

**STEP 1 - Scrutiny to seek nominations of up to 24 Members (politically balanced as far as possible) to sit on the Scrutiny Budget Working Group – Early July 2025**

**STEP 2 - STEERING GROUP MEET – JULY 2025**

Comprising: Group Leaders, Scrutiny Chairs, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, Cabinet Member(s) for Resources and Chief Executive and Chief Officer- Finance, Housing and Change

Role: To propose areas of focus for Scrutiny Budget Working Group and Deep Dive Groups to consider the previous year’s recommendations and 2025-26 MTFS indicative proposals, the main priorities going forward, areas of concern and areas of focus where can Scrutiny add value

**STEP 3 - SCRUTINY BUDGET WORKING GROUP MEET – EARLY SEPTEMBER 2025**

Comprising: Total up to 24 Members and Chaired by Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Invitees: Chief Executive, Chief Officer- Finance, Housing and Change, Head of Finance, Cabinet Member Finance and Performance

Role/Purpose: Discuss areas of focus following outcome from Steering Group and allocate up to 6 SBWG Members to each of the Deep Dive Groups based on their knowledge, expertise or preference expressed to contribute to a specific deep dive.

(Members will need to ensure they are able to commit to attending the Deep Dive Groups on the identified dates)

**STEP 4– DEEP DIVE GROUPS MEET ONCE EACH FROM MID SEPTEMBER TO MID OCTOBER 2025**

<p><b>Chief Executive</b> <u>Chaired by Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u></p>	<p><b>Education and Youth Services</b> <u>Chaired by Chair of Education and Youth Service Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u></p>	<p><b>Social Services and Wellbeing</b> <u>Chaired by Chair of Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u></p>	<p><b>Communities</b> <u>Chaired by Chair of Communities, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee</u></p>
<p><u>Comprising:</u> up to 6 SBWG Members to be agreed by SWBG. Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, Cabinet Member(s) for Resources, Chief Executive, Chief Officer- Finance, Housing and Change, Chief Officer, Legal and Regulatory Services, HR and Corporate Policy, Head of Finance, Finance Manager - Chief Executive’s Directorate and any other relevant Officers</p> <p><u>Role:</u> To undertake a deep dive into areas of focus in the Chief Executive’s Directorate as directed by the SBWG.</p>	<p><u>Comprising:</u> 6 SBWG Members to be agreed by SBWG, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, Cabinet Member(s) for Resources, Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Services, Corporate Director for Education, Early Years and Young People, Chief Officer- Finance, Housing and Change, Head of Finance, Finance Manager - Communities, Education and Family Support, and any other relevant Officers</p> <p><u>Role:</u> To undertake a deep dive into areas of focus in the Education and Youth Services Directorate as directed by the SBWG.</p>	<p><u>Comprising:</u> 6 SBWG Members to be agreed by SBWG, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, Cabinet Member(s) for Resources, Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health and Wellbeing, Corporate Director for Social Services and Wellbeing, Chief Officer- Finance, Housing and Change, Head of Finance, Finance Manager – Social Services and Wellbeing, and any other relevant Officers</p> <p><u>Role:</u> To undertake a deep dive into areas of focus in the Social Services and Wellbeing Directorate as directed by the SBWG</p>	<p><u>Comprising:</u> 6 SBWG Members to be agreed by SBWG, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, Cabinet Member(s) for Resources, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Environment, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Development and Housing, Corporate Director for Communities, Chief Officer- Finance, Housing and Change, Head of Finance, Finance Manager – Communities, Education and Family Support and any other relevant Officers</p> <p><u>Role:</u> To undertake a deep dive into areas of focus in the Communities Directorate as directed by the SBWG</p>

Scrutiny will support the meetings and draft outline actions arising, however it will be for the Chair of each Deep Dive Group to present the key findings from their Group and Members of each Group to discuss their merits at the SBWG for the agreement of any resulting overall Recommendations

**STEP 5 - SCRUTINY BUDGET WORKING GROUP – MID TO END OCTOBER 2025**

Comprising: up to 6 Members from each of the Deep Dive Groups – total up to 24 Members and Chaired by Chair of COSC

Role/Purpose: Chairs of the Deep Dive Groups present the Key Findings from their Group. SBWG to discuss findings and reach an agreement on overall conclusions and recommendations from the Working Group.

**STEP 6 – STEERING GROUP – NOVEMBER 2025**

Comprising: Group Leaders, Scrutiny Chairs, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance, Cabinet Member(s) for Resources and Chief Executive and Chief Officer- Finance, Housing and Change

Purpose: To present the Recommendations from the Scrutiny Budget Working Group to feed into the development of the draft budget proposals and MTFS.

**STEP 7 – CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 11 DECEMBER 2025**

Purpose: To receive the Conclusions and Recommendations from the Working Group for endorsing and official onward reporting to Cabinet (as Scrutiny Committee with overall responsibility for budget scrutiny)

**STEP 8 - CABINET – 16 DECEMBER 2025**

Purpose: To formally receive the Conclusions and Recommendations from COSC to be considered by Cabinet/CMB in advance of final budget proposals published after the RSG is finalised and formal response to be provided by Cabinet on 17 Feb 2026

**STEP 9 - CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 15 and 27 January 2026**

COSC consider draft MTFS and budget proposals in the public domain and make any conclusions/recommendations.

**STEP 10 - CABINET – 3 FEBRUARY 2026**

To formally present the Conclusions and Recommendations from COSC on the draft MTFS and Budget proposals to Cabinet.

**STEP 11 - CABINET – 17 FEBRUARY 2026**

Cabinet considers final recommendations and agree final budget/MTFS and provides formal response to Recommendations.

**STEP 12 - COUNCIL - 25 FEBRUARY 2026**

Council considers budget and votes on it.