

**Response from the meeting of Cabinet on the O&S Committee’s Comments –
6 February 2025**

Item 5 - General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget 2025/26

Scrutiny Comment:

The Budget Review Group thanked officers for their hard work in putting together the report.

The Group noted the importance of the change programme and savings expected to be delivered through this. Members requested Cabinet look into the potential of a cyber-attack and the risk profile of this. They expressed concerns around inflation and explored confidence in reserves.

The Group asked that the HRA business plan be brought forward alongside the base budget in future for Councillors to understand the budget within the context of this.

Cabinet Response: The Portfolio Holder for Resources thanked the Budget Review Group and advised that the concerns around inflation would be picked up in the context of the HRA Business Plan. He was agreeable to the suggestion of bringing forward the HRA business plan alongside the base budget in the future, and he would discuss this with the Head of Finance. He hoped to bring an update at the Committee’s next meeting on 18 March.

Item 6 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2025/26 (including Rent Setting)

Scrutiny Comment:

The Budget Review Group thanked officers for their hard work in putting together the report.

Members explored the decision to borrow monies externally to prevent the depletion of Council reserves and expressed the implications of this decision should be understood. The Group noted that this would be covered within the Treasury Management Strategy that will be brought to Cabinet at a later date but requested in future reports be brought together where possible in order for Members to see the bigger picture.

Cabinet Response: The Cabinet report was approved.

Item 8 - Q2 Budget Monitoring and updated MTFS

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report and advise Cabinet that the MRF is a confidential agenda item at O&S Committee on 18 February 2025.

The Committee thanked officers for their work to make the report more digestible and asked officers:

- to look at recovering the leisure centre consultancy costs from the developer; and
- to provide clarity in relation to the increased mowing costs (whether this was from No Mow May, or not).

Cabinet Response: Officers to follow up.

Item 9 - 2025-2026 Service Area Plans

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report and requested officers to provide information as to how the Performance Management Framework will be better communicated to residents and visible to the public. The Committee requests Cabinet to consider ways to measure how the Council's services are valued by residents in line with the Council's Corporate Strategy priorities.

Cabinet Response: The recommendations in the report were approved.

Item 13 - Update of Destination Management Organisation arrangements to include Shakespeare's England and emerging Local Visitor Economy Partnership

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report and will invite Shakespeare's England to Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 8 July 2025, for a performance review of the last two years, to establish the value being delivered to our residents and businesses.

Cabinet Response: No response needed. The recommendations in the report were approved.