

**Report to:** People Scrutiny Committee

**Date of meeting:** 27 September 2022

**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 comments and requests for further information.

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:**

**(1) consider the information in the attached RPPR Cabinet report of 29 September 2022 (appendix A), including the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and approach to one-off investments; and**

**(2) identify any further work or information needed to aid the Scrutiny Committee's contribution to the RPPR process for consideration at the November meeting, or as part of the Committee's ongoing work programme.**

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### **1. Background**

1.1 On 29 September Cabinet will consider a Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) update report. Following on from the State of the County report in June, the report sets out an updated picture of how the Council will need to refresh its service and financial plans to deal with the high level of financial uncertainty and the changing national policy agenda.

1.2 The report outlines that, since June, the instability in our planning context has persisted, with significant further national economic and political developments. A new Prime Minister took office on 6 September and, although the new Government's policy agenda and priorities are beginning to emerge, there remains uncertainty over whether, or how, national policy proposals brought forward by the previous administration will be progressed. The new Government takes over at a time when current and forecast economic conditions continue to shape a very challenging financial outlook both for the Council itself and many of the county's residents and businesses. The national economic conditions are impacting on our projected future financial position, alongside pre-existing pressures and uncertainties.

1.3 The report (attached at Appendix A) provides an update on the rapidly evolving context that will continue to inform planning for 2023/24, and includes:

- updates on key policy context developments since June;
- updates on the financial context and an updated Medium Term Financial Plan for 2023/24-2025/26;
- an update on the capital programme and next steps; and
- a proposed approach to the use of the one-off Services Grant of £5.175m received as part of the Finance Settlement for 2022/23, which was set aside for potential one-off investments, in light of the increasingly challenging financial outlook and taking account of feedback from Scrutiny Committees.

1.4 The report highlights that the RPPR process, which brings together our policy, business and financial planning and risk management, continues to provide the robust mechanism to help us

navigate this uncertain environment, supporting planning for 2023/24 and beyond and maintaining focus on our priority outcomes.

## **2. Overview of Scrutiny engagement in RPPR**

2.1 At their **July** meetings the People and Place Scrutiny Committees discussed relevant parts of the 2021/22 year end monitoring report and the State of the County 2022 report, both of which had been considered by Cabinet in June. These reports enabled the Committees to review current service and financial performance information, as well as considering new developments which will impact on services, to ensure a full understanding of the current context and future pressures for the areas within the remit of the Committee. Scrutiny work planning awaydays held in early September provided a further opportunity to consider issues raised and whether, or how, these should be reflected in the Committees' ongoing work programmes.

2.2 The **September** meetings provide an opportunity to consider further developments in the policy and financial context and how these will impact on planning for 2023/24 and beyond. The attached Cabinet report provides an update on the significant developments that have occurred since June, together with an updated Medium Term Financial Plan. Members are invited to:

- consider and comment on the developments in the planning context, particularly as they impact on services within the Committee's remit;
- review the updated MTFP (appendix 1 to the Cabinet report); and
- to consider whether any further information is required for the November meeting to inform scrutiny's ongoing input to the RPPR process.

2.3 The **November** Committee meetings provide an opportunity to consider or request any further information required by scrutiny to inform engagement with RPPR, and to further fine tune the scrutiny work programme to ensure the committee is in the best position to contribute to the ongoing RPPR process.

2.4 The committee's **RPPR Board** will meet on 16 December 2022 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 2023. The Chairs of the People and Place Scrutiny Committees are invited to attend the RPPR boards of both committees.

2.5 The **March 2023 Scrutiny Committees** will review the process and their input into the RPPR process and receive feedback on how scrutiny input has been reflected in final plans. Any issues arising can be reflected in the future committee work programme.

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

## **3. Conclusion and reason for recommendations**

3.1 As part of its ongoing input to the RPPR process, the Committee is recommended to consider the updated information provided by this report and identify any further information it requires to support further engagement in the planning process. The Committee is also recommended to consider any amendments to its work programme to aid its contribution to the ongoing RPPR process.

**BECKY SHAW**  
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