

Public Questions for 30 September 2024 Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Question 1:

There is so little detail in this report and little detail in the July 2023 report, the staff would like to know is there going to be cut to direct service? In the last town hall meeting it was mentioned the committee should scrutinize but there isn't enough information to fully scrutinize. Using the stores as an example, if there isn't a 'like for like service' what will actually happen? Will this come back to the **November 21st** committee as this will effect tenants.

Question 2:

Cambridge is **expanding** a lot thanks to our council in here to day, there will be more social and private homes. The scrutiny report has no detail in out how savings are going to be made ? It feels like as Cambridge is getting bigger but we may be cutting services and staff. What services and staff levels are being considered, could this come back to the **scrutiny committee**? And how will it effect service users as there is no details?

Question 3:

My understanding of the scrutiny report is that it is aimed at saving money yet there's no details in the report how this will be done, especially with the increase of contractors in the last two years. We use more **contractors** now where we could save thousands of pounds by having more in house staff, has this been considered and has comparison be done ? but there is no details in the report, could this be addressed and come back to another **committee** once this has been looked at for scrutiny?

Question 4:

I would like to ask as there isn't any details in the report if the **transformation team** will be looked at as in the cost, over £5m? The report mentions saving money but a large budget has been found to fund the transformation team yet there seems to be freeze on recruitment for front line staff. Will all details be available to be scrutinised later?

Question 5:

Could there be an update on the Extended working hours which includes the results of the **tenant's survey** last month to see if there is a requirement for this proposed change?

Since July 2023 there has been no meaning full discussions around this. Staff are concerned about this and have family issues that will be affected. Other councils do not offer this as there is not a need from their tenants. A similar council we visited this year do not do this and we have half the staff of them.

Question 6 on behalf of Unison:

Why is the Council choosing to move £7,918,000 into General Fund Reserves (see table on page 28 MTFS) when in 2022 it was said that 'providing there are no unexpected changes to the tax base or the rate of collection, the accumulated surplus will be distributed and received into the General fund in 2023 and 2024/25? Instead this figure is coming out of the funding of revenue and creating a budget gap in 2025/26?

On page 43 of the MTFS it says 'provided the Council can deliver the recurring savings requirements, the GF reserve balance is forecast to remain above the target level over the next 5 years, even without the benefit of additional business rates growth.

Why isn't the business rates growth funding used to "smooth" this year's budget to lessen the severity of the cuts and likely severe impact on staff and valued services and put less back into reserves? This would also give time for the new Labour government decisions around the future funding of local government to begin to translate into reality and impact this and other councils?

Question 7:

This report asks the committee to agree the principals for communities group and economy and place group and delegate authority to the relevant director /CEO to develop and implement internal organisation in line with council policy how can the scrutiny committee recommend this with no detailed information being submitted at this committee?

Can this be brought back to the November committee when all the detail are available?

Question 8:

At the last town hall meeting it was said that the scrutiny committee's job was to scrutinise the recommendations proposed for the leader.

In the report on page 57 it says proposals for city services and the corporate hub were agreed at the S&R committee on 3 July 2023 and 29 January 2024 .

in the committee report of 3 July 2023 page 243 it says please note -timelines and savings outside of those owned solely by the city services ops programme team (our Cambridge) are estimates at this stage , and require further analysis before returning to the S&R has this been brought back to the S&R?