

Balancing the Budget

This appendix sets out details of the budgets which will be reduced to realign funding to council priorities and known pressures.

Cabinet Portfolio	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	Total £'000	Description
Adults Services				
Review of funding to promote care as a career	170		170	Since 2018/19 the County Council has funded a small team to promote care as a career and to support the recruitment and retention of staff within the sector. The need to retain that capacity no longer exists because of other actions that have been taken, both locally and nationally. These include the impact of the National Living Wage and the fee uplifts paid by the County Council in recent years as well as promotional campaigns organised by others. The four posts within the team are vacant and a review of future requirements has confirmed that it is now appropriate to disband.
Review of carer information, advice, assessment and support contract	322		322	The County Council has a contract with Carers Support West Sussex for carer support. A wide range of services are provided, including carer assessments, welfare/benefit services, a response line, counselling, health and wellbeing payments and equipment for independence. Some of these fulfil statutory responsibilities, others are discretionary. The contract ends on 31st March 2024 and is in the process of being reproced. The specification for the new service has changed to being outcome focussed and as a result an expectation that efficiency savings equivalent to 10% of its current value will be achieved.
Review of the Quality, Practice and Development team	100		100	The Quality, Practice and Development Team is being reviewed. It is expected that this will identify some efficiency options that will enable a small reduction in posts to be made. Pending the completion of that work a savings target of £100k has been set.
Review of commissioning contracts	3,288		3,288	Work has been undertaken over the past few months that has identified efficiency savings in a range of contracts that are managed by adults social care. This is expected to deliver just over £3.2m in efficiencies to the council.
Commissioning		520	520	A review of commissioning arrangements in Adult Social Care.
Sub-total	3,880	520	4,400	

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Children and Young People, Learning and Skills				
Family Safeguarding model		1,820	1,820	The Family Safeguarding model will improve the main statutory provision of Children's Social Care. Through implementing this new model of practice, savings are expected to arise through a reduction in demand for statutory services which will result in reduced demand on the social work teams. Reductions in the number of children entering care are also expected, leading to savings against placement budgets.
Fostering redesign		760	760	The fostering redesign is expected to increase the market share of the Council-provided foster care placements compared to those provided externally which are more expensive. Other initiatives include the employment and training of specialist carers to prevent more complex children from requiring residential care, as well as increasing the support available to foster carers to help prevent foster care placements from breaking down. Keeping children in foster care rather than residential delivers better outcomes and is more
In-house residential phase 2 - High Trees		127	127	This initiative is Phase 2 of the In House Residential redesign which will result in increased capacity at High Trees by one additional bed.
In-house residential phase 3		30	30	This initiative is Phase 3 of the redesign of residential services and cost reductions are expected to arise through greater use of in house capacity and reducing the need for external placements. These changes will require capital investment.
Reduction in inspection team following positive Ofsted inspection		130	130	As a result of the improved Ofsted outcome announced in May 2023 to 'requires improvement' it is anticipated that the level of resources in the inspection team can be reduced from 2025/26.
Review of Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)		90	90	The structure and the processes of the Integrated Front Door and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), in the context of the Family Safeguarding Model, has been reviewed during 2023/24 and cost reductions can be delivered for 2024/25 which were agreed in February. A further review is planned for next year to look at potential further cost reductions in 2025/26.
Review of arrangements for children with complex needs	300		300	A review of arrangements for supporting children with complex needs will be undertaken, including realigning the work of the Emotional & Mental Health Team with Children's Commissioning Team and the review of Child and Adolescent Multi-disciplinary Service, Children and Young People's Enhanced Support Services, Intensive Planning Team & Youth Emotional Support.
Improved use of kinship placements	2,000		2,000	A placement recovery plan has been adopted to particularly focus on reducing the number and proportion of agency residential placements for looked after children. This is having an adverse impact on the placements budget. This initiative will build on the work of the service by focusing on reducing the number of IFA placements and supporting more children through Kinship arrangements.
Second Local House Project in the Coastal region	1,000		1,000	WSCC has already successfully adopted and implemented a Local House Project in the Crawley area. This is a scheme which helps to provide young people leaving care with a safe home, support to live independently and teaches them life skills such as cooking and money management. It is now proposed to implement a second Local House Project in the Coastal region, in response to the demand for this type of service in that
Improved joint working with Health	250		250	Improved joint working with Health in relation to Continuing Health Care packages is expected to reduce the costs on supporting children with eligible health needs.
Historic teacher pension payments		50	50	The number of historic teacher pension payments has been in decline over the last three years. As a result, the budget set aside can be reduced.
Review of Home to School Transport	800		800	There are a range of initiatives planned to reduce the cost to the County Council of providing home to school transport - this includes, independent travel training, review of single occupancy transport, pick up points, more efficient routes and increasing take-up of personal transport budgets.
Sub-total	4,350	3,007	7,357	

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Community Support, Fire and Rescue				
Record office - opening hours	100		100	Following a review of visitor numbers to the Record Office since its full re-opening after the pandemic, there is scope to reduce opening times which better reflect the use of the services provided through the Record Office.
Fire and Rescue - Additional income from Horsham Training Centre	150		150	The new fire and rescue service training centre in Horsham can be utilised to generate income by providing external training opportunities for neighbouring services and across the country. A syllabus and prospectus is being prepared and marketing opportunities will be developed.
Sub-total	250	0	250	
Environment and Climate Change				
Introduction of booking system extension to all Waste & Recycling Sites across the County	200		200	Since April 2021 a booking system has been in use at six Recycling Centres in West Sussex - Bognor Regis, Crawley, Horsham, Littlehampton, Shoreham and Worthing. Residents are able to book up to five visits per month up to 14 days in advance, same day bookings are also offered which means a booking can be made the same day and in most cases 10-20 minutes before arrival. The service has proved popular with residents with over 1.5m bookings being made and customers enjoy not having to queue at sites. This proposal is to expand the booking system to all West Sussex Recycling Centres so that Billingshurst, Burgess Hill, East Grinstead, Midhurst and Westhampnett would also be part of the scheme. This will mean less overall visits and a reduction in the overall tonnage which the County Council has to pay to dispose of through these sites. A recent review has shown that booking systems do not lead to increased fly tipping.
Solar Panel and Battery Project	50	200	250	The county council has been delivering energy, carbon and financial benefits from solar PV for over 10 years. The county council is currently procuring a new provider for the Solar PV & Battery Storage Programme which will deliver new solar PV & Battery Storage installations to schools and academies across West Sussex. The county council has undertaken market testing to develop this offer to schools and academies, liaising with a range of partners and Government bodies to ensure the business model is robust, sustainable and replicable. The proposal is to apply the Solar PV & Battery Storage model in a more commercial setting across the county and support 3rd party businesses to decarbonise their energy supply by hosting solar panel installations resulting in increase income.
Sub-total	250	200	450	

Cabinet Portfolio	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	Total £'000	Description
Finance and Property				
Review of operational estate - Early Help	100		100	As a result of changes to the Early Help Service which were agreed in 2021, there is an ongoing reduction in the running costs of the operations estate.
Review of operational estate - Corporate Estate	240		240	Vacant properties provide an opportunities for new income generation or disposal of properties declared surplus to operational requirements, resulting in a capital receipt. This will reduce the costs for operational estate spend, such as business rates and utility bills and result in increased rental income.
Sub-total	340		340	
Highways and Transport				
Increased Street Works Enforcement		300	300	As a result of increased enforcement on street works, i.e utility companies, additional income is anticipated. This will include income generated through the Lane Rental scheme.
Potential new parking restrictions (CPZs)		50	50	Potential new parking restrictions on the highways network through controlled parking zones will generate additional income. The location of these new zones will be subject to full consultation with local residents.
Street Lighting LED conversion		300	300	The Street Lightning LED Conversion Programme and Remote Monitoring System Programme will change all street lights to LED lanterns which will reduce energy consumption and energy costs as well as reduce carbon emissions in line with the County Council's Climate Change Strategy.
Reduction in the budget for removal of Ash trees	400		400	An annual budget for the removal of Ash trees was put in place in 2021/22 together with a reserve of £1.2m. Requirements to date suggest that the budget can be reduced by £400,000.
Increase in parking fees and charges	200		200	An above inflation increase in parking fees and charges will result in additional income.
Reduction in the demand for concessionary fares travel	1,000		1,000	The number of journeys made under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme continues to be below pandemic levels and therefore the budget can be reduced.
Sub-total	1,600	650	2,250	
Support Services and Economic Development				
Review of support services	390	80	470	A number of support services are subject to review on their structure and operational design to identify efficiencies and streamlining opportunities whilst minimising impact on services supported.
IT services – following transfer from Capita	500		500	In 2021, the IT service was transferred from Capita. At the time, budget was set aside for any changes required but can now be released as a saving. Any future changes in requirements that may arise from the implementation of the Council's IT and digital strategies will be considered as part of future budget setting processes.
Business Services – following transfer from Capita	300		300	In October 2022, the final services were insourced from Capita into the County Council. This process is now complete with the move from a centralised administration function within the finance and support services directorate to an integrated model within service directorates. The budget provision set aside for the insourcing was included in the 2022/23 budget but £300,000 remains unspent and can be released now as a
Sub-total	1,190	80	1,270	
Overall total	11,860	4,457	16,317	