

# **DRAFT REPORT OF THE BUDGET SCRUTINY PANEL – 2022/23 DRAFT BUDGET**

## **Foreword by Councillor Miah, Chair of the Panel**

It has been a tough year where staff and Councillors have worked well to keep the Council's finances resilient to ever increasing and changing demand.

### **1. Background**

Following a decision of the Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021, a Budget Scrutiny Panel has undertaken scrutiny of the Council's draft budget for 2022/23.

### **2. Panel Membership**

Councillors Miah (Chair), Hamilton, Parsons, Parton and Seaton.

### **3. Meetings and Matters Considered**

#### 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021

At this meeting, the Panel considered:

- The Period 4 Monitoring Report, covering General Fund and HRA to the end of July 2021, Period 4.
- The MTFS Tracker – Review of the MTFS Position. Tracking the data on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- The approach to budget setting for the financial year 2022/23.

#### 8th December 2021

At this meeting, the Panel considered:

- The Revenue Monitoring Position (General Fund and HRA) – Period 7. Setting out the revenue position for the General Fund and HRA at the end of period 7.
- The draft 2022/23 General Fund and HRA budgets. Showing the projected base budget position for 2022/23 including the savings and growth proposals put forward for the year and provide the basis for the budget consultation.
- The Draft Capital Plan 2022/23 to 2024, also considering possible sources of funding and to begin a period of consultation.
- Views on the Government financial settlement.
- Possible Budget Scrutiny Panel recommendations.

5th January 2022

At this meeting, the Panel were presented with further information on the Government financial settlement as well as an update on the approaches to the final budget development. The Panel also agreed its report.

The detail of the discussion at the above meetings is set out in the minutes of those meetings, attached as an **appendix** to this report.

#### **4. Officers and Cabinet Lead Members**

The Panel was assisted in its scrutiny of the Council's draft budget for 2022/23 by:

The Cabinet Lead Member for Finance and Property Services  
The Strategic Director; Environmental and Corporate Services  
The Head of Financial Services

#### **5. Recommendations**

At the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 the Panel will discuss and draw up recommendations in respect of future budgets and budget scrutiny. Any recommendations drawn up will also take into account the Government financial settlement issued on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

#### **6. Observations**

The detail of the discussion in the meetings is set out in the appendices.

The Panel wishes to make the following observations in respect of future budgets and budget scrutiny:

- (i) Key risk areas include the need to deliver on 2021/22 savings, including salary increases and inflation, pressures surrounding the final settlement figures, the impact of the environmental bill on garden waste collection and the need to monitor commercial rents.
- (ii) Whilst not having officers in their posts creates savings, it means that services are not being delivered.

#### **7. Background Papers**

No further papers to those already identified in/appended to this report.

#### **8. Appendices**

Minutes of the meetings of the Budget Scrutiny Panel held on 6<sup>th</sup> October and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021.