

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee
Date:	28 th April 2026
Subject:	Report of the Budget Task and Finish Group
Chief Officer:	Sarah Wilson, Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer:	Amy O'Brien, Scrutiny and Governance Officer
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	No
Appendices	Appendix A – Report of the Budget Task and Finish Group

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the work done by the Budget Task and Finish Group on scrutiny of the budget setting process for 2026/27, including recommendations from the group
- 1.2 It sets out the topics discussed by the group, what recommendations they gave, and reflections from members and officers.

2. Recommendations:

This report recommends that:

- 2.1 The Committee notes and comments on the report in appendix A.
- 2.2 The Committee approves its recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group in section 3.3
- 2.3 The Committee subsequently directs these recommendations to Cabinet for approval amended as necessary by any points emerging from the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee meeting.

3. Report

- 3.1 The Budget Task and Finish Group was convened as part of the 2025/26 Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee (CISC) Work Programme, with the aim of ensuring that the CISC, and members of the Task Group are given the opportunity to carry out better financial scrutiny, propose real-time improvements to the budget and MTFS development and feed into subsequent annual cycles.
- 3.2 The report is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.3 As a result of the work of the Task and Finish Group, the following recommendations have been made:
 - Any budget-related executive decisions or those that are considered outside of the budget scrutiny timetable that have a direct impact on the budget proposals (i.e. significant savings or reductions in services), should be considered by the scrutiny committee. The

format of this scrutiny to be decided in consultation with Committee members, the Chair, and finance colleagues.

- That the budget setting timeline and process, including scrutiny involvement be agreed and consulted on as early as is practical in the municipal year to ensure there is dedicated and sufficient opportunity for key stakeholders to engage with the budget setting.
- Equality Impact Assessments to be undertaken and completed at the earliest stage in the process of the budget. This is with the aim of informing decisions made around the budget and to consider the impact of budget decisions on all residents, particularly those who might be adversely affected. This impact should always be considered as part of the budget-making process, not an afterthought once decisions have effectively already been made.
- That public engagement and consultation is significantly strengthened and undertaken early on in the budget setting process, to allow for residents, business, and key stakeholders to feedback on the budget. This may require the council to consider new and innovative methods of engaging with residents to sharply improve participation rates.
- That Lead Members have stronger oversight and ownership of their budget portfolios, demonstrate much stronger political ownership of their portfolios and that they attend budget scrutiny meetings regularly
- That the Budget Task and Finish Group be commissioned for the 2026/27 municipal year and that the work is thoroughly scoped with the involvement of scrutiny members and finance colleagues.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications

This is not a decision-making report, therefore there are no direct financial implications.

4.2 Legal implications

There are no known legal implications arising from this report

4.3 Equalities

There are no known equalities implications arising from this report

4.4 Corporate Parenting

There are no known corporate parenting implications arising from this report

4.5 Risk management implications

There are no known direct risk management implications arising from this report.

4.6 Environmental implications

There are no known environmental implications arising from this report.