

1. Service Areas

1.1 The Council has set savings targets across 13 Service Areas. This gives Members the opportunity to make differential savings requirements across each area. It is suggested that these areas are retained for future planning.

2. Portfolio Plans

2.1 Last year the Council agreed a more focused approach to the Council Plan with four cross-cutting priorities being agreed for the Council as a whole. It is suggested that this year the plans set out how each Cabinet member expects the services under his or her purview to contribute to these overarching priorities for the Council as a whole, rather than setting individual policy steers for each service.

3. Council Plan

3.1 No change is proposed to the structure of the Council Plan although there will be the opportunity to review the targets within it.

4. Scrutiny

4.1 Scrutiny Committees meet in September and November. There are usually RPPR Scrutiny Boards in December/January to review savings plans in advance of Cabinet.

4.2 It is suggested that this year the programme for Scrutiny is as follows:

- September: an explanation of departmental budgets and their relation to the Service Areas (similar to that given last year) and a reminder of the RPPR process. Review of Portfolio Plans and savings plans in light of State of the County and Portfolio Plans and suggestions for further work/information to aid scrutiny of future budget plans;
- November: feedback from any requests for information from September; and
- December/January: Boards review developing Portfolio Plans and savings proposals.

5. Whole Council input

5.1 We previously had Members' forums in September, December and January. It is suggested that we hold two this year, in November and January. It is suggested that the format for these is the same for both with forums lasting 2.5 hrs. Each would comprise:

- A general session on developing plans overall;
- Carousel sessions on the plans for each department; and
- A final session for Members to bring together the information from the proceeding sessions to challenge overall plans.

5.2 It will be more important, with the new political make of the Council, that all Groups understand the budget position and how choices have been made before the Council considers the Council Plan and budget in January. It is suggested that this year sessions are added for Group Leaders at which they are invited to challenge the developing plans and suggest alternatives.

6. Partners

6.1 We will consult with partners about how they wish to engage with us as part of our RPPR process.