

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

1 NOVEMBER 2016

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

BUDGET MONITORING 2016-17 Q1 - RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CORPORATE RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 To present Cabinet with the recommendations of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee resulting from their deliberations and monitoring of the Budget 2016-17, Quarter 1.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The improvement priorities identified in the Corporate Plan 2016-2020 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Plan adopted by Council on 10 March 2016 formally set out the improvement priorities that the Council will seek to implement between 2016 and 2020. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 At its meeting on 21 September 2016, the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a Budget Monitoring report based on the Budget for 2016-17, Quarter 1.
- 3.2 Within this report were details of the Budget reduction proposals not achieved for 2015-16 which indicated an ongoing shortfall of £1.172 million. The Committee expressed concerns over these shortfalls, in particular those relating to charging Blue Badge Holders for parking and the review of staff car parking charges.
- 3.3 The Committee commented on the fact that the former was part of the budget public consultation for 2015-16 and was responded to positively, and changes to car parks across the county borough have now been made to enable suitable access to pay and display machines for blue badge holders. The Committee therefore questioned why this had not been progressed.
- 3.4 In relation to staff car parking, the Committee have commented on this at numerous meetings, stating the following at their meeting on 22 September 2015:

Members expressed concern over the Red Status for the Budget Reduction COM8 in relation to the Review of car parking charges for staff, given the fact that the Committee raised this in their meeting in June 2015 and had requested that this be dealt with as soon as possible to resolve the current situation. The Committee reiterated this request and asked for an update on this proposal.

3.5 At their most recent meeting, in September this year, the Corporate Director – Communities advised the Committee that there would be a full car-parking charging review undertaken in the next financial year, however Members expressed strong concerns over the continuing delays and lack of action.

3.6 Also discussed at this meeting were the financial pressures relating to waste disposal and the savings that are unable to be achieved in relation to the MREC. The Committee expressed its opinion that as these spends are a result of outside forces and factors out of the Directorate's control, the Directorate should not be expected to make up the shortfall from within their area. This budget pressure should be shared equally across the Council and dealt with Corporately.

4. Current situation / proposal.

4.1 Following discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members at their meeting held on 21 September 2016, the Committee determined to make the following recommendations in relation to the Authority's Budget:

1. The Committee expressed concern over the ongoing budget reductions not achieved from 2015-16, specifically those in relation to the implementation of charging Blue Badge Holders for parking as well as the review of staff car parking charges. The Committee recommend that a decision be made as to whether these proposals are going to be progressed or not and if so that they be actioned within the current financial year.
2. The Committee recommends that if budget pressures are outside of the control of the individual Directorate, consideration be given, on a case by case basis, as to whether the budget should be dealt with Corporately across the Authority in order to share the burden. Whilst appreciating that all Directorates are experiencing budget pressures, the Committee consider that the services within the Communities Directorate are being disproportionately affected by the difficulties in the savings being achieved in relation to MREC. The Committee therefore recommends that as these pressures are outside of the Directorates control, the budget for MREC be dealt with Corporately.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules.

5.1 The work of the Corporate Resources and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend. This item specifically relates to the role of Overview & Scrutiny Committee in monitoring the Authority's Budget throughout the year.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no Equality Impact Assessment that have been carried out in relation to this report, however, any potential changes made to the Authority's transport or Waste policies would require an EIA.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 Should any decision be made in relation to the Authority's Blue Badge Scheme, staff car-parking, or Waste as a result of this report and its recommendations, there would be a resulting financial impact on the Budget, its reductions and the MTFs.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- a) consider the recommendations of the Corporate Resources and Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Authority's budget;
- b) Respond to the recommendations by the next Cabinet meeting as agreed in the Scrutiny recommendations protocol.

Andrew Jolley

Corporate Director – Operational Partnership Services

26/10/2016

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins
Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

Telephone: (01656) 643613

E-mail: Scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Democratic Services,
Civic Offices
Angel Street
Bridgend.
CF31 4WB

Background documents

None