

# Budget Setting Review Group

Record of the meeting held on Wednesday 1 November 2023 at Shire Hall, Warwick at 6.00pm.

**Present:** Councillors: Barton, Collins, Day, R Dickson, Falp, Hales, Luckhurst, Milton, and Tangri

**Also Present:** Councillor Roberts, Portfolio Holder – Neighbourhood; Councillor Chilvers, Portfolio Holder – Resources; Andrew Rollins, Head of Finance; Tony Sidhu, Principal Accountant (Systems); and Sophie Vale, Committee Services Officer.

## 1. **Appointment of Chair**

Councillor Milton was appointed to Chair the meeting.

## 2. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Browne and Tangri.

## 3. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Falp declared an interest because her son worked in Neighbourhood Services at the Council, and her husband was involved in local football leagues which would be affected by some of the charges discussed in the report. However, she assured Members that she had an open mind and did not believe herself to be predetermined.

Councillor Barton declared an interest because he was occasionally hired for use the Royal Spa Centre but did not believe himself to be predetermined.

Councillor Milton declared an interest on behalf of the whole Group because it was understood that many, if not all, of them were regular users of the Council's leisure facilities and car parks.

## 4. **Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential items and reports) – Thursday 2 November 2023**

### Item 4 – Fees and Charges 2024/25

The Budget Review Group had concerns about the increase in fees at the crematorium but were satisfied by the rationale behind the decision provided by officers.

The Group wished to draw Cabinet's attention to the following points regarding car parking charges:

1. the connection between car parking fees and other priorities such as the town centre economy and the climate emergency should be recognised. The Council's ambition to encourage net zero carbon methods of transportation should be reflected in the parking charges strategy. To understand the impacts of these connections better and define a way

forward in achieving the Council's goals, the Group encouraged officers to test hypotheses and pursue different avenues to find potential solutions;

2. the importance of having an aligned strategy with Warwickshire County Council in relation to transportation and car parking charges should be highlighted;
3. in future, the consultation for car parking charges should be widened to include all Town and Parish Councils and interested organisations such as the Chambers of Trade and Commerce for Leamington, Kenilworth, and Warwick; and
4. a review into car parking charges of all car parks linked to leisure facilities would be welcomed to ensure that they are fair and equitable across the District.

The Group welcomed the increase in charges for filming on Council land.

The Group wished to draw Cabinet's attention to the circa £170,000 of opportunity that had not been taken which could have been available had the projections of the last Medium Term Financial Strategy been followed.

(The meeting ended at 7.03pm)

CHAIR OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
5 December 2023

CHAIR AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE  
19 December 2023