

**Process for the annual budget meeting of
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee is asked to scrutinise the budget papers in accordance with previously agreed procedure and in the context of:
 - The open invitation to all councillors to the budget briefing for the Financial Planning Task Group on 22 January 2025.
 - Remarks from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance, Chief Executive, Corporate Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer and any input from other Cabinet Members;
 - The meeting of the Financial Planning Task Group.
 - The views of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Select Committees.
2. The Financial Planning Task Group will have gained whilst undertaking budget monitoring on the issues that have caused pressures, the underlying reasons and mitigating actions. They will have taken a view on the robustness of the responses including variations made and on the overall effectiveness of budget management. It is important that this knowledge from the current year and how these matters will be addressed for 2025-26 are included in today's debate.
3. Likewise, the Select Committees, through the reviews they have undertaken in terms of policy development and service variation during the year, will have been aware of the financial implications (and commitments given or efficiencies expected) of each. It is important that an opportunity is given to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Select Committees to comment on whether these commitments and efficiencies have been reflected in the budget proposals.
4. Having heard from those with a direct responsibility and interest, the Chairman will open out the debate to the Management Committee members to make enquiries of the Executive representatives based on the Budget papers and what has been said.
5. As in previous years, the Committee is asked to focus on the main strategic and policy issues and not those that sit at an operational officer level.
6. The Chairman will look to gain consensus to the key points made as the meeting moves through the debate. These key points will be listed in the

minutes and form a report to Cabinet on 4 February 2025 and Council on 25 February 2025.

7. An additional meeting of the Committee to scrutinise any opposition group budgets or other proposed amendments has also been arranged for 13 February 2025.

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