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27 November 2019

Dear Member,

Cabinet - Tuesday, 3 December 2019

Please find enclosed the following documents for consideration at the meeting of the Cabinet on Tuesday, 3 December 2019 which was unavailable when the agenda was published.

Agenda No Item

4. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update 2020-21 to 2023-24 (Pages 3 - 18) and appendices.

Information for these documents was not available in time to despatch with the agenda.

Yours sincerely

Tony Kershaw Director of Law and Assurance

To all members of the Cabinet



Cabinet	Ref No:
03 December 2019	Key Decision:
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Update 2020-21 to 2023-24	Part I
Cabinet Member for Finance	Electoral Division(s): all

Summary

This report provides an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) projections, building on the information previously considered by Cabinet in July, and Performance and Finance Select Committee in October 2019.

It provides an overview of the current understanding of the proposed future funding for local government and updates the MTFS on further changes to assumed funding, required growth and savings since the October 2019 report.

As a result of this review the Council now needs to identify £2.2m of mitigating actions to balance the budget for 2020-21 and officers are endeavouring to identify these opportunities prior to setting February's budget report. The gap over the MTFS is £36.4m. The funding assumptions, demand pressures and proposed efficiencies will be updated further in the Budget Report presented to Cabinet on the 28^{th} of January 2020.

West Sussex Plan: Policy Impact and Context

The budget proposals have been developed and considered in the context of the West Sussex Plan priorities.

Financial Impact

The purpose of this report is to provide and update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the years 2020-21 to 2023-24 therefore there is no financial impact as a result of the recommendations in the report.

Recommendations

- 1. That for the 2020-21 budget, the Council plans a balanced budget and that without further savings, the current estimate would require £2.2m contribution from reserves, be noted, if other mitigations are not found.
- 2. That for the MTFS period to 2023-24 a total budget gap of £36.4m (after assumed council tax increases of 2.00% for Adult Social Care and 1.99% for core council services (total 3.99%) in 2020-21 and 1.99% for 2021-22 to 2023-24) be noted, recognising the continuing uncertainties that exist surrounding local government finance and funding levels, as well as local demand and other pressures.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In October 2019, Members received an update on the Council's financial outlook, following the Government's announcement in September on the Spending Round 2019 (SR19). Taking account of anticipated pressures at that time, forecasts indicated that the Council could potentially have had a budget surplus of £13m in 2020-21, falling to a deficit of approaching £14m by 2023-24. The risks and uncertainties surrounding the forecasts have been well-rehearsed, covering both local and national matters.
- 1.2 Since then, while the calling of a General Election has added uncertainties, prior to that announcement, the Government had provided further details of likely funding for next year through a technical consultation exercise.
- 1.3 Locally, the pressures identified in relation to Children's and other services have continued to grow, as reported in the half-year Total Performance Monitor being presented to Performance and Finance Select Committee on the 5th of December 2019.
- 1.4 From a capital perspective, the Council is in the process of exploring its investment and borrowing appetite, in context of competing priorities and demands, and its financial outlook.
- 1.5 The report provides an update on the Council's MTFS forecasts drawing on all of the above. Appendix A summarises the Council's updated funding and net expenditure for 2020-24.

2 National Context: Policy and Funding

General Election

- 2.1 The Prime Minister has called a General Election for 12th December 2019. The dominant theme for the election is Brexit. The competing parties appear highly aware of how that issue could affect voters' preferences when framing and targeting their policy and spending proposals. Most significant pledges so far have focused on the NHS, schools, police, transport and immigration.
- 2.2 The timing of when the Prime Minister called the General Election has meant three significant events were removed from the calendar:
 - the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Budget Statement was cancelled;
 - the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), which the Government employs to 'examine and report on the sustainability of the public finances', did not publish its Economic and Fiscal Outlook as advice from the Cabinet Secretary had concluded that this would not be consistent with the Cabinet Office's General Election Guidance; and
 - the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has written to all local authorities confirming that it will not be possible to

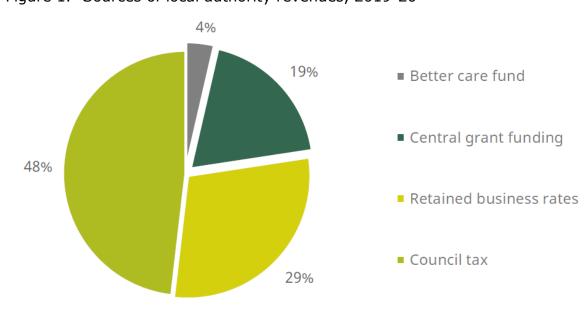
comply with the 2018 Hudson Review recommendation that the provisional settlement should be by 5th December and the provisional settlement will be a priority for Ministers after the General Election and MHCLG will take all possible steps to ensure the final settlement aligns with local authorities' budget setting timetables.

- 2.3 The consequences of these are that:
 - there is not a detailed Budget Report from the Government for 2020-21 and outline plans and prospects for future years;
 - the most recent independent five year forecast of the UK economy and whether the Government would hit its fiscal targets is from March 2019 and is framed in a different context;
 - SR19 provides the outline for the Government's spending plans, focused on the single year 2020-21; and
 - MHCLG's technical consultation on the Local Government Finance Settlement 2020-21 is likely to provide the most reliable view that councils can expect to receive before the New Year on the allocation of funding announced in SR19.

Local government funding and spending 2019-20

2.4 Figure 1 shows that in 2019-20, councils' revenues come from three main sources: Council tax, retained business rates and Government grant. Over three quarters of local authorities' revenue is collected from local sources. This has happened as a result of Government policy to transfer more responsibility for funding to local areas through business rates retention and through the reduction in Government grants and downward pressure on Council Tax that has happened over the last decade of austerity measures.

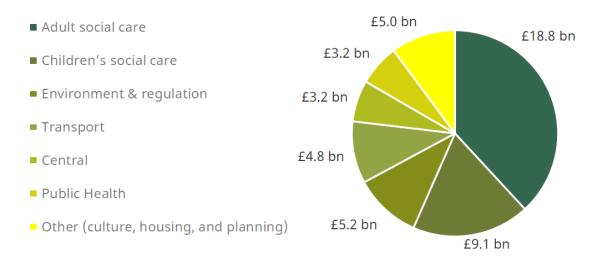
Figure 1: Sources of local authority revenues, 2019-20



Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies

2.5 Figure 2 shows that in 2019-20, social care accounts for well over half of the £49bn total local authority net expenditure (excluding education, police and fire services).

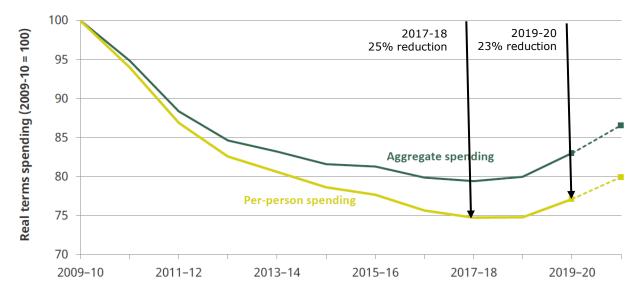
Figure 2: Local authority net expenditure by service, 2019-20



Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies

2.6 Figure 3 shows reductions in funding per person compared to 2009-10 led to falls in revenues and spending that peaked at around 25% in 2017-18 and have since risen back to a 23% reduction in 2019-20.

Figure 3: Local government funding 2009-10 to 2020-21 (projected)

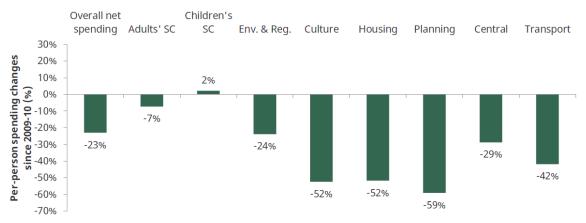


Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies

2.7 This change in spending pattern has happened because of the funding reductions and intensifying demands for social care. Figure 4 shows how local authorities in aggregate have responded to these funding and demographic changes since 2009-10 by focusing resources on statutory and acute services at the expense of other, discretionary services. Within the overall 23% reduction in spending per person, spending on Children's social

care has seen a small rise. Over this period, the drivers behind this include a doubling of safeguarding enquiries, which has led to a third more children having a protection plan and a sixth more being in care.

Figure 4: Change in local authority net spending by service since 2009-10



Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies

- 2.8 To limit cuts in some services, local authorities have used income from sales, fees and charges to protect service budgets where capacity to do so exists. For example, spending on Planning and Housing services fell by 18% and 11% less respectively when funding from sales, fees and charges is included.
- 2.9 Within individual services a similar change to comparative spending patterns exists, which works to: protect acute services and those with rising demands; limit reductions in spending in those services that can accrue support from sales, fees and charges; and reduce spending more severely in the remaining, discretionary services.
- 2.10 For example, in Adult Social Care across England since 2015-16 demand for services for adults over 65 rose by 4%, while demand for services for younger adults rose by 10%. The more acute nature for younger adults has meant the demand for spending on this group has led to spending on over 65s falling 18% despite a 20% rise in the elderly population.

Local government funding 2020-21

- 2.11 The plans in SR19 indicate that councils' core spending power in 2020–21 could increase by 4.3% in real terms. This rise includes: £1.1bn social care grant funding (which is not ring-fenced and councils can spend as they wish); inflationary increases in business rates revenues; and assumes all councils raise council tax by the referendum threshold limit (2% plus 2% adult social care precept).
- 2.12 Councils will not benefit equally from these funding increases. The extra money has been aimed at councils with social care responsibilities, as these are where spending pressures are most acute. Shire district councils will see significantly smaller funding increases.

2.13 Figure 3 (above) shows that with the addition of the last two years' increases, the funding increases for 2020-21 announced in SR19 could reverse around a fifth of the overall fall in local authority spending per person that occurred between 2009–10 and 2017–18. This would still leave spending per person 20% lower in 2020–21 than it was in 2009–10.

Local government funding outlook for 2021-22 and beyond

- 2.14 Changed priorities in central government during 2019 have meant a one year delay to the planned implementation of changes to the local government finance system till April 2021. If the new Government continues with the plans to make the changes through reform of business rates retention system and the fair funding review, these changes would increase the proportion of business rates retained locally from 50% to 75% and would see this increased amount replace about £6bn of Government grants to the sector. These grants would include Public Health Grant, which is currently ring-fenced and would be replaced by a share of retained business rates as a general revenue resource.
- 2.15 The proposed changes to the local government finance system, will initially affect individual local authorities' resources in two ways: Government decisions about the overall quantum of funding available to local authorities and how it is likely to grow (including the impact of any mandatory discounts Government grants to business rates payers); and the determination of each authority's share of that quantum based on its spending needs relative to all other authorities. Over the longer term, Government decisions about the share of local business rates that each authority can retain will affect its ability to raise resources.
- 2.16 Most local authority funding is set to come from Council Tax and business rates from 2021-22 onwards. However, projections indicate that revenues will not keep up with demand and cost increases, without continued large Council Tax rises (i.e. double the rate of inflation) and efficiency increases. This means that by 2024-25, local government's funding gap would rise by an extra £3.9bn if Council Tax rose at 2% annually (i.e. at the projected rate of inflation) and an extra £1.6bn if Council Tax rose at 4% annually.
- 2.17 Changes to make the social care system more generous or reverse cuts in recent years could cost billions of pounds across England. The Prime Minister has promised a 'clear plan' to 'fix the crisis in social care'.
- 2.18 In future, councils' financial sustainability is likely to continue to exhibit a strong dependence on how it manages the demographic changes in its area, as well as its ability to continue to achieve savings and raise revenues from local taxes and other sources.

3 MTFS Update Summary

Movement since October PFSC

3.1 Table 1 shows the movement in the 2020-21 Budget Gap reported to PFSC between October and December 2019. The £15.5m movement is from a £13.3m surplus position in October to a £2.2m Budget Gap. The remainder of this section provides more details of the movement.

Table 1: Movement in Budget Gap between October and December 2019

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Gap (as at October PFSC)	-13.3	-2.0	15.7	13.8	14.2
Gap (as at December PFSC)	2.2	15.4	10.4	8.4	36.4
Movement	15.5	17.4	-5.3	-5.4	22.2

Budget Gap before savings

Table 2 shows the budget gap identified in the October report to PFSC. The report reflected the Spending Round 2019 announcements and showed a gap before savings of £58.7m for the four year period to 2023-24, assuming a core council tax rise of 1.99% and a 2% rise for adult social care (total 3.99%) in 2020-21 and 1.99% thereafter:

Table 2: October 2019 PFSC Budget Gap before savings

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Gap (as at October PFSC)	18.0	11.2	15.7	13.8	58.7

3.2 Since the October report, there has been a review of both the pressures and funding assumptions. Table 3 outlines the latest position, showing a revised budget gap before savings of £27.0m, an increase of £9.0m.

Table 3: Updated December 2019 Budget Gap before savings

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Gap (as at October PFSC)	18.0	11.2	15.7	13.8	58.7
Net impact of changes	9.0	14.3	-3.3	-5.1	14.9
Updated Budget gap	27.0	25.5	12.4	8.7	73.6

Changes to Funding Assumptions 2020-21

3.3 Since October, the changes in funding assumptions amount to £3.4m increased revenue from the following:

- £0.9m increase in business rates revenue. In October, the Council's
 assumptions had taken a pessimistic view to reflect uncertainty about
 Brexit and the NHS Trust appeals case. The quarter two 2019-20
 forecasts and September CPI inflation release provide scope to revise
 these assumptions and allow £0.9m additional funding to be built in. As
 Brexit and NHS appeals remain a risk, no additional growth has been
 assumed.
- £0.5m increase in Council Tax revenue. Based on the last few years, the assumption on the Council's share of the Collection Fund surplus has increased from £1.5m to £2.0m. The assumptions continue to assume an increase in tax base at 1.5% as figures from the districts and boroughs are not yet due.
- £2.0m increase in Government Grants. The latest known information indicates: £0.4m increase in New Homes Bonus over current assumptions, £0.4m more from the announcement on additional social care funding and £1.2m increase from confirmation that the Think Family grant (which had been due to cease) will continue in 2020-21 at current levels.
- 3.4 The Local Government Finance Settlement had been anticipated for early December but it has been delayed due to the General Election and is now expected early in the New Year. The settlement should verify the core funding from Government and the council tax rise referendum threshold. The current assumption is 2.00% for the Adult Social Care precept and 1.99% for core Council Tax.

Demand and other service changes

- 3.5 Also, since October, demand and other service changes amount to £12.4m net additional cost pressures. The most significant of these are as follows.
 - £3.5m increase in the volume of children's placements.
 - £1.0m associated with the increase in children's court cases.
 - £0.9m additional cost for further improvements to the Fire and Rescue Service.
 - £4.5m for Adults & Health in relation to demand volume and the National Living Wage.
 - £3.9m extra cost from reinstating budgets due to undeliverable savings from 2019-20. These include: £1.7m in Children & Young People related to Early Help and Lifelong Services; £0.7m in Economy & Corporate Resources related to ORBIS and agency staff; and £1.5m related to Service Transformation.
 - £0.4m overall net increase in other service pressures.

Less

• (£0.8m) reduction in provision for pay and price inflation to reflect September 2019 figures.

- (£1.0m) withdrawal of assumed contribution to replenish reserves.
- 3.6 All areas of funding and budget pressure remain under review, to ensure estimates reflect the most up to date and robust position.

Savings changes

- 3.7 Since October, assumptions about savings have reduced by £6.5m. The reduction reflects the uncertainty about delivery of some of the savings such as from Service Transformation. In addition, any savings with a RAG rating of red have not been counted towards closing the Budget Gap. The main savings changes are as follows.
 - (£1.1m) increase due to new savings, mainly relating to the redesign of Early Help.
 - £0.3m due to reprofiling savings to future years from the in-house residential review.
 - £3.1m reduction due to undeliverable savings, mainly in Service Transformation.
 - £1.8m to re-categorise the savings from the additional Specialist Support Centres to the Dedicated Schools Grant.
 - £2.4m reduction due to savings judged to have a red RAG rating and requiring further work, mainly in Lifelong Services.

Balancing the Budget

3.8 Table 4 shows the up to date position of the budget gap after updating assumptions on funding, pressures and savings.

Table 4: The Budget Gap (net of savings)

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Gap (as at October PFSC)	-13.3	-2.0	15.7	13.8	14.2
Changes as in Table 3	9.0	14.3	-3.3	-5.1	14.9
Adjustment to savings	6.5	3.1	-2.0	-0.3	7.3
Updated Budget Gap	2.2	15.4	10.4	8.4	36.4

- 3.9 In addition to the increased pressures and change in funding assumptions outlined above, work has been undertaken to ensure the savings included in the 2020-21 draft budget are robust and reflect a high degree of confidence that they are deliverable. This has resulted in the savings being revised from the level previously reported of £31.3m to the current level of £24.8m. Appendix B lists all the identified savings included in the £24.8m total.
- 3.10 As in 2019-20, the Forward Plan for 2020-21 has included all major Cabinet level service budget decisions allowing preview by the relevant select

- committee, enabling effective and timely scrutiny prior to any decision being taken by the Executive.
- 3.11 Work is continuing to close the gap to enable a balanced budget to be presented to Council on 14th February 2020.

Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy

- 3.12 In October 2019, County Council approved a Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy for 2019-20. Approval of this strategy enables the Council (under a Direction from the Secretary of State) to apply capital receipts to fund transformation work, which ultimately relieves pressure on limited revenue resources. In 2019-20, County Council approved a flexibility of up to £7m, which gives some headroom above the forecast £5.3m transformation expenditure, to allow for accelerated activity on transformation projects.
- 3.13 The Direction also allows Councils to approve Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategies 2020-21. The Council intends to refresh its strategy for 2020-21 to again be able to take advantage of the flexibility which will be included in the Budget Report for 2020-21.

4 Financial Consequences

4.1 As this is a Budget Report the financial consequences are covered within the body of the report.

5 **Legal Implications**

5.1 The County Council is required to set a balanced budget. The legal implications relating to the specific service proposals and other budget plans will be assessed through the development of business cases for each proposal. This will include advice on the need for public or more focused consultation in relation to specific proposals.

6 Risk Assessment Implications and Mitigations

6.1 The draft budget papers will consider risks and how the Council will mitigate them through adequacy of reserves and contingency to provide a robust budget for 2010-21 and beyond.

7 Equality and Human Rights Assessment

7.1 The public sector equality duty will be applied during the development of any proposal identified for further consideration.

8 Social Value and Sustainability Assessment

8.1 The Council's sustainability policy and the social value impact of each proposal will be applied during the development of any proposal identified for further consideration.

9 **Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessment**

9.1 Implications for the Council's responsibility in relation to crime prevention and reduction will be assessed in the development of business cases for each proposal.

Katharine Eberhart
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Contact Officer: Nick Carroll, Interim Financial Planning Manager

Appendices

Appendix A – Updated funding and net expenditure budget 2020-24

Appendix B – List of savings currently contributing to the budget gap



Appendix A - Updated funding and net expenditure budget 2020-24

	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m
Funding				
Council Tax income	478.2	503.7	521.4	539.7
Adult Social Care Precept	9.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Settlement Funding Assessment	79.3	104.6	100.1	96.7
(75% from 2021/22)				
New Homes Bonus	3.2	1.6		
Business Rates growth	5.7	0.8	1.1	1.4
Social Care Support Grant - rollover	5.6			
Additional Social Care Funding	11.7			
Total Funding	593.0	611.0	622.9	638.1
Expenditure - opening amount b/fwd	556.3	593.0	611.0	622.9
Demand Growth				
Adults and Health	11.5	5.3	4.5	6.1
Children and Young People	18.1	1.4	2.9	2.2
Children's Improvement Plan - one off	6.9	-6.9		
Children's Improvement Plan - ongoing	5.1			
Economy & Corporate Resources	4.4			
Education and Skills	1.7	0.6	0.4	0.4
Environment	0.8			
Finance	2.7	1.0	0.5	0.5
Fire and Rescue and Communities	1.6	1.3	0.2	0.2
Fire Improvement Plan - one off	0.1	-0.1		
Fire Improvement Plan - on-going	2.1			
Highways and Infrastructure	0.5			
Leader	1.5			
Inflation	10.7	11.4	12.1	12.3
Non Portfolio - capital financing	-4.0	3.1	3.7	2.2
Non Portfolio – Additional Responsibilities for 75%		26.4		
Net Expenditure requirement	620.0	636.5	635.3	646.8
Budget Gap	27.0	25.5	12.4	8.7
Savings:				
February 2019 - net adjusted position	-7.2	-0.2		
Strategic Budget Options	-7.4	-5.3		
Business as Usual Decisions	-10.2	-4.7	-2.0	-0.3
Total Savings	-24.8	-10.2	-2.0	-0.3
Net Budget Gap	2.2	15.4	10.4	8.4

Notes

All figures include roundings.

Technical material related to the Spending Round 2019, clarified that £6.4m High Needs pressure could be funded from increase in Dedicated Schools Grant. As such, neither the funding nor the corresponding pressure is part of the Council's net budget.

Appendix B – List of savings currently contributing to the budget gap

Portfolio	Savings Description	2020-21 £000s	2021-22 £000s	Total £000s
February County	Council			
Adults & Health	Review options for in house provided services	180		180
	Housing Related Support (second year)	2,328		2,328
	Staffing Review - across Children, Adults,	175		175
	Families, Health and Education (CAFHE)	-/-		
	Reform of Lifelong Services	500		500
	Reprocurement of the Integrated Sexual Health Service (ISHS) contract	250		250
Children & Young People	Early intervention reducing demand for high cost services	400		400
Economy &	Centralisation of Learning & Development	50		50
Corporate Resources	Closer management of the Capita Contract	200		200
Education & Skills	Improve School Trading Offer	275		275
Environment	Further savings on Viridor contract through negotiation	200		200
	Expansion of solar installation programme	100		100
	Reduce waste going to landfill through further variations to MBT facility	75		75
	Disposal savings as a result of Adur & Worthing decision to move to 2-Weekly collection	200		200
	Waste Disposal - Non Resident Restriction/Charge	250		250
	Planning fee income	150		150
Finance	Income Generation - Investment Opportunities	500		500
	Asset Strategy - reduction in business rates payable		100	100
	Facilities Management - associated services		50	50
Fire & Rescue and	Reduced Partnership & Comm Team	45		45
Communities	Reduction in Community Safety Team	50		50
	Revised arrangements to deliver Command and Mobilisation services	1,000		1,000
	Procurement of contract for Fire Uniform	100		100
Highways &	Cost Recovery (Street Works Permit Scheme)	20		20
Infrastructure	Staffing changes	100		100
Non Portfolio	Interest Income	100		100
	February County Council total	7,248	150	7,398
Strategic Budget	Options			
Adults & Health	Review of In-house Residential Care		300	300
	Limit inflationary increase in fees paid to care providers	4,200	3,400	7,600
	Manage demand pressure – Older People	970	1,260	2,230
Education & Skills	Reduction in Post-16 Support Services		290	290
Environment	Household Waste Recycling Sites - Mobile Service		50	50
	Reduction in funding for Recycling Credits	2,100		2,100
Fire & Rescue and Communities	Review of Library Offer	175		175
	Strategic Budget Options total	7,445	5,300	12,745

Portfolio	Savings Description	2020-21 £000s	2021-22 £000s	Total £000s
Business as Usual				
Adults & Health	General 1% reduction in staffing budgets	300		300
	Additional savings from Lifelong Services	1,400		1,400
	Joint working with NHS		750	750
	Direct payments/review of assessments/support to self-funders	1,150		1,150
Children & Young People	Redesign of Early Help	1,000	950	1,950
Economy &	Review of salary sacrifice schemes	100	100	200
Corporate	Whole Council Design	2,400	300	2,700
Resources	Reduction in IT licence costs	100		100
	Management of Capita Contract	300		300
	Reduction in print and post costs	100		100
	Apprenticeship Levy	100		100
Education & Skills	SEND Transport Review	200		200
Environment	Solar Farms/Battery Storage	100	900	1,000
Finance	Management of amazon business accounts	200		200
	Charging for use of WSCC Frameworks	100		100
	Review of Fees and Charges	429		429
Fire & Rescue and	Insourcing of fleet maintenance	100		100
Communities	Community Hubs	150	300	450
	Increased income from Registrars Services	150		150
Highways & Infrastructure	On street parking	300	1,400	1,700
Non Portfolio	Actuarial review of pension contributions	1,500		1,500
	Business as Usual total	10,179	4,700	14,879
	Overall total	24,872	10,150	35,022

