

Report to: People Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 24 March 2022

By: Chief Executive

Title: Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)

Purpose: To review scrutiny's input into the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process for the financial year 2022/23 and to consider related items for inclusion in the committee's work programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Review the committee's input into the RPPR process;
- 2) Agree proposed enhancements to the RPPR scrutiny arrangements set out in paragraph 2.6;
- 3) Consider any further changes or improvements to the process from a scrutiny perspective; and
- 4) Identify any potential areas for inclusion in the committee's future work programme on services or issues within the Committee's remit.

1 Background

1.1 The Council's integrated business and financial planning process, Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR), matches available resources with our delivery plans for our priority outcomes so that we focus and protect our spending where it will deliver our priority objectives most effectively. It also ensures we have the demographic trends and performance information to monitor progress.

1.2 Scrutiny committees actively engage in the process, firstly to allow them to bring the experience they have gained through their work to bear and, secondly, to help inform their future work programmes, so that scrutiny work can continue to inform RPPR on an ongoing basis.

2 Scrutiny engagement in Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources

2.1 In September 2021 each scrutiny committee considered a range of information about the services within the remit of the committee to set the scene for the work on the RPPR process. This included extracts from the Savings Plans agreed by Council in February 2021, the current Portfolio Plans, extracts from the Financial Budget Summary for 2021/22 and the latest capital programme for the period 2021/22-2029/30 (extracts taken from the *State of the County* report considered by Cabinet in July 2021).

2.2 At the November meetings the committees considered an updated version of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and updated proposed savings schedules as set out in a report considered by Cabinet on 30 September 2021, which also outlined significant updates to the policy context since State of the County. The scrutiny committees were asked to identify any further work or information needed for consideration at their RPPR Board meetings.

2.3 The scrutiny committees established scrutiny RPPR Boards to provide more detailed input into the RPPR process. These met in December 2021 to consider and agree any recommendations on the draft 2022/23 Portfolio Plans and the existing savings plans. The Boards:

- considered any amendments to the draft Portfolio Plans and how priorities were reflected against the proposed key areas of budget spend for the coming year;
- assessed the potential impact of planned savings on services provided to East Sussex County Council customers; and
- agreed comments and recommendations to Cabinet.

2.4 Appendix 1 summarises the comments and recommendations made by the People Scrutiny Committee RPPR Board to Cabinet.

2.5 The committee is invited to:

- consider any areas arising from RPPR scrutiny discussions for inclusion in the committee's future work programme - careful selection of topics will enable the Committee to be well positioned to comment on the impact of service changes, future service delivery and budget proposals as part of the ongoing RPPR process; and
- review the committee's input to the RPPR process and consider any improvements to the process from a scrutiny perspective.

2.6 Some enhancements to the existing scrutiny RPPR arrangements have been identified in consultation with the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs. These are:

- A proposal that scrutiny committees consider relevant parts of the quarter 4 (end of year) monitoring report and the State of the County report annually at their July meetings to enhance scrutiny's consideration of performance achievements and challenges over the preceding year, alongside earlier engagement with the forward-looking demographic, policy and financial analysis in the State of the County report; and
- A proposal that each scrutiny committee holds an annual work planning awayday in early September, to enable further consideration of issues arising from State of the County for the services within the committee's remit and to ensure that key issues are incorporated into the committee's ongoing work programme.

2.7 Scrutiny committee meeting dates in the summer and autumn have also been adjusted to ensure scrutiny has the opportunity to discuss and comment on RPPR information provided to Cabinet in a timely way.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Committee is recommended to review its input into the RPPR process and incorporate any areas into its future work programme that are likely to inform the future RPPR process. The committee is also recommended to agree the proposed enhancements to scrutiny RPPR arrangements as outlined in paragraph 2.6 above.

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