

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive

BUDGET TIMETABLE AND BUDGET CONSULTATION 2021/221. Purpose of report

To advise the Committee on the budget consultation process for 2021/22 and to set out the proposed timetable and budget scrutiny process.

2. Background

Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 places a duty upon local authorities to consult representatives of non-domestic ratepayers before setting the budget. There is no specific statutory requirement to consult residents. Local authorities were placed under a general duty to 'inform, consult and involve' representatives of local people when exercising their functions by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 but this was repealed and replaced by more prescriptive forms of involvement by the Localism Act 2011.

For 2021/22 a similar budget consultation process is proposed similar to that adopted for 2020/21 using a web-based survey, publicised through social media.

As with the 2020/21 budget, it is proposed that elements of the budget are reported to the relevant Committees for detailed scrutiny. An overall budget report will then be presented to the Finance and Resources Committee on 11 February 2021 for recommendation to Full Council on 3 March 2021.

Appendix 1 denotes the budget timetable and consultation process. The consultation survey is attached at appendix 2. This includes questions relating to resident's method of access of particular Council services and preferred means of interacting with the Council, and the impact of Covid-19.

Promotional activity will include social media messages, email me bulletins, press releases, website promotion and direct engagement with groups, organisations and individuals on the Council's stakeholder map.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:

- 1. The budget-setting process for 2021/22 be approved.**
- 2. The Budget Consultation questionnaire be approved.**

Background papers

Nil

APPENDIX 1

Budget timetable and consultation process

19 October 2020	Online questionnaire published by this date.
31 October 2020	Capital and revenue submissions received
30 November 2020	Online questionnaire closes
November 2020	Compilation of proposed three-year Capital Programme
November-December 2020	Scrutiny of services business and financial plans by General Management Team
7 January 2021	Results of budget consultation exercise and draft budget proposals to Finance and Resources Committee. Council Tax base set.
January–February 2021	Scrutiny of service business and financial plans by service Committees
11 February 2021	Budget proposals presented to Finance and Resources Committee
3 March 2021	Budget approved by Council