

REPORT TO: CHILDREN & FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 11th OCTOBER 2023

REPORT OF: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION

REPORT TITLE: RESPONDING TO OUR MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 Within this report and appendix we outline our strategic approach in responding to the review of the medium-term financial plan. This report should be read in conjunction with the MTFP update report (both parts A and B) presented to Cabinet meeting on the 19th September 2023¹
- 1.2 Whilst Stockport Council continues to develop opportunities for further enhancing the lives of our residents, we are also in a period of unprecedented uncertainty. Factors include the high levels of social care demand, the cost of living crisis, workforce shortages, the National pay offer, covid-19 recovery and high inflation. Furthermore there are global issues, such as the war in Ukraine which adds complexity.
- 1.3 Our collective focus is on actions which deliver outcomes to support and enhance our communities and businesses across Stockport. In this context it is even more important to have a resilient and robust budget.
- 1.4 This appendix to this report outlines the budget proposals being considered by the Cabinet to address financial and demand challenges, enable longer term transformation, and ensure the delivery of shared strategic partnership ambitions.

2 CHANGE PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The challenging financial circumstances outlined within the MTFP review (Part A) report require careful and bold decisions to ensure we can deliver a resilient budget. Within this scrutiny report we have included outline draft change proposals which will contribute towards a balanced budget position. The proposals appended to this report contribute to a suite of change proposals totalling £5.362m.
- 2.2 We welcome early comment and feedback from Scrutiny Committees on the outline draft proposals that are appended to this report. Ongoing work to develop these proposals is underway and will be informed by feedback from partners, scrutiny, residents, trade unions and colleagues as appropriate.

¹ MTFP update to September Cabinet

Part A – Medium Term Financial Plan update

<https://democracy.stockport.gov.uk/documents/s223686/202309PARTAMTFPUupdate.pdf>

Part B – Cabinet Response: Responding to Our Medium-Term Financial Plan

<https://democracy.stockport.gov.uk/documents/s223477/2023.09.06%20-%20Part%20B%20Report.pdf>

- 2.3 Although in early stages, some of these proposals will mean changes to the way we deliver services. As proposals are developed we will continue to consider the impact that any change would have on residents, services users and our workforce as well as how this may affect our partners or suppliers.

3 NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Cabinet are keen to seek views from Scrutiny on these plans. As we develop the detail around these proposals, there will be further opportunity to engage with committees in November scrutiny cycles.
- 3.2 Where proposals will mean a change in statutory services, we will be carrying out appropriate consultation and engagement activity. All feedback will be considered by Cabinet and updates brought back to Committee's in January 2024, ahead of Cabinet decision making in February.
- 3.3 The Committee is invited to comment on the report and the proposals presented within the report relevant to the remit of this committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

MTFP update – Cabinet Meeting, 19/09/23
Part.A - MTFP Review
Part.B - Cabinet Response

Anyone wishing to discuss the report should contact Gill Lawton,
gill.lawton@stockport.gov.uk
