
To: Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board

Date: 14 January 2026

Subject: Pre Budget Consultation Report 2026/27

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 This item outlines the purpose of the Pre-Budget Consultation Report for 2026/27 and invites members to share their views on potential investment themes to shape policy decisions. For the first time in about 15 years, the Council anticipates being able to meet its legal duty of setting a balanced budget for 2026/27 without requiring significant service reductions, thanks to expected improvements from the Government's Fair Funding reform.
- 1.2 The Pre-Budget Report outlines potential themes for investment based on public engagement and council performance data. These include:
 - Keeping people safe – tackling crime, improving cleanliness and city centre improvements
 - Anti-social behaviour – including fly tipping
 - Local environments – particularly in deprived neighbourhoods
 - Protecting vulnerable people – tackling child poverty
 - Good jobs, investment and prosperity – addressing youth unemployment and education achievement
 - Helping people to manage – support with bills and energy costs
 - Roads and pavements – improving condition and safety
- 1.3 The Board will focus on reviewing the proposed themes, consider their alignment with strategic priorities, and respond as necessary to support informed decisions ahead of the final budget approval in February 2026.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board are recommended to:
 - a) Note the contents of the Pre Budget Consultation Report (Appendix 1) which was approved by Cabinet on 16 December 2025, as a basis for consultation.
 - b) To agree as a Board, any feedback it wishes to provide as part of the formal pre budget consultation which ends on 28 January 2026.

3 Information and Background

- 3.1 The Pre budget report is approved by Cabinet in December each year and commences a public consultation process regarding the options set out for consideration.
- 3.2 Recent custom has seen the report setting out a series of cost reduction options on which stakeholder views are sought.
- 3.3 The Government have recently consulted on a set of proposals that will see the level of funding change reflecting updated data and formulae. It is expected that Coventry will benefit from the updated system, however the impact of the changes were not announced until after the pre-budget report was approved.
- 3.4 Provisional indications continue to be such that no cost reduction options are required in order to set a balanced 2025/26 budget. Views on the themes set out for potential investment are therefore sought to inform member policy choice in the lead up to the final budget approvals in February 2026 as seen in paragraph 2.5 of the attached pre budget (consultation) report (Appendix 1).

4 Health Inequalities Impact

- 4.1 No direct impact as a result of the report contents.

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