

Report to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 27 November 2025

By: Chief Executive

Title: Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)

Purpose: To provide an update on the Council's business and financial planning process, Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR), and the committee's input to the process.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) consider the information in the attached RPPR Cabinet report of 11 November 2025 (appendix 1); and**
 - (2) identify any further work or information needed to aid the Scrutiny Committee's contribution to the RPPR process for consideration at the RPPR Board, or as part of the committee's ongoing work programme.**
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1. Background

1.1 On 11 November Cabinet considered a Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) update report. Following on from the State of the County report in June, this report outlined the latest financial and service planning outlook for the Council. It also highlighted significant ongoing uncertainties, particularly around future funding, national policy reforms, and changes to local government structures, with key details still awaited that will be essential to inform our planning. A further update on the planning position will be reported to Cabinet in December.

1.2 The RPPR Cabinet report (attached at Appendix 1) includes:

- an updated overall assessment of the planning position and financial outlook;
- updates on key policy context developments since the State of the County report;
- the CIPFA Assurance Review report and the proposed response to recommendations;
- an updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and reserves position; and
- an update on the capital programme.

1.3 The key specific pressures and policy developments set out in the report which relate to services within this committee's remit are summarised below.

- Devolution and the establishment of the Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority
- Local Government Reorganisation and creation of a single tier of local government in East Sussex
- Expanded use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within the Council to maximise efficiency
- Local and national measures to boost economic growth including: the Government's Modern Industrial Strategy, the Pride in Place programme, the 10-year National Infrastructure Strategy, and implementation of the East Sussex Prosperity Strategy

1.4 Further detail on the above areas is set out in the Cabinet report and the committee is invited to consider and comment on the implications of these developments for service planning and delivery.

2. Scrutiny engagement in RPPR planning

2.1 Scrutiny's engagement in RPPR planning is ongoing throughout the year, through specific RPPR reports and topics included in the wider scrutiny work programme. At the **July** meeting the Place Scrutiny Committee discussed relevant parts of the 2024/25 year end monitoring report and the State of the County 2025 report, which enabled the committee to review both the current context and future pressures for the areas within the remit of the committee. The Committee requested a progress report on the work of the SPACES programme and property asset disposals to ensure that the council is making best use of available resources through efficient use of estates.

2.2 At its **September** meeting the committee reviewed its work programme to ensure it best supported scrutiny's role in the ongoing RPPR process. The scrutiny work planning **awayday** held following the September meeting provided an opportunity to further consider current and forthcoming challenges for the services within the committee's remit and the best approach to scrutinising these issues. The Committee confirmed that it wished to receive a briefing on the expanded use of AI in the Council, as well as a future progress report on the updated strategic highways policies and asset management plans adopted following the Lead Member for Transport and Environment meeting on 8 September 2025.

2.3 As well as the specific policy context developments set out above, the **November** meeting provides an opportunity to consider the wider current planning and financial outlook, as set out in the attached Cabinet report. Members are invited to:

- consider and comment on the latest planning position;
- review the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (appendix 1 to the Cabinet report);
- consider the proposed next steps to work towards a balanced budget for 2026/27; and
- review the capital programme update (appendix 4 to the Cabinet report); and
- identify any further work or information needed to aid the Scrutiny Committee's contribution to the RPPR process for consideration at the RPPR Board, or as part of the committee's ongoing work programme.

2.4 The Place Scrutiny Committee's **RPPR Board** will meet on 16 December 2025 to consider the further RPPR planning update to Cabinet in December and to agree detailed comments and any recommendations on the budget and emerging portfolio plans to be put to Cabinet on behalf of the committee in January 2026. The Chairs of the People and Place Scrutiny Committees are invited to attend the RPPR boards of both committees.

2.6 In **March 2026** the committee will review the process and its input into the RPPR process. Any issues arising can be reflected in the future committee work programme.

2.7 Running alongside this process, there will be a number of opportunities for all Members to engage in the RPPR process.

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