

Cabinet – 19th December 2018 – Public Questions

Nigel Behan

1) Relates to Revenue Budget Monitoring Update:

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/documents/s9160/Cabinet%20and%20Key%20Decision%20template%20May%202016.pdf>

In 2.7 it is stated that:

“2.7. Potential Future Issues

Although not reflected in the outturn projections at this stage, there are a few areas where issues may arise before the end of the financial year that may influence the end of year forecasts. Management will up-date on these areas at the quarter 3 budget monitoring position. These include: • the council’s strategy for managing the costs of borrowing (minimum revenue provision – MRP). Proposals currently being reviewed with the external auditor; • The adequacy of the Council’s insurance reserve. Potential liabilities currently being reviewed; • The Council’s earmarked reserves, with a view to seeking opportunities to replenish these were appropriate in order to aid the Council’s overall financial resilience.”

Does “replenish” mean eliminate the earmarked negative reserves as a major priority?

Q2&3 Relate to the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019- 2022 (and the Provisional local government finance settlement 2019 to 2020)

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/documents/s9180/Medium%20Term%20Financial%20Strategy%20-%20Report%20v2.pdf>

Public Finance (CIPFA) reported (about the settlement) that:

“A further 15 councils, mainly counties, will take part in the 75% business rates retention pilots. These included troubled [Northamptonshire County Council](#).”

2. When will the MTFP (draft) budget be adjusted given that Somerset is also a pilot County?

The government statement also so stated:

“There will also be no change to the Council Tax Referendum limits set for local authorities in 2018-19, aside from further flexibility offered on the police precept level.

Authorities will have the flexibility to increase their core Council Tax requirement by up to 3% and can draw, as needed, on the Adult Social Care precept to meet demand for services. But local residents will continue to be protected and be able to approve or veto any excessive rises in a referendum.”

3. What is SCC'S view on the meaning of "excessive" and what would the Council Tax rise have to be for the projected (MTFP) shortfall for 2019/20 to be met?

4) Relates to Revenue Budget Monitoring Update:

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/documents/s9160/Cabinet%20and%20Key%20Decision%20template%20May%202016.pdf>

In section 2.1 it is stated:

"Children & Learning Central Commissioning: (-) £0.706m movement (-) £0.207m

The projected underspend against Getset has increased by £0.149m, mainly due to staff leaving the service earlier than anticipated."

What is the total projected underspend for Getset in the above figures and how will the increase noted above modify/amend the business case and consequent proposals put forward in the current public consultation and staff consultation respectively?

Kerry Tonkin

As the Headteacher of Bishop Fox's School in Taunton I am very grateful for the opportunity to address the Cabinet. I can confirm, on behalf of the Trust, of our full support for the expansion of our School.

The Trust recognises the need to respond to the increase in secondary pupils forecast from 2020 onwards and is pleased to be working with the Local Authority to provide secondary school places for the young people of Taunton.