



Assets and Budget Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2011/12

This leaflet sets out the work programme for the Assets and Budget Scrutiny Committee for 2011/12.

We are responsible for scrutinising whether the Council is allocating and using its resources effectively to achieve the priorities set out in the Strategic Plan. Specifically this involves:

- scrutiny of the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Annual Budget and Council Tax setting process;
- scrutiny of the Council's support services including Finance, ICT, Human Resources, Legal and Member Services;
- scrutiny of how the County Council manages its property and assets, including Treasury Management; and
- scrutiny of the Council's approach to trading services.

We review our work programme from time to time. Sometimes we change it - if something important comes up during the year that we think we should investigate as a priority. Our work results in recommendations for the County Council and other organisations about how what they do can be improved, for the benefit of the people and communities of Staffordshire.

County Councillor Phillip E Jones

Chairman of the Assets and Budget Scrutiny Committee

If you would like to know more about our work programme, please get in touch with Tina Randall, Scrutiny and Support Manager, 01785 276148 or tina.randall@staffordshire.gov.uk

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Details and Method	Action/Outcome
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Annual Budget and Council Tax	29 July 2011 (proposals and initial project plan)	To scrutinise the MTFS and Annual Budget and Council Tax setting process and make reports to Cabinet prior to their final submission of the MTFS to full Council.	The Committee agreed to the proposed process, and began to identify specific issues for scrutiny.
	September 2011 additional meeting (determining interviews and questions)		
	October – December 2011 (evidence gathering)		
	December 2011 (consideration of Innovation & Efficiency options)		
	27 January 2012 (final report)		
Asset Mapping and Management	29 July 2011 (scoping report)	For the Committee to consider the County Council's approach to asset management, and in particular to contribute to the asset mapping process taking place to enable the County Council and public sector partners to develop a pan-Staffordshire Public Estate Asset Management Plan.	In July the Committee asked a number of questions regarding the rationale for the exercise, expected outcomes; and funding. They requested that the Cabinet Member provide an update to their next meeting with this information.

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Details and Method	Action/Outcome
			They plan to determine the approach to any future scrutiny in September.
	Update Report 2 nd September 2011		
Land Acquisition – Newcastle-under-Lyme	2 nd September 2011	To consider the decision and in particular review the business case and re-assess the risk profile which supported the decisions. The Committee may make recommendations to Cabinet regarding the process by which such decisions are made in the future.	
Zero Based Budgeting – Grounds Maintenance	August - October 2011 Exercise to take place 12 th September 2011 Report to Committee – 20 October 2011	The Chairman and one other Member of the Committee to spend half a day with accountants from the Place Directorate to scrutinise the costs of the Grounds Maintenance service and to work with officers to undertake a zero-based budgeting exercise. The outcomes of this small working group to be reported back to the full Committee for comment/discussion in September/October 2011.	

Item	Date of meeting when the item is due to be considered	Details and Method	Action/Outcome
Treasury Management, Annual Investment and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategies 2011/12	January 2012	To consider the County Council's Treasury Management Strategy, in line with new code of practice, prior to its publication in 2011.	
Financial Implications of Changes to Schools Governance Arrangements	TBC – October 2011 or part of MTFS Scrutiny	Members resolved at their meeting on 17 June 2011 to undertake a piece of work looking at the financial risks to the Council of changes to schools governance arrangements.	
Support Services	TBC	<p>The Committee is responsible for ensuring that the County Council's support services are delivered in a cost effective way which enables the County Council to achieve its priorities.</p> <p>The Chair proposes reconsidering this item when the work on zero based budgeting has been completed.</p>	

<p>Membership</p> <p>County Councillors Phillip E Jones (Chairman) Brian Beale John Bernard Frank Chapman Derek Davis OBE Frank Lewis MBE Mary Maxfield Rex Roberts, OBE (Vice-Chairman) Alan White</p>	<p>Calendar of Committee Meetings (at 10am unless otherwise stated)</p> <p>17 June 2011 29 July 2011 2 September 2011 20 October 2011 9 December 2011 27 January 2012 9 March 2012 (2 pm) 20 April 2012</p> <p>Meetings usually take place in County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford.</p>
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