

SUMMARY



Report For:	Improvement & Review Commission
Meeting Date:	24 January 2019
Part:	Part 1 - Open
If Part 2, reason:	Choose a reason

Title of Report:	Budget Task and Finish Group 2019/20 Recommendations
Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Iram Malik 01494 421204 Iram_malik@wycombe.gov.uk
What is the Commission being asked to do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) To consider the recommendations of the 'Budget Task and Finish Group 2019/20 as outlined in the report below; (ii) To decide whether to endorse, amend or reject these recommendations for referral onto the Cabinet Meeting of 4 February 2019; and (iii) To scrutinise the Draft Revenue Budget for 2019/20 post Cabinet on 4 February 2019
Executive Summary	<p>The Budget Task and Finish Group 2019/2020 was set up by the Improvement & Review Commission in order to consider the capital and revenue budget for the financial year 2019/20 leading into the new Unitary Council.</p> <p>A total of 5 meetings were held the first on 29 November, 3 December and on the 11 December 2018. Then on the 7 January and 10 January 2019.</p> <p>Membership of the Group included:</p> <p>Chairman of the Budget Task & Finish Group: Councillor A Collingwood</p> <p>Vice-Chairman Councillor R Wilson</p> <p>Other Members: Cllr Mrs L Clarke (OBE), M Knight, R Raja H McCarthy and C Whitehead.</p> <p>Relevant Cabinet Member (Finance & Resources) D Watson was also kept informed of meetings and developments.</p> <p>Officer contact: Catherine Whitehead (ext:3980) catherine.whitehead@wycombe.gov.uk</p>
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	<p>Risk: N/A</p> <p>Equalities: N/A</p> <p>Health & Safety: N/A</p>

Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	Monitoring Officer & S.151 Officer: There are no legal or financial implications at this stage until Cabinet has considered how to respond to the recommendations.
Consultees:	Cabinet Members and Officers
Options:	To not consider the recommendations
Next Steps:	The Improvement & Review Commission was scheduled to consider the recommendations at its next meeting on 24 January 2019. These would then go onto Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 4 February. Ultimately these would go forward for endorsement by Full Council at its February meeting.
Background Papers:	Minutes Budget task and Finish Group 29 November, 11 December 2018, 7 January and 10 January 2019.
Abbreviations:	IRC - Improvement and Review Commission TFG - Task and Finish Group

1. Detailed Report

- 1.1 To consider the recommendations of the 'Budget 2019-20 Task and Finish Group as featured below;
- 1.2 The annual Budget Task & Finish Group was set up by the Improvement & Review Commission for the input of recommendations for consideration for inclusion in the evolving 2019-20 budget and the scrutiny of the draft revenue and capital budget for 2019/20.
- 1.3 To look at the service areas budgets for the next 18 months to identify any issues, concerns, pressures and aspirations.
- 1.4 As a result the Task & Finish Group arrived at some recommendations for consideration, by both Improvement & Review and the Executive. These are featured below. Recommendations are open to any additions or deletions as agreed.
- 1.5 A total of 5 meetings were held the first on 29 November, then on 3 December and on the 11 December 2018. Then on the 7 and 10 January 2019. The following process was followed.

29 November – initial discussions took place around the future years capital budget. A presentation was conducted by D Skinner and D Watson.

3 December – Discussion continued on the capital programme and the draft recommendations to be taken forward

11 December – Interviews took place with Head of Housing & Environment, and Cabinet Members for Environment and for Housing.

7 January – Further interviews resumed with Head of Economic Development & Regeneration and Head of HR ICT and Shared Support Services, together with the Cabinet Members for Environment and for Digital Development & Customer Services

10 January – Interviews with Head of Community and Cabinet Member for Community. Senior officers from Planning were also in attendance along with the Cabinet Member for Planning.

1.6 Membership of the Group included:

Chairman of the Budget Task & Finish Group: Councillor A Collingwood

Vice–Chairman: Councillor R Wilson

Other Members: Cllr Mrs C Clarke (OBE), M Knight, R Raja H McCarthy and C Whitehead.

Relevant Cabinet Member (Finance & Resources) D Watson was also kept informed of meetings and developments.

Recommendations

Planning

- 1) That £500k reduction be achieved in 2019/20 however it was recognised that year 2 and 3 were aspirational and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) needs to be updated and reflected, and the new unitary needs to be informed. *Planning to revisit their budget and discuss alternatives with the Head of Finance and Cabinet Member for Finance.*

Reasons for recommendation:

Concerns about ability to deliver the promised efficiency savings.

- 2) That Cabinet provide proposals to deliver the Princes Risborough relief road and Phase 7 of the Town Centre Masterplan, and to report progress within the next six months.

Reason for recommendation:

Initial work will need to be undertaken on the Princes Risborough relief road so that the new development can commence.

Phases 5 and 6 of the town centre Masterplan were due for completion at the end of 2019, this would enable phase 7 works to start immediately after. Cabinet to consider virement from strategic land acquisition budget heading if budgets cannot be found elsewhere.

Community

- 3) To use the best procurement route to promote delivery and this can include the

suspension of contract standing orders

Reason for recommendation:

To enable delivery on projects in appropriate timescales using the best method of procurement available.

- 4) That the procurement team be provided with funds for additional resources.

Reason for recommendation:

There are currently only two members of staff in the procurement team who deal with and support officers with procurement contracts. As there were a number of projects being developed this was creating a significant increase in workload and additional resources would need to be considered.

- 5) If the Modernising Local Government process is delayed then the Council revisit the procurement thresholds.

Reason for recommendation:

The current thresholds create delays due to the process required.

- 6) It be noted that the Budget TFG support the waiver of Contract Standing Orders for the proposed works at Court Garden.

Reason for recommendation:

So that works can be undertaken within an acceptable timescale.

- 7) That a review of Street Wardens be undertaken within 3 months and additional resource be provided if the project is successful (6 street wardens).

Reason for recommendation: So that the amount of Street Wardens can be increased and be distributed across the District.

Economic Development & Regeneration

- 8) That additional revenue funds be made available for the feasibility work to facilitate the continuity and delivery of Capital Projects. Including, but not exclusively including, car parks, regeneration and the Local Plan.

Reason for recommendation:

So that officers and departments at the Council can undertake projects without additional resource pressures

- 9) To accelerate and expedite all regeneration projects so that they can be delivered ahead or on schedule.

Reason for recommendation:

As the District Council has Capital projects already agreed that these are able to be fulfilled.

- 10) That a Project Manager be appointed to oversee delivery and to support the Deputy Leader with implementation plans.

Reason for recommendation:

So that an officer can be responsible and drive forward projects. Also so that they are able to report to the Strategic Management Team and Members on a regular basis.

(a) The Deputy Leader be given the additional role to oversee the delivery of all projects both revenue and capital.

Reason for Recommendation

To support other Cabinet Members where additional help is required

11) To identify the land acquisition and car parking capacity across the District.

Reason for recommendation:

To improve investment options and car parking for the future of the District.

12) That Cabinet note that a Task and Finish Group will be undertaken to consider Parking in the District.

Reason for recommendation:

To support the delivery of future parking in the District.

13) To note that the Budget Task and Finish Group support the implementation of an increase in parking charges.

Reason for the Recommendation:

The increase in parking charges has been scrutinised by the Budget TFG.

Housing

14) To note that the Budget TFG supports the funding for the delivery of HMO licensing.

Reason for recommendation:

To provide support for HMO Licensing as this would generate future income.

15) That the Council enter into a Service Level Agreement with Wycombe Homeless Connections on a 3-5 year basis.

Reason for recommendation:

To bring stability to the delivery of services to the most vulnerable and enable Wycombe Homeless Connections to plan over a longer term helping to minimise potential adverse effects due to a change in the Authority.

Environment

16) That £150k be provided for a new recycling collection vehicle.

Reason for recommendation:

Currently flatted developments are unable to have their waste recycled, a new vehicle would support this option.

17) To note that a Task and Finish Group will be undertaken to consider the new Joint Waste Contract.

Reason for recommendation:

To support the delivery of a new Waste Contract in an improvement role in the same way the previous contract was delivered.

ICT

18) That contingency of £100,000 be considered for funding to support the delivery of the Digital First Programme if required.

Reason for recommendation:

To support the Cabinet Member and officers with the strategy.

19) That Community Grants be continued and provided to Parish and Town Councils as previously agreed.

Reason for recommendation:

So that Parish and Town Councils and continue to be supported in the District.