

1. Recommendations from the Budget Scrutiny Process

- All Overview and Scrutiny Panels have considered whether they have been able to undertake effective scrutiny of the 2016/17 budget. This should include scrutiny of the budget setting process as well as the budget itself. The Member Challenge Group is concerned that effective budget scrutiny has not always been possible as the scrutiny function has not been involved at an early enough stage. In the light of these challenges, the Member Challenge Group **recommends that the OSPB devises a revised budget scrutiny process utilising the talent and experience of the Corporate and Communities O&S Panel and the Budget Member Challenge Group**. This should scrutinise and monitor the development and implementation of the current budget and the start of the 2017/18 process. Early scrutiny involvement should be considered a constructive addition to the process.
- The Member Challenge Group **recommends that scrutiny should work with Cabinet in its lobbying of central government on a fairer funding deal for the County**. Members' 'on the ground' detailed service knowledge could be used to support effective lobbying for change.

2. Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel welcomed the £5 million being added to the budget for looked after children. However the Panel also noted that, at the same time, £6.3 million savings needed to be found from other budgets within Children, Families and Communities. How these additional savings will be found is not clear. The Member Challenge Group is concerned about the impact these additional budget cuts may have on preventative services, and the potential longer term effect on numbers of looked after children coming into the system. The Group would wish to be reassured about how the £6.3 million cuts will be delivered and **recommends that the Children and Families O&S Panel is fully involved as budgets are further developed**.
- The Panel was also concerned about the large overspend in relation to Home to School Transport, currently standing at £677k. The Member Challenge Group **recommends that the Children and Families O&S Panel undertakes a scrutiny of Home to School Transport to better understand the service, the reasons for the overspend and what is being done to correct the situation**.

3. Adult Care and Well-Being Panel

- The Adult Care and Well-being O&S Panel welcomed the additional funding that would be available for adult social care as a result of the proposed 2% increase in Council Tax. However, at the same time the Panel was concerned that the reduction in the Revenue Support Grant meant that, instead of having extra funding available, the budget would 'stand still'. There was also concern about the robustness of the local marketplace in relation to adult social care. In the light of these concerns, the Member Challenge Group **recommends that the Adult Care and Well-being O&S Panel continues to monitor whether the Council is meeting its obligations under the Care Act and reports any concerns to OSPB**.

4. Corporate and Communities Panel

- The Member Challenge Group **recommends that the County Council works to maximise all opportunities for income generation**, in particular in relation to:
 - Place Partnership
 - Best use of the County Hall campus and other assets, including country parks;
 - A review of agricultural land to support economic strategies;
 - Additional revenue raising powers.
- The Group also **recommends that the Corporate and Communities O&S Panel examines how the Commercial Team can ensure that the Council is getting the absolute best deal and delivering value for money for its residents when undertaking commissioning.**

5. Economy and Environment Panel

- The Group **recommends that a detailed Scrutiny review of the impact of Climate Change on the Council be conducted.** This should cover matters such as the problems caused, issues faced, impact of, opportunities presented and cost of climate change on the Council.