

Notes of the Informal Meeting of the BUDGET AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE held on WEDNESDAY 5 JANUARY at 19:00 hrs

**Present:** Councillors Brown (Chair) Clarke, Ferrans, Fuller, Hume, Rankine, Verma and Wardle

**Apologies:** Councillor P Geary

**Officers** S Richardson (Director, Finance and Resources) A Rulton (Head of Finance), N Hutchin (Head of Finance), M Bracey (Chief Executive), P Thomas (Director, Planning and Placemaking), S Gonsalves (Director, Communications, Policy and Insight), P Brown (Head of Democratic Services), S Haslem (Senior Finance Manager), S Hattle (Senior Finance Manager), L Wheaton (Senior Finance Manager Budget and Financial Planning), (E Richardson (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

**Also Present:** Councillors R Bradburn, Marland, Middleton and Trendall

**BR28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Fuller advised that she was a tenant of Milton Keynes Council.

**BR29 DRAFT COUNCIL BUDGET 2022/23 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2022/23 TO 2025/26**

The Committee received an introduction from Councillor Marland, Leader of the Council, setting the context for the draft 2022/23 budget proposals. Councillor Marland explained that this was the eighth budget he had presented as Leader and he praised the hard work of the Finance Team which had enabled the Council to present a strong and robust budget for the coming year. He also advised that the Local Government Finance Settlement had been more advantageous than expected which would help with some of the one-off pressures for 2022/23, with the caveat that this could go the other way in 2023/24.

Councillor Marland went on to explain that a balanced budget was not an end in itself, it was the financial means by which the Council delivered services to the people of Milton Keynes. He also

commented that the largest proportion of the Council's expenditure was on the provision of social care services for both adults and children.

He also said some difficult decisions had to be made, the main one being an increase in Council Tax of 3.75%. Although this was below the current level of inflation, it was still higher than the Cabinet would have liked; however, it was still one of the lowest rises in the country, certainly over the two-year period from 2021-23. This was due to the Council's decision not to take the full amount of the additional adult social care precept, either last year or this year. He added that the Council was able to maintain its local 80% council tax reduction scheme for those on low incomes/benefits, which was one of the most generous in the country.

Following Councillor Marland's introduction and discussion of the draft budget proposals in his portfolio, the Committee then heard from Councillor R Bradburn, Cabinet Member for Economy, Recovery and Renewal, Councillor Trendall, Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Councillor Middleton, Cabinet Member for Resources, which included the Capital Programme, about the pressures, one-off pressures, reductions and income generation proposals associated with their portfolios for 2022/23.

The Committee then scrutinised, commented upon and discussed these proposals with the Cabinet members. These would be further considered at the meeting scheduled for 18 January 2022 and any recommendations included in the Committee's report on its work during December and January to scrutinise the 2022/23 draft budget, which would be submitted for consideration by Cabinet on 1 February 2022 and full Council on 16 February budget setting process.

RESOLVED –

1. That Councillors Marland, Bradburn, Trendall and Middleton be thanked for discussing with the Committee the pressures, one-off pressures, reductions and income generation proposals in their portfolios identified as part of the 2022/23 draft budget preparation process.
2. That officer colleagues attending the meeting be thanked for the support offered to Cabinet Members during the budget setting period and for the clarification of various issues raised by the Committee.
3. That any recommendations the Committee may have arising from the evidence taken at this meeting be included in the

report on its work which will be presented to Cabinet on 1 February 2022.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 20:39

The documents referred to in these minutes can be found on the Council's Committee Management Information System (CMIS) at: [CMIS: Informal Budget & Resources Scrutiny Committee - 05 January 2022](#)

The recording of this meeting is available to view on the Council's YouTube Channel at: [Milton Keynes YouTube: Budget & Resources Scrutiny Committee - 5 January 2022](#)

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