

COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Committee feedback on Business Plan and Budget 2026-27 – 2028-29

Meeting held 15 January 2026

The Business Plan and Budget was discussed in full by the committee.

Councillors reviewed the business plan and budget, with key concerns centred on poverty-related support and library services. They discussed the shift from the Household Support Fund to the new Crisis Resilience Fund, seeking assurance that vulnerable households, including those relying on holiday food vouchers, would still receive help.

Officers confirmed support would be available to families but for a more focused cohort, and that this would bring a shift to an increased focus on prevention, resident voice, and working with districts to ensure the council supported people in poverty to be more financially resilient and sustainable. It was noted that a detailed plan for the use of this funding would be developed.

Proposed savings to a review of roles across Communities, Libraries and Skills prompted questions about reduced library opening times or closures. However, assurance that this would not lead to library closures, reduced hours or reduced service was provided by officers.

Furthermore, assurances were provided that the risks associated with the transition arrangements for the delivery of trading standards were not significant or material, assurance was provided around the arrangements that were being put in place.

No amendments were proposed.

There were no comments passed for clarity or raising to the Strategy, Resources & Procurement Committee.