

Report to Cabinet

12 July 2023

Subject:	Recommendations from Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board in response to quarter 3 budget monitoring report 2022/23
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources – Cllr Piper
Director:	Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer Surjit Tour
Key Decision:	No
Contact Officer:	Suky Suthi-Nagra, Democratic Services Manager Suky_suthinagra@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

That Cabinet be requested to:

- 1.1 Ensure that Directors review and update any pages they hold on the Council’s website.
- 1.2 Authorise the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Director for Finance to consider the introduction of additional financial controls on general spend, in particular, matters relating to recruitment and day to day spend where necessary.
- 1.3 Authorise the Director of Children’s Services, Director of Adult Social Care and Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Young People, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources to explore the feasibility of providing in house care for young people in care, SEND placements and adult social care placements.



1.3 That, in connection with 1.1 – 1.3 above, a further report be submitted to the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, within 2 months' time, on the decision of Cabinet.

2 Reasons for Recommendations



2.1 The Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board had considered the quarter 3 budget monitoring report for 2022/23 and expressed concern that:-

- There was out of date information on the council's website.
- Significant overspends in a number of budget areas and looking at introducing additional control measures to ensure there was authorisation obtained to approve transactions on general spend and recruitment;
- The year on year increase in costs associated with children's placements and SEND and looking at the feasibility of in house provision to reduce costs, including those associated with adult social care placements;
- Considering current outstanding section 106 spend, including details of deadline for spend and how ward members are consulted;
- Meeting with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to understand the high cost associated with Sandwell Children's Trust.





2.2 The recommendations set out in paragraph 1 of this report were made by the Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting held on 1 March 2023.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

3.1 Scrutinising the quarter 3 budget monitoring position support the Council's activities towards the delivery of the Corporate Plan objectives:

	Best start in life for children and young people
	People live well and age well



	Strong resilient communities
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods
	A strong and inclusive economy
	A connected and accessible Sandwell

4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 The Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board has been considering the reasons for a range of key budget pressures that impact upon budget monitoring.

4.2 Arising from the discussions at these meetings, the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board felt that the Cabinet should:-

- ensure that Directors review and update any pages they hold on the Council's website.
- authorise the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Director for Finance to consider the introduction of additional financial controls on general spend, in particular, matters relating to recruitment and day to day spend where necessary;
- authorise the Director of Children's Services, Director of Adult Social Care and Director of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources to explore the feasibility of providing in house care for young people in care, SEND placements and adult social care placements.



5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Cabinet is requested to respond to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Management Board within two months, setting out any approved recommendations, and how they will be implemented.

6 Implications

Resources:	In considering and approving the proposals, Cabinet would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to consider the cost associated with exploring in house provision for children in care, SEND and adult social care placements; • make income available to the council by updating current webpages listing rental of available properties; • reduce cost in service areas by bringing in additional control measures on general spend and recruitment.
Legal and Governance:	In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, Cabinet is requested to respond to the recommendations of the scrutiny board within two months, setting out any approved recommendations, and how they will be implemented.
Risk:	There are no risk implications associated with this report.
Equality:	No Equality Impact Assessment is required in relation to this report.
Health and Wellbeing:	No health and wellbeing implications associated with this report.
Social Value	The Council, in promoting available rental premises in Sandwell, could contribute to promoting local businesses
Climate Change	By considering in house provision for children in care, SEND and adult social care placements will reduce carbon emissions associated with out of borough placements.
Corporate Parenting	Proposals to explore in house provision for children in care placements will ensure care is maintained in the borough.

7. Appendices

None.



8. Background Papers

None.

