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## 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     Additional Urgent Items**

**5/24-  
25**

None.