500k of additional income since 2015.

The main challenges and risks for the portfolio included:

- Retaining senior members of staff to ensure key projects are delivered on time.
- Property Maintenance – a pressure area which had improved since the implementation of a new contract.
- Cyber Security – a growing problem nationally which the Council must address.

We were pleased to hear that 33% of the Resources budget was generated through income; however, there was a concern that 81% of this income came from schools. The Committee would like officers to work proactively to diversify their customer base to avoid such a reliance on schools income.




Resources Portfolio

ICT Transformation Programme

- We were pleased to see the continuous investment into ICT. However, it was agreed that the digital programme had lost momentum and with a new Head of ICT & Digital yet to be appointed, the direction of travel could once again be disrupted.
- We believe that the projects highlighted to us were business as usual activities rather than truly transformational and clear, consistent leadership is needed to reinvigorate the Council's approach to digital.
- Whilst the Committee recognise that there is a considerable investment proposed in the draft Capital programme, Cabinet should consider whether this is sufficient to deliver the Council's aspirations in this area.

Recommendation 5 – That Cabinet ensures that there is clear and effective leadership and programme management in the area of ICT and Digital to ensure that the Council's systems are robust, fit for purpose and can share data, where appropriate. This should include a centralised approval system for ICT procurement to ensure value for money and an improved customer experience.



Children's Services Portfolio

- The Cabinet Member reported a £1.8m forecast overspend at year end - mainly due to an increase in Looked After Children (LAC). £1.1m of contingency had been released to offset this, resulting in a year end forecast of £0.7m.
- Despite forecasting an overspend in the current financial year, Children's Services were proposing an overall reduction in their revenue budget of £2.1m for 2018/19.
- The costs within Children's Services were higher than average due to the increased number of complex cases leading to high unit costs of placements and significant staffing costs.
- The delivery of the '**Change for Children**' transformation programme was ongoing and the associated savings could be at risk if there were delays in implementing new models of service delivery.



Children's Services Portfolio

- The Cabinet Member confirmed that the budget would be sufficient for 2018/19; however, there was a growing pressure around the legal budget.

Recommendation 6 – That a realistic figure is included in the final Children's Services budget for legal fees.

- We acknowledge that Children's Services face challenges around demand and recruitment of experienced social work staff. However, during questioning it was difficult for Members to fully understand what assumptions had been made around demand, staffing etc. within the MTFP. Similar issues were also raised in connection with the Health and Wellbeing portfolio, therefore a recommendation to review both social care areas is made later in the report – **See recommendation 8.**



Children's Services Portfolio

Agency Staff

- We were pleased to hear that the level of agency staff had reduced to 21% due to an effective retention strategy.
- It was explained to the Committee that a significant proportion of agency staff were used to cover more challenging areas, including Senior Social Worker vacancies.

Whilst we acknowledge that Children's Services will probably always require an element of agency staff to meet demand, more work should be undertaken to reduce the level of spend in this area where possible.



Children's Services Portfolio

- Last year, the Committee highlighted their concern over our low numbers of in-house foster carers and were disappointed to see that only 10% of the target increase set out in the Change for Children programme had been achieved within the past 6 months.
- It was noted that a significant proportion of budget savings are predicated on increasing the in-house fostering capacity and therefore there are concerns that these will not be achieved.
- The Committee wish to see a more proactive and innovative approach to foster carer recruitment. It is vital that new recruitment initiatives are effective in order to deliver improved outcomes for children and significant savings proposed for the next four year period.

Recommendation 7 - That a benchmarking exercise on foster carers allowances and a best practice review of independent fostering agencies is undertaken to better inform the Council's approach to recruiting additional in-house foster carers.



Health and Wellbeing Portfolio

- The Cabinet Member reported an unexpected forecast overspend of £4.1m to be offset with contingencies, which would reduce it to £1.4m by year end.
- Only £3.8m of the £5m savings target in 2017/18 had been achieved.
- We acknowledge that pressures on Adult Social Care are felt nationally, with demographic changes and issues in the care provider market triggering further financial problems. As a demand led and statutory service, many costs are unpredictable and therefore unforeseen.
- However, we were disappointed to hear about the overspend, which had only recently come to light. The Cabinet Member and Finance Director were unable to fully explain the reasons for this overspend. We heard that the S151 Officer was undertaking an urgent investigation and we ask that the outcome of this investigation to be reported at a future FPR Select Committee meeting.




Health and Wellbeing Portfolio

- In view of the overspend and the failure to hit the 2017/18 savings targets, the Committee believe there are risks in the 2018/19 budget and would encourage an increased level of Corporate monitoring of the Adult Social Care budget.

Recommendation 8 - That there should be a detailed independent review of the assumptions and cost drivers used to develop both the Children's Services and Health and Wellbeing budgets, as well as a comprehensive review of processes and financial modelling used, to ensure more accurate forecasting of spend.

- We heard from the Cabinet Member that an **Adult Social Care Transformation** programme is underway, as a response to current financial pressures – this will change the service operating model from reactive to a more proactive approach to generate efficiencies, manage demand, yield financial savings and improve areas of underperformance.

The Committee wish to support the portfolio's Transformation programme and therefore ask that detailed project plans should be scrutinised by the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee.



Health and Wellbeing Portfolio

Other key findings include:

- **Income Generation** – the opportunities to generate income within health and wellbeing are restricted due to legal reasons. This leads to a further emphasis on savings.
- **Accountable Care System (ACS)** - The Committee welcomed the fact that Buckinghamshire is one of 9 pilot ACS in the country. ***We believe that there needs to be more urgency in the integration of health & social care to improve outcomes for residents and produce long term financial savings.***
- **Contracts** – it was highlighted that over 200 contracts are managed within Health and Wellbeing. ***We ask that consideration is given to rationalising the number of Care Home contracts to improve the quality and efficiency of contract management.***



Education & Skills Portfolio

The Cabinet Member reported a small forecast underspend.

The key priorities for the portfolio in the year ahead remained:

- Managing Home to School Transport
- Managing changes to Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)
- Ensuring children with special needs have the relevant support
- Narrowing the achievement gap in schools
- Improve school performance

The key challenges for the portfolio included:

- Demographic changes and providing sufficient school places, including pre school
- Maintaining a cost effective Home to School Transport service.
- Improving KS2 results
- Delivering the proposed new Early Help model



Education & Skills Portfolio

- **School Places** – The proposed capital expenditure will provide approximately 4,450 Primary and 5,500 Secondary places over the next four year period.
- **School Funding** – the new Funding Formula introduced will provide £11m of additional funding next year through a local formula. Overall, Buckinghamshire schools will see a 3% increase in funding.

The Committee welcomes the changes introduced by the new revised Funding Formula and noted that schools in deprived areas with higher levels of pupils on free school meals would benefit from the new formula. We would however like to see the Council proactively intervening to narrow the attainment gap between children from deprived families and the national average and the greater gap between the County Council's Looked After Children and the county average.




Education & Skills Portfolio

Home to School Transport

- We heard that the Home to School transport budget, particularly SEND transport, was experiencing high levels of demand.
- The Cabinet Member advised that whilst savings had already been made in this area over the last few years, his team were reviewing arrangements due to the ongoing costs pressures.
- The Committee appreciate that changes to Home to School Transport policies can be unpopular with parents. However, Budget Scrutiny made a recommendation in this area in 2017 and as the budget continues to be under pressure, difficult decisions are needed.

Recommendation 9 - That the provision of Home to School Transport, both mainstream and children with EHC plans, by the Council meets national statutory guidelines only, that discretionary transport should be phased out and that parents/guardians are provided with reasonable notice for any policy changes.



Community Engagement & Public Health

The Cabinet Member reported that his portfolio would be on budget for 2017/18.

The portfolio was very wide-ranging and priorities for next year included:

- To make communities stronger, healthier, resilient and safer.
- To keep people healthier and independent for longer
- To keep communities safe by working with the Bucks Safer Stronger Partnership Board (BSSPB)

Public Health

- The Committee heard that Public Health were using digital channels as a means of delivering mandatory services at a reduced cost. We were pleased to hear that detailed assessments have been carried out to ensure this channel shift was effective.

The Committee heard that Government plans to link Public Health funding to Business rates from 2020. We hope that robust plans will be put in place to ensure a smooth transition and to enable the preventative agenda to be adequately supported.




Community Engagement & Public Health

Library Service Delivery Options Appraisal

- The Committee heard that the library services had generated savings in the region of 40% of the net budget over the last eight years through a range of efficiencies.
- A detailed Service Delivery Options Appraisal was now being developed to see if further savings could be achieved.

Recommendation 10 - That as part of the Strategic Options Appraisal for redelivering Library Services, an e-book pilot study should be undertaken.

Book Fund

- It was explained to the Committee that the Council's investment in stock was below the national average -it was therefore a challenge to see investment reduced further.
 - However through careful stock management and by encouraging donations the libraries were still able to offer a wide choice for residents and library issues remained above the national average.
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Buckinghamshire County Council

Community Engagement & Public Health

- Libraries also acted as important community hubs, offering more than just books – e.g. IT classes, Citizens Advice Bureau sessions, Knit and Natter and Bounce and Rhyme sessions.

The Committee recognise that libraries are a valued part of the community and the current Bucks mixed model, which includes a number of Community Libraries has proved very successful . We ask therefore that the Resource Grant Agreements with Buckinghamshire's Community Libraries will continue.



Planning & Environment Portfolio

The Cabinet Member reported a small forecast underspend at year end and the portfolio had continued to deliver the income targets already built into the MTFP.

- The biggest challenges for the portfolio in the coming year included:
 - Cost reductions relating to Household Recycling Centres. (HRCs)
 - Housing growth
 - An increasing population and demand for services
 - A need for astute contract management, particularly in Waste
- We were pleased to hear about the successful delivery of efficiency savings both through service efficiencies and the purchase of a bulky waste shredder.
- We also welcome the impact that the Energy from Waste (EfW) Plant has had on the total level of landfill tax being spent by the Council, reducing tax from £8.4m in 2014/15 to £45k in 2018/19.
- We were pleased to hear that Buckinghamshire was the top performing County for recycling.



Transportation Portfolio

The Cabinet Member reported a small forecast overspend for year but mitigating action was being taken and he was confident that the portfolio would come in on budget.

- The Client Transport service had forecast an overspend of £29k while there was an estimated underspend in the Transport for Buckinghamshire budget.
- A survey on Highways Maintenance completed in November showed satisfaction rates are low but improving.

The key challenges for the portfolio included:

- The public's perception and satisfaction with road maintenance
- Funding to keep up with the pace of Growth and demand



Transportation Portfolio

- **Growth** – The Committee was pleased to hear that more funding is available year on year for growth and that appropriate scenario planning had been undertaken to inform the draft budget.
- **Gully Emptying** – The Committee was pleased that their recommendation last year to invest further in gully maintenance had been implemented. However, there remained a general concern that the asset had not been comprehensively surveyed.

Recommendation 11 - That a comprehensive gully survey is undertaken throughout the County to identify accurately the number of gullies and locations and use this to inform the creation of an effective maintenance programme.



Transportation Portfolio

- **Weed Management**

- The Committee has previously recommended that there should be an increased spend to remove water from the roads to protect them from erosion. This has been accepted in recent budgets.
- The Committee believe the same consideration should be given to introducing a programme of weed management to preserve the quality of footways across the County.

Recommendation 12 - That sufficient budget is set aside to enable the introduction of a programme of weed management on footways across the County.



Other Observations/Further Work

- The Committee heard a public question regarding winter gritting routes. The Cabinet Member explained that the Council works closely with the District Council's to ensure that roads are safe during the winter. We ask that the protocol with District Council partners regarding gritting of pavements in town centres in snowy weather should be revisited. In addition, a communication campaign to highlight grit bin usage to members of the public would be helpful.

Follow up items for Select Committees

Transport, Environment & Communities – Skills agenda and Future Reconfiguration of Household Recycling Centres.

Health & Adult Social Care – ASC Transformation Programme

Children's Social Care & Learning – Narrowing the Gap

Finance, Performance & Resources – Development of Budget Book, Recruitment & Retention Strategies, Progress of ICT & Digital, Outcome of the S151 Officer's urgent investigation into Overspend



Commendations

The Committee would like to record the following 'good news' stories from Budget Scrutiny:

- **Public Health** – Strong evidence of innovative transformational change which has generated a number of savings whilst maintaining the quality of services
- **Trading Standards** – Joint service with Surrey is seen as an exemplar, delivering savings set out in original business plan and preparing for opportunities arising from Brexit.
- **Energy from Waste Insurance & Overheads** – Evidence of effective contract management that was able to mitigate a potentially avoidable increase in cost.
- **Country Parks** – Continuing to attract increasing visitor numbers and generating significant revenue to sustain the parks for the future.
- **Children's Services** - The Committee welcomed the open presentation and appraisal of the challenges facing the services.



Appendix

Link to Budget Scrutiny Inquiry Scope

<https://democracy.buckscc.gov.uk/documents/s104695/Draft%202018%20Budget%20Inquiry%20Scope.pdf>

Link to the Budget Scrutiny Meeting webcasts (available for 6 months)

- Day 1 - https://buckscc.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/319460
- Day 2 - https://buckscc.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/319461
- Day 3 - https://buckscc.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/319462

