

Cabinet

Briefing Note: Draft Revenue Budget 2025/26 and Draft Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2028/29 – Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Comments and Recommendations

Purpose of the briefing note: To inform Cabinet of the discussions and recommendations agreed by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Draft Revenue Budget 2025/26 and Draft Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2028-29.

- 1.1 This report was considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 14th January 2025. The following comments and questions were raised:
 - 1.1.1 Members questioned the impact of proposed local government reform.
 - a. The Council would need to continue to achieve savings target until any local government reform changes are made, and the programme of assets disposal and divestments would also need to continue.
 - 1.1.2 Members questioned the council tax increase to 4.99% and if this had been benchmarked against other comparative local authorities.
 - a. Benchmarking had been completed and the council tax charge for a Band D property remained lower than other comparative councils.
 - 1.1.3 Members questioned if the government's National Insurance increase had been considered as part of the budget.
 - a. Thurrock will receive compensation from the government for payroll National Insurance contributions, but it was unclear whether this would include supplier National Insurance contributions, and this had been included in the budget.
 - 1.1.4 Members highlighted the high levels of council tax collection rates as an area of achievement for the Council.
- 1.2 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the recommendations:
 1. Members noted and commented on the Draft Revenue Budget 2025/26 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26-2028-29, before submission to Cabinet on 12th February 2025.
 2. No additional recommendations were made by the Committee.

For any questions regarding this briefing note, please contact:

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