



REPORT TITLE: Draft 2024/25 Budget for Consultation

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dates between which decision will be taken | Earliest date: 6 December 2023 Latest date: 7 December 2023 |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr Lynden Stowe, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Change |
| Key Decision | No |
| Purpose of Report | To obtain approval for the Council's draft revenue and capital budget 2024/2025 to be the basis for scrutiny and consultation with residents, staff, businesses, partners, trade unions and schools in line with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules. |
| Recommendations | That the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Change: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approves for consultation and scrutiny the Budget Consultation document – including the detailed revenue, capital and Dedicated School Grant budgets for 2024/25 (Annex A).2. Approves for consultation and scrutiny the Consultation questionnaire (Annex B).3. Agrees that a public consultation be undertaken on the Council's draft budget 2024/25 for a 5-week period between 7th December 2023 and 11th January 2024. |
| Reasons for Recommendations | To ensure that Councillors, members of the public and other interested groups can express their views on the Council's draft revenue and capital budget 2024/25. |
| Resource Implications | The Council is required to set a balanced budget for 2024/25, and a Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Resource Implications are set out in detail in Annex A. |
| Background Documents | County Council (16/02/2023): Policy and Budget Framework – Medium Term Financial Strategy Cabinet (25/01/2023): Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2023/24 to 2026/27 Council Strategy 2022-2026: Building Back Better in Gloucestershire |
| Statutory Authority | Local Government Finance Act 1992 |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Divisional Councillor(s) | Countywide |
| Officer | Any representations should be sent to: Name: Jayne Fuller, Corporate Finance Manager Email: Jayne.Fuller@gloucestershire.gov.uk By 5pm on: Wednesday 6th December |
| Timeline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7 December 2023: Public consultation commences ▪ December 2023 (date TBC): Provisional Local Government Settlement ▪ 10 January 2024: Budget Scrutiny meeting ▪ 11 January 2024: Public consultation closes ▪ 8 January 2024: Trade Union Budget Consultation meeting ▪ January 2024: Analysis of consultation responses ▪ Wednesday 31 January 2024: the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28, 2024/25 budget and Precept presented to Cabinet for recommendation to County Council ▪ Wednesday 21 February 2024: County Council asked to approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28, 2024/25 budget and Precept ▪ 1 April 2024: Implementation |

Background

1. The purpose of this report is to obtain approval to commence consultation and scrutiny with residents, staff, businesses, partners, trade unions and schools in early December 2023.
2. The Council's draft revenue and capital budget 2024/25 is presented as the basis for consultation and scrutiny, prior to the final draft budget being presented to Cabinet on 31st January 2024 for approval and recommendation to County Council on 21st February 2024.
3. Prior to the MTFFS being finalised the Council intends to undertake a period of public consultation on the 2024/25 draft budget between 7 December 2023 and 11 January 2024. Public consultation is being carried out and will allow for feedback to be considered prior to the Cabinet meeting on 31 January. The budget will also be considered by the Council's Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee during the same period.
4. The budget has been informed by the priorities within the Council Strategy, Building Back Better in Gloucestershire, which was approved by County Council on 16 February 2022. The consultation document contains the commissioning intentions for each of the Council's Directorates. These set out the actions, decisions and programmes the Council is putting in place in 2024/25 to continue delivery of this four-year strategy.
5. The funding assumptions on which the budget has been calculated are set out in Section E of the Council's draft revenue and capital budget 2024/25 (Annex A).

Options

6. It is a statutory obligation to consult on budget proposals so there are no other options.

Risks

7. The risks associated with the draft budget are set out in Sections I and J of Annex A.
8. To encourage engagement with the consultation appropriate communications needs to be carried out so there is good awareness within relevant groups. Consultation information will be available via the county council's website and will be provided in hard copy, other formats and languages upon request. Information will be shared with town and parish councils, community groups, borough and district councils and county councillors with a request that they share information through their communications channels. Information will also be shared with local media contacts and via GCC's social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), Nextdoor) and with subscribers of GCC e-newsletters. Information will also be shared with GCC staff and staff networks, with a request that they promote the consultation through their communications channels. Posters will be displayed in libraries and in public areas of other GCC buildings, helping to raise awareness of the consultation not online. There will be regular reminders throughout the consultation period to make sure there are multiple opportunities for interested parties to see the relevant information and be invited to respond.

Financial implications

9. The Council is required to set a balanced budget each financial year based on robust and realistic assumptions. The full Financial Implications are set out in Annex A.

Climate change implications

10. The draft budget reflects the Council's commitment to tackling climate change.

Ecological implications

11. Has an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) been produced, or will one be undertaken at a later stage? No – a full assessment of proposals will be included in the Cabinet report in January.

Equality implications

12. Has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed? No - a full assessment of the proposals will be included in the Cabinet report in January.
13. To make sure the consultation is accessible to those with protected characteristic, information will be provided via a range of channels, which are broadly outlined above and a diverse set of groups and individuals, which will include GCC's Employee Networks; Young Employee Network (YEN), Black Workers Network (BWN), Disability Network (D-Net), Carers Network, Prism (LGTB+), Dignity at Work and Digital Smarties, borough and district councils, local NHS organisations, housing associations, Gloucestershire Deaf Association, Young Gloucestershire and other youth organisations, town and parish councils, Gloucestershire Voluntary and Community Sector Alliance, Libraries, CABs and Age UK Gloucestershire and county councillors. As well as asking these groups to encourage their staff to complete the consultation they will also be asked to share information with their members, customers and other groups and parties they have access to. Consultation information will be provided in different formats and languages upon request. Any

additional, reasonable requests to help further increase access to the consultation will also be considered.

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications

14. A DPIA decision checklist has been completed and no statutory requirement to complete a full DPIA has been identified.

Social value implications

15. Social Value implications will be considered as part of any Executive Decisions arising from the budget.

Consultation feedback

16. The draft budget has been developed in collaboration with Officers and Cabinet Members of the Council. The purpose of this budget consultation period is to seek the views of a wider range of stakeholders, including residents, scrutiny, staff, businesses, partners, trade unions and schools. These views will be reported back to Cabinet and Council alongside the final budget proposals.

Officer recommendations

17. That the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Change:
 1. Approves for consultation and scrutiny the Budget Consultation document – including the detailed revenue, capital and Dedicated School Grant budgets for 2024/25 (Annex A).
 2. Approves for consultation and scrutiny the Consultation questionnaire (Annex B).
 3. Agrees that a public consultation be undertaken on the Council's draft budget 2024/25 for a 5 week period between 7 December 2023 and 11 January 2024.

Performance management/follow-up

18. The Council's performance against its budget, once approved, is monitored monthly and reported to Cabinet and to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis.