



Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 18 January 2022

Pre-decision Scrutiny: Covid Recovery and Investment

Role of the Committee

Purpose	This report provides guidance on pre-decision scrutiny ahead of consideration of the Cabinet report on: a) Covid Recovery and Investment.
Content	This covering report explains the role of the Committee in undertaking pre-decision scrutiny. The actual Cabinet report, which is to be considered by Cabinet on 20 January, is appended.
Councillors are being asked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• note the pre-decision scrutiny process and role of the Committee• consider the Cabinet report and proposals• agree any views on the proposed decision(s) that are to be raised with Cabinet
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee will carry out pre-decision scrutiny or delegate to relevant Scrutiny Panels, in respect of proposed cabinet reports as requested.
- 1.2 A report concerning 'Covid Recovery and Investment' is scheduled for decision by Cabinet on 20 January. This report is described in the Council's Forward Plan as updating Cabinet of the Covid Recovery to date, highlighting future investment that may be required. The report sets out the background and current position

on recovering from COVID-19, highlighting challenges, risks and issues on individual projects.

1.3 The Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy, Strategy & Finance (Leader) on this matter is **attached** for pre-decision scrutiny.

2. Role of the Committee

2.1 The purpose of pre-decision scrutiny:

- It entitles scrutiny to discuss proposed Cabinet reports, where a clear recommendation(s) exists, before decisions are taken by the Executive.
- Acting as a 'critical friend', it enables scrutiny to ask questions about a report to develop understanding and inform and influence decision-making, for example asking about:
 - the rationale for the report
 - robustness of the proposed decision and decision-making process
 - potential impact and implications (including financial, social, economic and environmental impact) and risks
 - how different options have been considered
 - the extent of consultation undertaken
 - implementation and measures of success etc.
- It enables scrutiny to provide a perspective and report its views and any issues to Cabinet. The chair, on behalf of the Committee, can attend the Cabinet meeting to share the views of scrutiny on the report prior to Cabinet decision. This may include giving support, providing other suggestions on the way forward, or flagging up any concerns.
- The views of scrutiny are required to be formally considered by Cabinet before it makes the decision and feedback should be given including explanation for any rejection of views expressed.

2.2 Lead Cabinet Member(s) will attend the meeting to present the report and respond to questions, along with relevant officer(s) involved in the development of the report who can assist the Committee and provide appropriate advice.

2.3 The Committee (through the chair) will write to the Cabinet Member(s) with its views following pre-decision scrutiny. The Chair will have the opportunity to attend the Cabinet meeting on 20 January to verbally feedback the Committee's views, conclusions and recommendations about the report, based on the contents of letter.

3. Cabinet Response

- 3.1 Cabinet must formally consider scrutiny views at its meeting. It may decide that any issues raised by scrutiny can be dealt with at the meeting and decision taken. It may decide that more time is needed to consider the views of scrutiny and defer decision to the next (or a special) meeting of Cabinet.
- 3.2 The relevant Cabinet Member is expected to write back to the Committee with feedback from Cabinet and should include explanation of any rejection of scrutiny views.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution "pre-decision scrutiny gives scrutiny the opportunity to influence Cabinet decision making as a critical friend". "The views of the scrutiny committee are formally presented (either in a written report or verbally by the scrutiny Chair) to the Cabinet meeting for the Cabinet to consider and inform its decision making".

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report. Financial implications of the actual cabinet report(s) are contained within those reports.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Cabinet Report – Covid Recovery and Investment