

Comments from Select Committees on Cabinet's 2022/23 budget proposals

As part of the Constitution (Budget and Policy Framework Procedure), Select Committees have a statutory role to review the Cabinet's draft budget proposals, which were set out at Cabinet on 16 December 2021 and then to submit their comments to the Cabinet for consideration before the final budget is recommended to full Council.

At Select Committee meetings in January 2022 consideration was given to reports which provided details of the draft budget proposals relating to the remit of each committee. Each committee agree a set of comments and on 2 February 2022, the Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee met and reviewed these, in order to submit a combined set of comments to Cabinet as set out below:

Select Committee	Comments
<p>Families, Health & Wellbeing Select Committee</p> <p>5 January 2022</p>	<p>The Committee recognised the uncertainties associated with the final outcome of discussions with the DfE over the Safety Valve Agreement, in relation to the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit.</p> <p>It was noted that the Committee would regularly monitor this matter through its scrutiny responsibilities, and should there be no agreement, the Committee would wish to address the broader implications of this for the Dedicated Schools Budget and in respect of the Council's current budgetary position.</p> <p>However, the Committee welcomed budget proposals to increase investment into services to reflect market and demand led pressures, as well as the emphasis on service transformation with preventative measures across both portfolios to help address demand and improve outcomes for residents. The capital proposals for investment in school places, including SEND were also welcomed.</p>
<p>Public Safety & Transport Select Committee</p> <p>18 January 2022</p>	<p>The Public Safety and Transport Select Committee welcomed the well-constructed and sound budget proposals for the services under the Select Committee's remit. It was noted that the budget addressed the uncertainty posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the medium-term financial forecast demonstrated a sustainable road ahead.</p> <p>Proposals were particularly welcomed for investment in Street Lighting Works, Highways Structural Works and the maintenance of the CCTV Programme.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the reduced budget in a number of works programmes from 2021/22 to 2022/23 was primarily attributed to a significantly heightened spend in 2021/22 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Many Council services had been subject to restrictions throughout the 2020/21 financial year and a catch up spend was required in 2021/22.</p> <p>The Committee accepted that reviewed fees and charges would</p>

	<p>deliver efficiency savings and wished to highlight that they remained significantly more favourable than other neighbouring boroughs. Finally, the Committee also wished to acknowledge that the final Transport for London settlement was currently unknown and may require an in-year budget amendment.</p>
<p>Environment, Housing & Regeneration Select Committee</p> <p>20 January 2022</p>	<p>The Committee noted that it was gratifying to see that, despite the financial pressures faced by the Council as a result of rising inflation, increasing demand for services, and the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council was able to maintain adequate funds for projects and services for residents, including a programme of activity around homelessness prevention, investment in the Chrysalis programme, renewal of estates and playgrounds, and the delivery of more than 100 new homes per annum to support increasing demand for social housing within the Borough.</p>
<p>Corporate, Finance & Property Select Committee</p> <p>12 January 2022 and 2 February 2022</p>	<p>In accordance with a corporate change in approach, it was noted that Members had received an abridged version of the budget proposal report compared to that presented to the Committee in previous years. A request for a more detailed report was noted by the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee noted and welcomed the overall budget from officers and recognised their ongoing work in delivering a balanced budget following the continued inflationary and demand-led pressures from the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>In regard to the areas within the Corporate, Finance and Property Select Committee's remit, it was noted that savings would be achieved through streamlining of transactional financial processes and automation of business processes. Not only would these deliver savings, but also technological enhancements that would improve efficiencies in services.</p> <p>The Committee also noted the significant capital investment planned to deliver facilities across the north and south of the Borough for Hillingdon residents, together with major steps to reduce the Council's carbon footprint.</p>

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Minutes of the budget discussions at the above Select Committees:

- [Families, Health & Wellbeing Select Committee - 5 January 2022](#)
- [Corporate, Finance & Property Select Committee - 12 January 2022](#)
- [Public Safety & Transport Select Committee - 18 January 2022](#)
- [Environment, Housing & Regeneration Select Committee - 20 January 2022](#)