

Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

1. THE FRAMEWORK FOR DECISION MAKING

Full Council will be responsible for the adoption of its Budget and Policy Framework as set out in Article 4. Once a Budget or a Policy Framework is in place, it will be the responsibility of the Policy Committees to implement it.

- (a) In July each year the Finance & Management Committee will consider proposals to be made to Full Council, which will set out the strategic framework for the development of the annual Budget. The programme will be widely publicised including through press releases and the Council's website. The timetable will provide for annual consultation with stakeholders on Council priorities to be brought into the Budget process.
- (b) At the same time, the Finance & Management Committee may request up to a total of 2 policy studies from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on key cross-area topics.
- (c) Once the proposals from the Policy Committees and policy studies from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have been received, the Finance & Management Committee will formulate corporate proposals. These will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration for a period of no longer than 4 weeks. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will hold a public hearing on the proposals and seek other public comment.
- (d) At the end of the period the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will make recommendations for any changes to the proposals to the Finance & Management Committee. That Committee will consider these recommendations, and then submit its final proposals to Full Council.
- (e) In approving the Budget and Policy Framework, Full Council will also specify the extent of virement within the Budget and degree of in-year changes to the Policy Framework which may be undertaken by Policy Committees, in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of these Rules (virement and in-year adjustments). Any other changes to the Budget and Policy Framework are reserved to Full Council.

2. VIREMENT

The Transfer of Budget Provisions will be allowed between all heads within services, with certain exceptions – See Financial Regulations Section A Financial Management – Paragraphs 21-23 and Financial Procedure Rules - Section A2 – Managing Expenditure.

3. **IN-YEAR CHANGES TO POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The responsibility for agreeing the Budget and Policy Framework lies with Full Council, and decisions by Policy Committees or Officers with delegated authority must be in line with it. No changes to any policy and strategy that make up the Policy Framework may be made by a Policy Committee or Officer with delegated authority except changes:

- (a) which will result in the closure or discontinuance of a service or part of service to meet a budgetary constraint;
- (b) necessary to ensure compliance with the law, ministerial direction or government guidance;
- (c) in relation to the Policy Framework in respect of a policy which would normally be agreed annually by Full Council following consultation, but where the existing policy document is silent on the matter under consideration.