

Meeting of:	Council
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, 10 March 2021
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	No Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Report Title:	Consultation with Non-Domestic Ratepayers
Purpose of Report:	To consider any representations from non-domestic ratepayers
Report Owner:	Leader
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Managing Director
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	None as a consequence of this report
Policy Framework:	To comply with the procedure laid down in the Council's Constitution for the making of the budget
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To comply with the Non-Domestic Ratepayers (Consultation) Regulations 1992 (Statutory Instrument No. 3171). • An advertisement inviting non-domestic ratepayers to inspect the Council's expenditure proposals and to submit representations on the same was placed in the Western Mail on 26th February, 2021. • Copies of the Council's expenditure proposals have been forwarded to local non-domestic ratepayers, who have been invited to submit any comments by 12.00 noon on 10th March, 2021. Any comments received will be reported to the meeting. 	

Recommendation

1. The Council take into account any representations received from non-domestic ratepayers before fixing the Council Tax.

Reason for Recommendation

1. To comply with the Non-Domestic Ratepayers (Consultation) Regulations 1992 (Statutory Instrument No. 3171).

1. Background

- 1.1 An advertisement inviting non-domestic ratepayers to inspect the Council's expenditure proposals and to submit representations on the same was placed in the Western Mail on 26th February, 2021.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 Section 65 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 places a duty on the Council to consult with representatives of local non-domestic ratepayers regarding the current and preceding years' expenditure proposals.
- 2.2 Copies of the Council's expenditure proposals have been forwarded to local non-domestic ratepayers, who have been invited to submit any comments by 12.00 noon on 10th March, 2021. Any comments received will be reported to the meeting.
- 2.3 Consultees have been informed that the Council has no control over the level on non-domestic rates, which are set by the Welsh Assembly Government.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1 In setting the revenue budget, the Council needs to consider its corporate priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan 2020-2025 through the new well-being objectives.
- 3.2 These new objectives demonstrate the Council's commitment to the Well-being of Future Generations Act which aims to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales and ensures that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need. Even with reductions in funding, where practical, the Council will strive to maintain services which contribute to this agenda.
- 3.3 In developing the Corporate Plan, the Council has reflected on the way it works and has stated five principles it will follow. These budget proposals reflect this new approach to working. The five ways of working are:

- Looking to the long term - The budget proposals are a means of planning for the future and take a strategic approach to ensure services are sustainable and that future need and demand for services is understood;
- Taking an integrated approach - The budget proposals highlight and encourage ways of working with partners;
- Involving the population in decisions - As part of the budget proposal process there has been engagement with residents, customers and partners;
- Working in a collaborative way - The budget proposals recognise that more can be achieved and better services can be provided by collaboration and it encourages this as a way of working in the future;
- Understanding the root cause of issues and preventing them - The budget process is proactive and allows an understanding of the financial position so that issues can be tackled at the source.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** None as a consequence of this report. However, specific considerations relating to the Council's final proposals for the Revenue Budget 2021/22 were contained in the related report to Cabinet on 22nd February, 2021.

Employment

- 4.2** None as a consequence of this report. However, specific considerations relating to the Council's final proposals for the Revenue Budget 2021/22 were contained in the related report to Cabinet on 22nd February, 2021.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.3** The Council is required under statute to fix its Council Tax for 2021/22 by 11th March, 2021 and in order to do so will have to agree a balanced revenue budget by the same date.

5. Background Papers

The Non-Domestic Ratepayers (Consultation) Regulations 1992 (Statutory Instrument No. 3171)