

Council Plan and Budget 2023/24 – Adjustment and additional recommendation

Following consideration of the Council Plan and Budget 2023/24 at Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee on 25 January 2023, an additional allocation of £0.4m is proposed to provide funding to support the continuation of the discretionary Council Tax hardship scheme across the West Sussex District and Boroughs Councils for 2023/24.

The proposal is to offer up to £25.00 relief per working age household that claims relief under the working-age Council Tax reduction scheme offered by the District and Borough Councils.

This is in addition to the Council Tax Support Fund of £100m announced by the Government on 19 December 2022 to support the most vulnerable households in England. This Government money will also be distributed to eligible households by the District and Borough Councils in the County.

Together with the Government's scheme, this means that for 2023/24, a household that claims relief under the working age Council Tax reduction scheme offered by the Districts and Borough Councils could receive up to £50.00 relief on their Council Tax bill.

The estimated cost to the County Council is £0.4m and is to be funded by using the uncommitted balance of the 2021/22 Council Tax Support Grant which is held in the Covid-19 reserve. The council received £6.6m Council Tax Support Grant and after covering the related costs of the scheme for 2021/22 and 2022/23, there are sufficient funds to cover the expected cost of this proposal for 2023/24.

Additional Recommendation

- (8) An allocation of £0.4m be made available from the Covid-19 reserve to provide funding to support the continuation of the Council Tax hardship schemes across the West Sussex districts and boroughs for 2023/24.