

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 16 JANUARY 2025

Present:

Councillor Frank Adlington-Stringer
Councillor Nigel Barker
Councillor Richard Beech
Councillor Lilian Deighton
Councillor Clive Fletcher
Councillor William Jones
Councillor Carol Lacey
Councillor Fran Petersen
Councillor Mick Smith
Councillor Pam Windley

Councillor Neil Baker
Councillor Graham Baxter MBE
Councillor Stephen Clough
Councillor Michael Durrant
Councillor Pam Jones
Councillor Pat Kerry
Councillor Tony Lacey
Councillor Derrick Skinner
Councillor Richard Spooner

Councillors in Attendance Virtually:
Councillor Suzy Cornwell

Also Present:

J Dethick	Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer)
J Wells	Corporate Finance Manager / Deputy S151 Officer
A Bryan	Governance Manager
J Hayden	Senior Scrutiny Officer
P Kerry	Trainee Accountant
T Scott	Governance and Scrutiny Officer

JSC Appointment of Chair

1/24-

25 Councillor M Smith was appointed Chair for the meeting.

Councillor M Smith in the Chair

JSC Apologies for Absence

2/24-

25 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors K Clegg, A Dale, M Emmens, M Foster, C Gare, L Hartshorne, S Reed, C Renwick, R Shipman, Caroline Smith, Christine Smith, and K Tait.

JSC Declarations of Interest

3/24-

25 None.

JSC Consideration of the Draft Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

4/24-

25 The report to the Joint Scrutiny Committee had an appendix which was the report for the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2024/25 to 2028/29 prior to it being

submitted to Cabinet and Council on 23 and 27 January respectively.

The Director of Finance and Resources delivered a presentation which summarised how the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2024 – 2029 had been progressing. This included details about:

- General Fund
- Reasons for Uncertainty
- National Settlement 2025/26
- Funding Reforms & Other National Reforms
- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
- Reserves
- Social Housing Regulation Act 2023
- Forecast
- Housing Revenue Account
- Capital Investment Programme

Members discussed the proposed Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and its impact on the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2024 – 2029. Councillor Nigel Barker explained that the topic of Local Government Reorganisation would be on the 27 January 2025 Council agenda, so Members would have an opportunity to discuss it in more detail at that meeting.

Members also discussed the issue of reserves as a possibility in budget setting. The Director of Finance and Resources advised that the majority of the Council's reserves were ring-fenced, so there would be a limit on using them.

Members turned to the subject of Council Tax, and enquired if provisions were made for those claiming benefits. The Director of Finance and Resources explained that Council Tax was set at a lower level for those claiming benefits.

RESOLVED – That the Joint Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

JSC 5/24- 25	<u>Additional Urgent Items</u> None.
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