



SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 8 SEPTEMBER 2025

QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 35

Question asked by Mr. Adam Stares

At the Cabinet meeting on 15 July, in Item 4 the Cabinet noted it “needs to continue to make progress in closing the current MTFS gap to allow a balanced budget position to be presented to the County Council for approval in February 2026.”

What progress has been made towards closing the budget gap, are any plans being made to cut levels of service provision?”

Reply by the Chair

The MTFS and budget gap continues to be a focus for Cabinet and Chief Officers, and there is a wide range of activity ongoing to ensure that the Council can set a sustainable budget and MTFS in February.

The Council is commissioning an external efficiency review which will be an independent assessment of the potential opportunities for cost reductions or to generate service income. The procurement process was launched last week and is due to be complete by the end of October, which will enable work to start on the review in November. Any impact on future service delivery will be considered as part of the recommendations from the review.

Alongside this, Council officers continue to make progress on savings under development and accelerating existing savings initiatives. Demand in social care services continues to grow and focus on managing this will be crucial.

The Scrutiny Commission will receive a further report in December setting out the Council’s draft budget proposals. This will give further information on progress with savings delivery and the efficiency review.

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