

Draft Inquiry Scope

Title	Budget Scrutiny 2018
Signed-off by	FPR Select Committee
	Sara Turnbull, Head of Member Services (Statutory Scrutiny Officer)
Author	Kelly Sutherland, Committee and Governance Manager
Date	14 November 2017
Inquiry Group Membership	FPR Select Committee Members and the Chairmen of all other Select Committees
Member Services Resource	Member Services will provide the following officer support: Sara Turnbull, Head of Member Services –Report Quality Assurance Kelly Sutherland, Committee & Governance Manager – Policy Advice & Project Oversight To be confirmed - Policy Lead and Project Management Committee Assistant – Administrative support (as needed)
Lead Cabinet Member	Martin Tett, Leader John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Resources
Lead HQ/BU Officer	Richard Ambrose, Director of Finance and Assets/Sarah Ashmead, Assistant Chief Executive
What is the problem that is trying to be solved?	Members require assurance each year that the Council's proposed budgets are realistic, deliverable and in line with the Council's priorities as outlined in its Strategic Plan. The Finance, Performance and Resources Select Committee conducts hearings in mid-January in order to develop the conclusions and recommendations of its 2018/19 budget scrutiny inquiry. As in previous years, Cabinet Members will be questioned by members of the inquiry group on their planning, assumptions and budgetary proposals for the period of the Medium Term Plan, with their responses forming the evidence base for the recommendations that will be presented to Cabinet.
Is the issue of significance to Buckinghamshire as a whole?	Yes - Budget proposals for the County Council will have an impact on Buckinghamshire as a whole.
Is the topic of relevance to the work of BCC?	Yes see above
Is this topic within the remit of the Select Committee?	Scrutiny of the budget is a priority within the Select Committee's remit. The subject falls within the remit of the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Resources but involves all Cabinet Members.

What work is underway already on this issue?	<p>See key timing considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee will receive a 12 month update on outcomes of the Income Generation Inquiry at 14th November 2017 meeting. • The Committee will receive a briefing on 19th December 2017 from the Director of Finance and Assets on the draft budget and key financial issues.
Are there any key changes that might impact on this issue?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Modernising Local Government agenda within the County and any unforeseen changes to government funding. • Possible implications of Brexit
What are the key timing considerations?	<p>Timings of budget consultation</p> <p>11th December 2017 – Cabinet agrees draft budget</p> <p>19th December 2017 – FPR budget scrutiny preparatory briefing</p> <p>Budget Scrutiny – 9th to 12th January 2018</p> <p>12th February 2018 – Cabinet recommends final budget</p> <p>22nd February 2018 – Council agrees final budget</p>
Who are the key stakeholders & decision-makers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet Members • Corporate Management Team • Public (in terms of consultation)
What might the Inquiry Achieve?	<p>The Inquiry will result in recommendations to Cabinet to ensure that the Budget for 2018/19 is robust.</p>
What media/communications support do you want?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release and social media communications to launch Budget Scrutiny Week • Questions invited from Public via social media during Budget Scrutiny week • Link with communications regarding Council's consideration of the Budget • Press release and social media communications to promote the report once published

Evidence-gathering Methodology

What types of methods of evidence-gathering will you use?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information provided by the Director of Finance and Assets • Business Unit Commercial Plans • Equality Impact Assessments • Three days of meetings with Cabinet Members • Consultation feedback • Questions from Public via social media
How will you involve service-users and the public in this inquiry?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with each individual Cabinet Member held in public and webcast • Feedback will be fed through from Public via budget consultation • Public can pose questions via social media during the Budget Scrutiny Week meetings

Outline Inquiry Project Plan

Stage	Key Activity	Dates
Scoping	Inquiry Scope Agreed by Select Committee	14 th November 2017
Evidence-gathering	Pre-Budget briefing	19 th December 2017
	Budget Inquiry Meetings with individual Cabinet Members	9 th -11 th January 2018
Developing Recommendations	Inquiry Group/SC meeting – Key Findings Report & Possible Areas of Recommendations considered	12 th January 2018
	Testing & developing recommendations with stakeholders	19-26 th January 2018
Reporting	Draft Inquiry Group report with recommendations completed (signed-off by SC Chairman)	26 th January or after
	Select Committee agrees report to go forward to decision-makers (either at Committee Meeting or via email)	31 st January 2018
	Cabinet papers published	2 nd February 2018
	Cabinet considers recommendations	12 th February 2018
	Council Report	22 nd February 2018