

Report to: People Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 17 March 2025

By: Chief Executive

Title: Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR)

Purpose: To review scrutiny's input to the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources process for the financial year 2025/26 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 to the RPPR process;**
- 2) 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 priorities 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 bring the insight they have gained through scrutiny work into the planning process and, secondly, to help influence 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 This time of the year provides a good opportunity for the Committee to take stock and reflect on its involvement in the RPPR process to date, and to consider any areas arising from the scrutiny discussions that took place.

2.2 By way of background, attached at Appendix 1 is a diagram setting out the RPPR cycle and below is a timeline of the Committee's involvement to date.

2.3 July 2024 - People Scrutiny Committee considered relevant parts of the quarter 4 2023/24 (end of year) monitoring report and the 2024 State of the County report. This enabled scrutiny to consider performance achievements and challenges over the preceding year, alongside the forward-looking demographic, policy and financial analysis in the State of the County report.

2.4 September 2024 - People Scrutiny Committee discussed a report to be considered by Cabinet on 26 September detailing the latest financial outlook and the Council's response to financial pressures, including a recommendation to begin public consultation on a range of specific potential savings. Members were asked to identify any additional information or scrutiny work required to support the Committee's ongoing contribution, for consideration at future meetings.

2.5 October 2024 - People Scrutiny Committee held a work planning awayday to consider current and forthcoming challenges for the services within the Committee's remit, including

departments' approaches to identifying savings and efficiencies, and to ensure that key issues were incorporated into the Committee's ongoing work programme.

2.6 November 2024 - People Scrutiny Committee discussed a report to be considered by Cabinet on 13 November detailing the latest assessment of the financial outlook, including the potential impact of announcements made at the national Budget and further savings proposals. The meeting provided a further opportunity to request any information required by scrutiny to inform its engagement with RPPR, for consideration at the RPPR Boards in December or as part of the wider work programme.

2.7 December 2024 - the RPPR Board that the Committee established to provide more detailed input into the RPPR planning process met to consider the draft 2025/26 Portfolio Plans and the latest financial position. The Board:

- considered the emerging financial outlook based on Government announcements during the autumn;
- 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;
- discussed savings proposals contained in the September and November reports to Cabinet within the committee's remit; and
- agreed comments and recommendations to Cabinet.

2.8 Appendix 2 summarises the comments and recommendations made by the People Scrutiny Committee RPPR Board to Cabinet.

2.9 February 2025 – a Pre-decision Scrutiny Board was established to consider specific RPPR savings proposals relating to adult social care and health ahead of Cabinet decisions.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Committee is invited to:

- consider any areas arising from RPPR scrutiny discussions which should be included 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.

3.2 Scrutiny's input to planning, through RPPR, for 2026/27 will begin at the July meeting with consideration of relevant parts of the quarter 4 2024/25 (end of year) monitoring report and the 2025 State of the County report.

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