SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report To:	Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee
Date:	21 July 2026
Subject:	Election of members to the Budget Task and Finish Group and approval of draft Terms of Reference
Chief Officer:	Sarah Wilson, Monitoring Officer
Contact Officer:	Natalie Carr, Head of Democratic Services and Scrutiny (Statutory Scrutiny Officer)
Author:	Amy O'Brien**,** Scrutiny and Governance Officer
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	Appendix A – Budget Task and Finish Group 2026-27 Terms of Reference

1. Summary and Recommendations

1.1 The purpose of this report is to appoint members to the Budget task and finish group that was commissioned at the 30 June 2026 meeting and to approve the draft Terms of Reference for the group (Appendix A).

2 Recommendations

2.1 That the Committee:

1. Appoint between 2 and 6 members (excluding the already appointed chair) to the Budget task and finish group
2. Approve the Terms of Reference (Appendix A)

3 Report

3.1 The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee commissioned the Budget Task and Finish Group and elected a Chair at the June meeting.

3.2 As per section 5.5 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, membership of task and finish groups and Terms of Reference must be agreed by the Committee.

3.3 The Committee is being asked to appoint between 2 and 6 members (excluding the already appointed Chair) to sit on the task and finish group. Membership is not exclusive to those on the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee. Additionally, there is no requirement to adhere to political proportionality rules, although cross-party representation is desirable.

3.4 Appendix A outlines the draft Terms of Reference for the task and finish group. Once approved by the Committee, it will act as a framework for the group's work. The task and finish group may determine the scope of the group, using the broad scoping document published at the June meeting - Agenda for Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday, 30th June, 2026, 6.30 pm

Commissioner Review

This is a procedural report and no Commissioner review was required.

4. Other Implications

Financial implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Other statutory implications

4.2 There are no other specific statutory or legal implications arising from this report.

Appendix A

Budget Task and Finish Group 2026-27 Terms of Reference

1. **Purpose**

The purpose of the Budget Scrutiny Task and Finish Group is to undertake a focused review of the Council's budget proposals and financial planning arrangements and make evidence-based recommendations ahead of the approval of the budget for 2027/28.

2. **Objectives**

The Group will:

- Review the draft budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- Assess the assumptions, risks and financial pressures underpinning the budget.
- Consider the Council’s arrangements for assessing the impact of proposed savings and growth items on services and residents.
- Examine opportunities for savings, efficiencies and value for money.
- Review the adequacy of reserves and contingencies.
- Consider the financial sustainability of the Council over the medium term.
- Make recommendations to Cabinet and/or Council as appropriate.

3. Scope

The review may include:

- Revenue budget proposals.
- Capital programme proposals.
- Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- Budget consultation findings.
- Budget monitoring and outturn information.
- Corporate risks relating to financial sustainability.
- Benchmarking information from comparable authorities.

The Group will not duplicate the responsibilities of Cabinet, Council, external auditors or statutory finance officers.

4. **Membership**

- Between 3 and 7 Members appointed by the Scrutiny Committee (do not need to be members of the committee)
- There is no requirement to adhere to Political proportionality, but cross-party representation is desirable
- Chairman to be appointed by the Scrutiny Committee.
- Relevant Cabinet Members, officers and external witnesses may be invited to attend.

5. **Evidence Gathering**

The Group may:

- Receive officer presentations and briefings.
- Review financial reports and supporting documentation.
- Meet with/Gather responses from Cabinet Members and senior officers.
- Consider external benchmarking and best practice.
- Gather views from residents and stakeholders where appropriate.

6. **Timescale**
The Group will operate from September 2026 and report its findings to the CISC at the January 2027 meeting.

7. **Reporting**
- A final report containing findings and recommendations will be presented to the CISC.
- Following approval, recommendations will be submitted to Cabinet and/or Council.
- Progress against accepted recommendations may be monitored by the Committee.

8. **Expected Outcomes**
The review should contribute to:
- Improved transparency of budget decisions.
- Stronger financial governance and accountability.
- Enhanced value for money.
- Better-informed budget-setting decisions.
- Increased public confidence in the Council's financial planning.