

Audit Committee

5 April 2017

Finance Scrutiny Panel

Purpose of Report: Progress report

The Panel continued to monitor emerging budget proposals culminating in a report that was considered by Cabinet on 7 February 2017. The minute of that meeting is copied below for information:

Before the Cabinet considered the agenda item the Chair of the Finance Scrutiny Panel presented the Panel's report on the budget proposals for 2017/18. He reported the Panel's concerns over the substantial draw on reserves and that some services seemed to be moving from cash limited to demand led budgets. The Panel wanted to see the base budget review in Adult Services to be rolled out to all directorates. The Panel was also concerned that levels of Council Tax did not reflect average income in the county and that council tax base in Powys was one of the highest in Wales meaning it made a significant contribution to the overall funding.

The Cabinet noted the Panel's comments, but did not accept their conclusion that untested proposals should not be put forward for consultation arguing that it was important to take account of representations made. The Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance thanked the Finance Scrutiny Panel for their work.

RESOLVED that the report of the Finance Scrutiny Panel be noted.

A joint working group comprising members of both the Audit Committee and Adult Social Care Working Group of the People Scrutiny Committee, have been looking into the reasons behind the overspend in Adult Social Care. Some of this work was undertaken by the Panel. Going forward, it has been agreed to co-opt two Members of the Adult Social Care scrutiny working group to the Panel when considering the Recovery Plan and associated Action Plan to ensure consistency going forward and to ensure the knowledge gained to date informs ongoing scrutiny. An initial report has been produced and presented to Cabinet on 28 February. However there is an ongoing debate around the veracity of some of the statistical data. A formal response is due to be considered by Cabinet on 11 April 2017. One more meeting of the Panel will be arranged before the end of this Council to monitor the Action Plan.

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Group Membership: County Councillors J G Morris (Lead Member), K Curry, A W Davies, D E Davies, S C Davies, J Gibson-Watt, D R Jones, M J Jones, M McKenzie, K Roberts-Jones, D A Thomas and Mr J Brautigam