



## Cabinet supplement agenda

Date: Tuesday 11 July 2023

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: The Oculus, Buckinghamshire Council, Gatehouse Road, Aylesbury HP19 8FF

### Membership:

M Tett (Leader), Cllr A Macpherson (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing), G Williams (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment), S Broadbent (Cabinet Member for Transport), J Chilver (Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources), A Cranmer (Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services), C Harriss (Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure), A Hussain (Cabinet Member for Communities), P Strachan (Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration) and M Winn (Cabinet Member for Homelessness and Regulatory Services)

### Agenda Item

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#### 5 Question Time

##### **Question from Councillor Stuart Wilson to Councillor John Chilver, Cabinet Member for Accessible Housing and Resources**

The Q1 Budget Monitoring Report reviewed by Cabinet today rightly notes the significant financial challenges of this Council against a backdrop of persistent high inflation and continued increase in demand and complexity of key services, notably in Adult and Children's Social Care. As an aside, and somewhat strangely, high energy costs are impacting certain portfolios but not delivering the benefits anticipated in Energy from Waste which raises some questions about energy procurement and trading. As such, this reports projects an adverse forecast of £8.3m for the 2023-24 year compared to £3.8m adverse in the same quarter last year. This reflects 2% of Portfolio Spend this year rather than 1% of Portfolio Spend last year. Savings are projected to deliver a shortfall of £6.6m in 2023-24 compared to a projection of £0.2m shortfall this time last year.

The Report asks Cabinet to note its contents and the risks and opportunities within it. It also asks Cabinet to approve the actions set

out in the Report to address the pressures. I have been through the Report several times and I am unable to locate any specific opportunities or actions that have been scoped and costed to address the pressures. However, I do note the following comments in paragraph 1.4:

“Detailed Portfolio Action Plans are already in development to address the pressures, with a view to urgently bringing budgets back into line. These will consider the acceleration of savings plans from future years. In addition, a member led Strategic Property and Finance Review will be initiated to examine opportunities for additional savings, income, or capital receipt. The delivery of the action plans will be managed by the Portfolio Holders.”

Sections 8, 9 and 10 of the Report deal with consultation, communication, engagement, next steps, and review which concludes there is no further public reporting action required until the Q2 Report in November, at which point the financial year is half-way through.

Given the severity of the Council’s financial position versus Budget at Q1, can the Cabinet Member please confirm that:

- the year-to-date (Q1) and year-to-go (Q2-4) trends versus Budget and prior year confirm the full year projection with a suitable data table shown by portfolio and corporate line;
- Cabinet Members are actually able to approve the actions set out in the Report to address the pressures if those Detailed Portfolio Action Plans are still in development;
- the acceleration of savings plans from future years is feasible given a projected miss on savings of £6.6m this year, given the existing pressure on statutory services in particular;
- the Detailed Portfolio Action Plans and details of the proposed member led Strategic Property & Financial Review will be presented to the Finance & Resources Select Committee on July 20<sup>th</sup> alongside the Q1 Report to demonstrate how they will urgently bring budgets back into line?

If you would like to attend a meeting, but need extra help to do so, for example because of a disability, please contact us as early as possible, so that we can try to put the right support in place.

For further information please contact: Ian Hunt [democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)